



October 17, 2022

Upcoming Events

[Generation NEXT – New Kent Conference Center – November 2](#)

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

Employee News

Congratulations!

- ◆ Stephen Jasenak is the Eastern Region Water Quality Engineer. His first day in this role was October 10. Stephen has worked for VDOF since 2014, serving in a variety of field positions including Blackwater area forester, Central Region water quality specialist, and Heartland work area forest technician. He earned a degree in Forest Resources Management from West Virginia University.
- ◆ Dominic Chirico has been selected as the new area forester for the Capital District. Dominic has worked with VDOF for the last year in the Capital work area as a forest technician. Dominic holds an A.A.S in Science from Paul D. Camp Community College, a B.S. in Wildlife, Fisheries, and Aquaculture from Mississippi State University, and a Masters of Forestry from North Carolina State University. In addition to his regular VDOF duties, Dominic currently serves as a tree improvement intern.
- ◆ Andrew Murray will be moving from his area forester position with the Rappahannock District to join the Capital District as a Community Forester on October 25. Andrew has been with VDOF for 7 months. He holds a Bachelors in Environmental Science from VCU, is an ISA certified arborist, and is also a certified Virginia Master Naturalist. Andrew holds memberships in the Richmond Tree Stewards and the Virginia Native Plant Society. Previously, Andrew worked as a climbing arborist in the Greater Richmond Area for 5 years.

Welcome to VDOF

- ◆ The Western Region welcomes Brandon Devault to the New River District and to the VDOF team; his first day was October 11. Brandon comes to us from the National Park Service. Previously he served in maintenance at the Guilford Courthouse National Military Park in Greensboro, North Carolina. His interests include hiking, fishing, traveling and professional photography. Brandon is getting married on the first day of fall fire season - October 15 - to his lucky fiancé Kimberly Gillespie. Congratulations and welcome to VDOF!



Leaving VDOF

- ◆ Cindy Frenzel (Project Learning Tree coordinator) has left VDOF. Her last day was October 14.

News You Can Use

Logger Best Management Practices (BMP) Cost-Share Program

- ◆ The Logger BMP Cost-Share Program has funding again this year from the Virginia Water Quality Improvement Fund, administered by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). For this program year – July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 – a total of \$500,000 is available. The program will also receive another \$500,000 next program year. This is the highest level of funding the program has ever received in a two-year period.
- The Logger BMP Cost-Share Program helps cover the cost of implementing best management practices on stream crossings. The program helps cover labor, equipment and material costs. To be eligible, a logger must be current on their SHARP Logger training, not have any outstanding penalties or past due bills owed to VDOF, and have no water quality issues on any tracts on which they are operating.
- Due to the increased funding and cost of materials, the cost-share rate has increased. It will now provide up to 75% of the actual cost (not to exceed \$6,000) for BMP implementation at the stream crossing, and if the crossing requires the purchase of a portable bridge, the maximum increases to \$12,000. This year, a logger can have two projects per program year, one with a bridge purchase (\$12,000) and one for BMP installation (\$6,000), with total cost-share not to exceed \$18,000 per program year per tax identification entity.
- To help spread the news about this program as we are conducting our harvest inspections, a one-page flyer is available on our website. <https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/FT0047-Logger-BMP-Cost-Share-Program.pdf>
- Loggers should contact their local water quality engineer or specialist to sign up for this program.

Last Week

VDOF Tree Seedling Store Opens

- ◆ VDOF's online seedling store [is now open](#). Bred specifically for Virginia's soils and climate, 45 species of trees and shrubs are grown and sold directly from the agency's self-supporting nurseries. VDOF nurseries offerings include a variety of pine and spruce species, as well as dozens of hardwood varieties used to establish timber stands, pulpwood crops, Christmas tree plantations, wildlife habitats, stream bank stabilization, urban forests, and riparian buffers. This year's crop is 63 percent larger than in 2021, thanks in part to all those across Virginia who participated in last year's annual acorn collection. Read [VDOF's news release](#).

Amelia WMA Interagency Fall Prescribed Fire

- ◆ On September 28, a crew of interagency fire practitioners conducted a fall prescribed fire on a wildlife habitat field at Amelia Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This 2,217-acre WMA provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, shooting ranges and other outdoor activities. (The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) maintains 46 WMAs totaling more than 215,000 acres.) The team consisted of qualified fire crews from VDOF, DWR and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. While most prescribed fires are held in the late winter to spring timeframe, fall presents another option for achieving specific wildlife habitat goals. Fire can provide excellent control of saplings, while helping development of native pollinator and wildlife friendly herbaceous plant seeds.

Urban and Community Forestry Grants

- ◆ Thirty-four applications, totaling more than \$600,000 were received for the Urban and Community Forestry grant cycle. The ranking committee of certified arborists reviewed each application last week. Grantees will be notified and awards will be issued in the coming weeks.

