



August 29, 2022

Upcoming Events

[VDOF/ACF meeting](#) – September 1 (Employee Only)

[Generation NEXT Virtual Workshop](#) – September 7, 8, 14 & 15

[Beginning Woodland Owner Retreat – Southeast Virginia](#) – September 9 - 10

[Forest Management Academy – East](#) - September 13 – 15 (Employee Only)

[Fall Fire Academy – Western Region](#) – September 13 – 16

[Project Learning Tree Workshop for Educators](#) – September 15

- ◆ Visit <https://dof.virginia.gov/events/> for more public events and <https://dof.virginia.gov/events/category/employee-only/> for more employee only events.

Employee Spotlight

Rich Reuse – Great Job!

- ◆ Rich Reuse (area forester) was put in contact with a homeowner in Hopewell who had questions about her cedar tree. She emailed pictures and Rich was able to answer her question about the cedar, but he also noticed a potentially dangerous tree in the background of the photo. He offered to do a site visit, which she happily agreed to. He discussed the risks with her and followed up with an email about potential species to replace the tree. This was her response to his efforts:
 - “I am so blessed that you took the time to come see. I would recommend you for a promotion. LOL you eased my mind about what I needed to do. Thank you so much for everything. It meant a lot to me.”

Last Week

Data Collection for the 2022 Forest Inventory and Analysis

- ◆ VDOF staff joined a U.S. Forest Service (USFS) quality assurance forester to begin data collection for the 2022 Urban Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) field season. A USFS program, FIA provides scientific, credible information needed to assess forests nationwide. Plots are located in Northern Virginia counties and utilize the USFS “iTree” program to assess vegetation in non-forest or urban settings. This data will allow researchers to describe the condition of trees within the Washington Metro region, as well as contributions to air quality, reductions in energy usage, absorption and storage of carbon, contribution to privacy and noise reduction, and added property value.

Cumberland State Forest Warner Swinging Bridge Work

- ◆ Survey work on the Warner Swinging Bridge in the Cumberland State Forest has been completed. This is the first step in the design phase for replacing the bridge to allow for public recreation access into an otherwise inaccessible ~600 acres of the state forest. Recent funding from the General Assembly for recreation is helping to pay for this project.

Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship Meeting

- ◆ VDOF staff met with the Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship (NAPS) on Aug. 21. NAPS is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of the Chesapeake Bay, advocating sound land use policies, preventing and reducing pollution, and promoting educational programs. VDOF was invited to address concerns from the group about the environmental impacts of timber harvesting, specifically clear cutting, in the Northern Neck. Other areas of discussion included standard scientific forest management practices, the hardwood habitat initiative, and the sustainability of Virginia's forest resource.

Forest Management Projects in Bath County

- ◆ VDOF has partnered with the Appalachian Conservation Corps (ACC) on a number of forest management projects in Bath County. Part of Conservation Legacy, ACC is a national network of service organizations that partner with land management agencies on conservation projects, while also providing young adults with land management learning opportunities. ACC brought a certified saw crew to perform hardwood stand management and invasive species control on private forest land. Part of VDOF's participation in the Joint Chiefs Lower Cowpasture River Project funded by USFS, the demonstration areas are operational-scale projects. These efforts are a success story in engaging landowners and a service provider to accomplish hardwood and invasive management in an area where such work has traditionally been challenging. (Pictured: Grayson Coleman in white oak stand instructing Appalachian Conservation Corps Saw Crew on Day 1.)



Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager), Molly O'Liddy (U&CF partnership coordinator) and Denny McCarthy (area forester) met with the Roanoke Valley Urban Forest Council to discuss regional urban forestry efforts, including Arbor Day plans and greenway updates.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana (utilization & marketing [U&M] program manager), Rachel Harris (U&M specialist) and Joe Lehnen (urban wood utilization forester) traveled to Bland County for a US Forest Service demonstration of the CharBoss biochar machine. This portable unit can be towed most anywhere with a pick-up truck, to create biochar from forest residues, fuel reduction thinnings, and urban forest biomass.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana attended a company site visit, where she provided Virginia forest resources, forest industry, best management practices (BMPs), and sustainable forest management overview to the potential business investor.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator) joined Virginia Cooperative Extension Forester Adam Downing and two students from Virginia Tech to install permanent monitoring plots on the 50-acre Femelschlag-style harvest at Shenandoah Valley/McCormick Farm Agriculture Research and Extension Center near Lexington. Femelschlag (German) harvesting is a system where a series of small forest openings (gaps) are created, and then when desirable tree regeneration has grown in the forest edge in the surrounding area, the openings are expanded to release the regeneration to grow. The process is continued over many years and the gaps are expanded until the entire stand has been harvested. Monitoring of the vegetation response to the harvest is being organized by a silviculture professor at Virginia Tech, Dr. David Carter. In addition to the monitoring plots, the group installed three small deer exclosures.
- ◆ On August 17, Amanda Conrad (forest health technician) visited parks in Prince William and Fairfax counties to survey for beech leaf disease (BLD). 15-20 trees were surveyed at each site, including trees from the canopy, mid-story, and understory levels. BLD is caused by nematode feeding and the most obvious symptom is dark banding between leaf veins. The disease can reduce tree vigor and lead to tree mortality. Although one isolated incidence of BLD was found in Prince William County in 2021, the range of BLD is relatively unknown. VDOF Forest Health conducts surveys in public areas with a high concentration of beech trees.
- ◆ Molly O’Liddy (urban & community forestry partnership coordinator), Amanda Conrad, Matt Wolanski (senior area forester), and Connor Goolsby (natural resources specialist) met with City of Winchester arborist Jordan Herring on August 18 to discuss plans for tree planting around Winchester. The City of Winchester, Shenandoah University, and VDOF are working together to use heat mapping data to create a tree planting strategy that alleviates some of the city’s “heat islands,” which affect the ecology and livability of a city. The project is funded through Urban and Community Forestry’s “Virginia Trees for Clean Water” Grant Program, which encourages the creation of long-term, sustained canopy cover to improve water quality across the Commonwealth. VDOF will continue to work with Shenandoah University and the City of Winchester to ensure the project is completed in a way that promotes public awareness of the benefits of trees and impacts on water quality.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) presented information about the spotted lanternfly during a "Brown Bag Webinar" hosted by the Blue Ridge Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM), a non-profit that works towards decreasing the impact of invasive species. The webinar also featured control strategies for tree-of-heaven. Over 200 people attended the webinar, which can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyLqPPWMPFA>
- ◆ The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and VDOF Cooperative Agreement was renewed for another five years! VDOF and NRCS have enjoyed a good working partnership for over a decade, and this agreement will continue the partnership into the future. VDOF field foresters provide technical assistance to landowners who have forestry needs and enter into a contract with the NRCS. NRCS in turn will reimburse VDOF for the time.

State Forest

- ◆ Jack Kauffman (local state forest manager) met with volunteers, an Extension forester, and VDOF Rappahannock area staff to discuss opportunities for education on the Whitney State Forest. Plans are to use recreation funds to expand the parking area on the Whitney and to address trail issues on the forest, including possible replacement or removal of a failing culvert.

- ◆ Mike Womack (local state forest manager) presented on the history of Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest (ABSF) for Society of American Foresters (SAF) Blue Ridge and Robert E Lee Chapters, with over 25 foresters attending. Jerre Creighton (research program manager), Caitlin Verdu (watershed program manager) & Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator) also gave presentations and reviews concerning several planting density studies established in the late 1980s on the ABSF, in cooperation with Virginia Tech, VDOF's Hardwood Habitat Initiative, and VDOF's watershed program. (Pictured)



- ◆ Shannon Lewis (local state forest manager) met with Jeremy Yancey of the Gray Ghost Hunt Club to discuss wildlife food plot locations and acceptable seed types. Jeremy and the hunting club have volunteered to plant about eight food plots for wildlife on the Cumberland State Forest this fall.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Stephen Jasenak (area forester), John Rose (forest technician), Kendall Topping (community forest specialist), and Scott Bachman (senior area forester) presented *The True Story of Smokey Bear*, firefighting tools, and PPE on wildfires to the last of three Suffolk Fire Department Safety Camps. This third camp was the largest of the summer season; thirty students received our message and met Smokey. The campers also got to see Suffolk 50 up close at the end of the presentation. (pictured)



- ◆ Fire ants have arrived at the Waverly office, and three known mounds have appeared so far. One fire ant mound is located in front of the mechanic shop and has been treated with bait. Anybody using the mechanic shop should be cautious of the mound. (Pictured).



Central Region

- ◆ Rodney Newlin (water quality engineer) presented an agency water quality program update to employees of WestRock during their annual meeting in Charlottesville. Rodney updated attendees on Best Management Practice (BMP) audit results, harvesting trends, and other requirements of the silvicultural water quality law. A total of 35 people were in attendance.
- ◆ Tyler Hill (forest technician) and David Powell (senior area forester) utilized a VDOF dozer to continue the battle against a persistent kudzu infestation at James Monroe's Highland in Albemarle County. The tractor allowed them to gain deeper access into the kudzu patch. This is the third follow-up treatment of the infestation. After the mechanical work, a contractor will perform a third herbicide application. Once the kudzu is controlled, a forested riparian buffer will be established on the creek.