



September 26, 2022

Upcoming Events

[Governor Visit – VDOF HQ – September 30](#)

[Project Learning Tree New Facilitator Training – October 25 – 26](#)

- ◆ 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 News

Amanda Scheps – Welcome Back

- ◆ VDOF would like to welcome back Amanda Scheps in the role of Forestland Conservation Specialist, overseeing land conservation projects that include easements in much of the northern and eastern parts of the state. Her first day back was September 12.



News You Can Use

Spotted Lanternfly

- ◆ The spotted lanternfly (SLF), an invasive insect, continues to spread in Virginia. In some areas SLF is well established and needs no reporting (Frederick, Warren, and Clarke counties, and the City of Winchester). However, if you find lanternflies outside of these heavily infested areas, please report them via the Forest Health Ground Observation (FHGO) tool in IFRIS. Use the tool to select the following fields: "biotic" category, "insect" class, "sapsucker" type, and "spotted lanternfly" cause. Reporting SLF detections helps us better understand the populations and will assist VDACS as they identify possible treatment areas.

Senior Management Team (SMT)

- ◆ The minutes from the September 6 SMT meeting have been posted to the intranet.

Last Week

Missing Man's Body Found

- ◆ Staff from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) confirmed a body found Monday night outside Twin Lakes State Park was that of a North Carolina man who had been reported missing since Saturday. The Prince Edward County Sheriff's Office and DCR reported that the body was

found in the Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest, adjacent to the state park. An investigation into the matter is ongoing.

White Oak Initiative Steering Committee Meeting

- ◆ State Forester Rob Farrell attended the White Oak Initiative (WOI) steering committee meeting in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The WOI is supported by the bourbon industry and includes representatives from barrel manufacturers, universities, state and federal agencies, and land managers covering the range of white oak in the east. White oak trees are critical for bourbon production because the whiskey must be aged in a barrel made from white oak staves and can only be used once. The future supply of white oak is in jeopardy because of a lack of young trees in the forest. Significant efforts are needed to reverse this condition. The work of the WOI will contribute to Virginia's Hardwood Forest Habitat Initiative.

Forest Management Academy

- ◆ VDOF held two agency training events recently for field-level foresters and resource managers. Designed to supplement, enhance and broaden employee knowledge and skills in current and emerging topics, the annual Forest Management Academy all-day training sessions support employee development in order to provide the best forest management guidance to Virginia landowners and citizens. (pictured)



New Forestry Research Reports Available

- ◆ Four new research reports have been posted on the [VDOF website's resource library](#). These include Five-Year Effects of Herbicide Tank Mixes and Surfactants for Loblolly Pine Release (No. 142), Site Prep vs. Release for Woody Competition Control in Loblolly Pine: 15-Year Results (No. 143), Effects of Hardwood Control Timing on Loblolly Pine Growth – Age Five Results (No. 144) and Triclopyr Ester for Controlling Tree-of-Heaven (No. 145). VDOF research has been instrumental in developing pine and hardwood forest management practices in Virginia. As a result, pine forest productivity has more than doubled and options for improving species composition and health of our hardwood forests have been identified and proven.

Sovereign Nations of Virginia Conference

- ◆ Assistant State Forester Terry Lasher attended the Sovereign Nations of Virginia Conference (Indigenous Led Conservation) on September 15. Attendees discussed how tribal management of land is an essential element of climate justice work and how tribes can collaborate with national and local conservation agencies to acquire and conserve land.

Industrial Design Class Visit to Rocktown Urban Wood

- ◆ VDOF partnered with the City of Harrisonburg and Rocktown Urban Wood to host Dr. Audrey Barnes' industrial design class from James Madison University (JMU) at the Rocktown facility located near Harrisonburg. The JMU students learned about the proper handling and drying of wood after milling, wood pest management, finishing wood for various products, and integrating epoxy into finished wood items. The class will be making musical instruments from a variety of urban wood.

Waynesboro Tree Care Workshop

- ◆ The annual Waynesboro Tree Care Workshop was held Friday, September 16. Presentations included the topics of tree climbing, trees and pollinators, ground penetrating radar theory, co-managing turf and trees, and urban wood utilization programs. VDOF staff along with the Trees Virginia Board and the City of Waynesboro managed the logistics of the workshop. More than 160 participants attended the successful workshop.