Forest Sustainability Fund Steering Committee

- ◆ VDOF Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer and Forest Management staff held the second meeting of the Forest Sustainability Fund Steering Committee. The committee is composed of several commissioners of revenue and supporting staff from across the state, as well as representatives from the Virginia Farm Bureau and the Virginia Forestry Association. The committee is tasked to help VDOF develop guidelines to allocate funding to localities across the Commonwealth. The online grant administration portal allows localities to report forestland forgone tax revenue and provide a copy of forest land use ordinances. Localities have until November 15 to apply and report forgone revenue to be eligible for funding.

Central Region Annual Meeting

- ◆ VDOF's Central Region held their annual meeting at Camp Albemarle, located near Free Union. Speakers outlined agency expectations and guidance regarding forest management, fire and emergency response, and watershed programs. The meeting concluded with a tour of nearby Henley's Orchard, where staff received an overview on the nursery's apple orchard management. Henley's Orchard is a small, family-owned orchard that has been in operation since 1932. A total of 65 VDOF employees attended.

Fall Foliage Map Available from VDOF

- ◆ To help Virginians and visitors enjoy the fall foliage, VDOF collects and shares information on when and where to see the best of autumn's colors. The agency recommends several driving tours with routes covering parts of northern, western and central Virginia. The fall foliage map can be found on VDOF's website at <https://dof.virginia.gov/education-and-recreation/fall-foliage-driving-tours/>. Read [VDOF's news release](#).

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) and Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist) met with Jesse Bander (area forester) to survey a pine stand in New Kent County with trees showing signs of decline. Pine beetles were initially thought to be the cause, but upon further investigation it appeared to be a fungal root issue. Samples were collected from the site and delivered to the VA Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services plant pathologist for confirmation.
- ◆ Amanda Conrad (forest health technician) and Kinner Ingram (District Forester) visited a conservation easement to assess and treat ash trees as a demonstration project. Ash trees were treated with a soil drench, which is typically performed in fall to protect trees over winter and during the early growing season. The property borders James Madison's Montpelier, where other ash trees have been treated and parasitoids have been released as biocontrol for long-term EAB control.
- ◆ Joe Rossetti (hardwood forest habitat initiative coordinator), gave a presentation to a meeting of the DWR District Biologists and Wildlife Management Area managers. The theme for the day was wildlife management in hardwood forests, with other presentations from Dr. Craig Harper (University of Tennessee) and two DWR biologists on ruffed grouse and golden-winged warbler. Both of these wildlife species, and many more, will benefit from practices proposed within the Hardwood Forest Habitat Initiative.

State Forest

- ◆ Staff assisted the New River Soil and Water Conservation District with a Natural Resources Field Day on the Matthews State Forest. 173 students from Carroll County Middle Schools were taught about different aspects of forest management.
- ◆ Site preparation was completed on all State Forests and State-Owned Lands projects last week. Over 846 acres were treated, including 12 acres strip-sprayed at a lower rate to test for possible Hardwood Habitat Initiative projects.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Scott Adams (forester) and Paul Taylor (technician) attended the annual Tree Fest on University of Mary Washington's campus. The event is a sustainability tradition where students, faculty, staff and community members gather to celebrate tree conservation and stewardship in the greater Fredericksburg area. *(Pictured are Director of Landscape and Grounds at UMW Holly Chichester, Smokey Bear, UMW Chief of Staff Jeff McClurken and Natural Resource Specialist Scott Adams.)*



Central Region

- ◆ Tyler Hill and Cameron Lipscomb (forest technicians) participated in the Louisa County Natural Resources Day for 3rd to 5th grade students. They coordinated multiple programs including a tree cookie craft, tree identification and fire prevention. A total of 20 students participated.
- ◆ Tyler Hill, Chuck Wright (area forester) and Smokey Bear participated in the Goochland Public Safety Event with the Goochland County tractor/plow unit and a table of fire safety information. It was a large event with over 100 in attendance. <https://www.wtvr.com/community/photos-goochland-county-fire-rescues-2022-fire-rescue-show> & <https://www.wtvr.com/news/local-news/goochland-2022-fire-rescue-show>
- ◆ Peter Eales (pine resource forester) and Jason Fisher (Virginia Cooperative Extension) gave a forestry talk to approximately 80 third graders in Halifax County.
- ◆ Kenny Midgett (forest technician), Darren Williams (regional mechanic) and Darwin Rhodes (forest technician) worked together to build a dozer/tractor plow training course at the New Kent Nursery grounds for training options. The course was designed to have a mountain station where personnel can learn and hone slope skills, an obstacle course for pushing tires to learn blade control, a track with varied degrees of angles and turns, a trench, and a course through a pine thicket. This training course will enable personnel to increase skill levels by facing the many demands that firefighters need to be able to negotiate in real fire line construction incidents. These stations will need to be groomed from time to time but should give VDOF employees a place to practice their skills and knowledge of dozer operations (pictures attached).