VDOF Treats Carolina Ash Trees

- ◆ On September 8, VDOF staff treated Carolina ash trees in the Cypress Bridge Swamp Natural Area Preserve in Southampton County. Threatened by the emerald ash borer, these trees are a rare species in Virginia. With big tree experts Byron and Jean Carmean acting as their guides, VDOF staff treated five male and female Carolina ash trees, which will help protect the future of the species in the Commonwealth. Since this area of Virginia is currently abnormally dry, treatment was made easier than if water levels were near normal levels in the Nottoway River system. (pictured)



State Forests Tours

- ◆ VDOF staff gave a tour of the Charlotte and Prince Edward-Gallion state forests to Washington D.C. office staff from The Conservation Fund (TCF). TCF has worked with VDOF to acquire our newest state forest (Charlotte) through two phases thus far, with another two phases planned, that will bring the Charlotte State Forest size to around 6,000 acres by the end of 2023. TCF staff were interested in gaining hands-on experience with land conservation and working forests to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the important roles they play for TCF. (pictured)



- ◆ Jerre Creighton (research manager), John Scrivani (research technician) and Ellen Powell (conservation education coordinator) led a tour of Lesesne State Forest for Albemarle County Environmental Studies Academy students. The tour focused on American chestnut research, challenges, and successes.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ On September 2, the Forestland Conservation Program established VDOF's 200th open space easement on Pine Mountain, a 1,428-acre property in Wise County. Staff worked in close partnership with The Nature Conservancy to complete the project using funds provided by the US Department of Transportation to help mitigate the impacts of constructing Route 460 through Buchanan County. The easement conserves a key connector point in a 125-mile wildlife and recreational corridor running from Tennessee's Cumberlands, through Kentucky, Virginia, and into southern West Virginia. The easement also helps conserve over 1,400 acres of managed forests, four miles of headwater streams, an important bird area, and a suite of rare or threatened species, including the threatened black-sided dace, Big Sandy crayfish, and Swainson's warbler.

- ◆ Terry Lasher and Sabina Dhungana (utilization and marketing [U&M] program manager) attended the Virginia Forest Products Association Annual meeting in Virginia Beach. They presented an agency update and engaged members in facilitating networking, reporting on our latest trainings, and inquiring about future needs of the industry.
- ◆ VDOF and NC Forest Service forest inventory personnel participated in joint virtual training held by the Southern Research Station Forest Inventory staff. This training included new “Manual 9.2” data collection procedures as well as changes for the transition to “paperless” field records.
- ◆ Sabina Dhungana attended a planning meeting for the Southern Group of State Foresters’ Southern Utilization and Marketing annual event, which will be in Tennessee this year. Sabina provided feedback on the agenda and updates about the forest carbon committee and ideas for speakers to invite to present at the event.
- ◆ Rachel Harris (U&M specialist) continues to assess and develop plans to address workforce and labor needs in the state. She is researching programs in other states that have had success, as well as reaching out to folks at Mountain Gateway Community College to see what type of assistance they may need on the Appalachian Hardwood Training Initiative grant they received this year. Many of the goals for that program align with those of VDOF, and a partnership would benefit both entities in order to make a lasting impact on the forestry workforce in Virginia and surrounding states.

State Forest

- ◆ Staff met with engineering professors and students from James Madison University (JMU), along with staff of Trout Unlimited, on First Mountain State Forest this past week. They discussed a project that would enhance and improve recreational access to First Mountain by improving an existing stream crossing that has resident trout populations, and by moving the parking lot out of the floodplain area and further into the Forest. Monies from the Dupont Foundation, Trout Unlimited, and recreational monies are being considered for funding the project. JMU students hope to provide assistance on the project in the design phase.
- ◆ Staff held a virtual discussion meeting with some folks from the Appalachian Conservation Corps (ACC) about the use of ACC on possible State Forest, State-Owned Lands, and Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) work involving invasive species management, timber sale layout and marking, crop tree release work, boundary line marking, trail maintenance / establishment, and other possible practices. ACC staff will be speaking at a meeting of the State Forest staff on September 29.

Central Region

- ◆ Drew Arnn (senior area forester) and Miller Adams (area forester) presented a message of forest management and forest fire prevention to 600+ Pittsylvania County 4th graders, the first in-person Ag Day event since 2020.

Communications

- ◆ Education Coordinator for Piedmont Soil & Water Conservation District Kelly Atkinson and Virginia Project Learning Tree (PLT) Coordinator Cindy Frenzel held a PLT Workshop at Twin Lakes State Park for local teachers and state park staff. They enjoyed a beautiful day outside learning how to use trees and forests as a window on the world. Students made a model of a cross section of a tree trunk, played games like "Birds and Bugs," studied different ecosystems, and wrote "Poet-Tree," among other activities in this 6-hour workshop.