



**October 24, 2022**

## Upcoming Events

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### **[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.

## News You Can Use

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### ***Fall Fire Season***

- ◆ This week, VDOF announced the beginning of the annual fall fire season, which extends through November. The main cause of wildfires is yard debris burning. Dry grass and leaves, low humidity and windy conditions create favorable conditions for wildfires. VDOF's staff works with local fire departments in every county to provide emergency response which protects people, property and natural resources.

### ***Don't Move Firewood Campaign***

- ◆ VDOF and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services are teaming to raise awareness about invasive insects that live in and on firewood. Moving firewood enables the movement of destructive forest and agricultural pests such as the invasive emerald ash borer, spongy moth, Asian longhorned beetle and spotted lanternfly. Virginians are being asked to buy firewood locally to protect our forests and crops, while supporting local economies. The annual [Don't Move Firewood campaign](#) is a national effort by forestry agencies and organizations to promote awareness.

### ***Arbor Day Foundation Program Applications Now Open***

- ◆ Sponsored by the [Arbor Day Foundation](#), the Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA and Tree Line USA programs are now accepting applications. The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization that works to recognize green communities and institutions of higher education, and acknowledge best practices in utility arboriculture. The deadline for applications is Dec. 31.

## Last Week

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### ***Fall Forestry and Wildlife Field Tours***

- ◆ One of Virginia Cooperative Extension's Fall Forestry and Wildlife Field Tours recently included a visit to Sawmill Solutions in Powhatan County. More than 30 tour attendees, which included seven area teachers, learned about sourcing, processing, manufacturing and marketing urban wood products. This tour was one of three occurring this month, with a goal of educating and connecting landowners,

professionals and those interested in natural resources management. Hosted by Extension and the Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program, the tours are a collaboration between Virginia's natural resource agencies, associations, and industry partners.

### Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Dennis Gaston (state forests forester), Ben Duke (state forests technician), and Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator) marked a 19-acre stand for crop tree release on the Chesterfield State Forest. In the 23-year old stand, the trio marked 614 crop trees, for an average of 32 per acre. Some spots had regenerated so well with white oak that it was difficult to choose a crop tree! However, since not all of the trees will make it to the next harvest, they chose the best trees to release.

### State Forest

- ◆ Staff located a reported southern pine beetle (SPB) spot on the Cumberland State Forest and started examining the area. The spot is big, potentially 20 to 30 acres. Staff started looking at possibilities to salvage the SPB damage and options to look for other SPB spots aerially.
- ◆ Staff hosted 94 seventh grade life science students from Carroll County Middle School at the Matthews State Forest. Students learned tree ID using a dichotomous key, made tree measurements, and participated in a nature scavenger hunt.

### Communications

- ◆ Ellen Powell (conservation education coordinator) presented on oak decline for about 25 attendees of Ivy Creek Natural Area's "Ivy Talks" lecture series.
- ◆ Lisa Deaton (area forester) and Ellen Powell led a Project Learning Tree workshop for the Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists at Machicomoco State Park in Gloucester County. The 18 attendees also included a few Master Gardeners, the chapter's advisor from Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and a state park ranger.
- ◆ The Virginia Forest Products Association and Virginia Forestry Association inaugural Virginia Wood Cup was held last week at the Royal New Kent Golf Club in Providence Forge. VDOF was proudly represented by Eastern Regional Forester Bryant Bays, Assistant State Forester Terry Lasher, recently retired and former Human Resources Director Hector Rivera, and Communications Director Greg Bilyeu (pictured, left to right) who braved the hilly terrain and windy conditions on the challenging Irish links style golf course...but most importantly all enjoyed a beautiful crisp fall day while celebrating Forest Products Week with the Richmond forestry community. Proceeds from the tournament benefited the Virginia Forest Resources and Wood Products PACs of Virginia.



### Eastern Region

- ◆ Alanna Ostrowski (forest technician) and Jeremey Falkenau (district forester) participated in the Junior League of Richmond's 17th annual Touch-A-Truck. Alanna and Jeremey showcased one of the JD550 bulldozer and transport units, allowing kids of all ages to learn what it is like to be a bulldozer operator on a wildfire and explore the controls. (pictured)
- ◆ The Capital District staff organized a Federation 4H/FFA Forestry competition in Hanover County on October 12. Approximately 60 students from schools in Hanover and King William Counties



competed. Teams from Chickahominy Middle School, Atlee High School and King William High School will now move on to the next level of competition in November. Thanks to Jesse Bander (natural resource specialist) for setting everything up, and to Kathleen Ogilvy, Dominic Chirico, Dave Slack (area foresters), and Alanna Ostrowski for helping to make this competition a success.

- ◆ On Wednesday October 12, Scott Adams (area forester) was traveling past the Mattaponi Wildlife Management Area in Caroline County when he was flagged down by a motorist on the roadside. The person had hit a bald eagle, which was now standing dangerously close to the edge of the highway. About that time a truck passed through the area and startled the bird, which caused it to drop about 40 feet into a ravine. Virginia Department of Wildlife Resource personnel were contacted and shortly afterward, a representative of an animal rehabilitation group arrived at the scene. The rehabilitator went into the ravine to cage the eagle but was then unable to climb out. Caroline County Fire and Rescue personnel were dispatched to the scene to perform a tactical rescue, aided by Scott Adams. The eagle seemed to be doing well once captured. (pictured)



- ◆ Eli Podyma (community forestry specialist) assisted the Richmond ToolBank and Richmond Parks Department with a volunteer tree planting in Forest Hill Park in Richmond's southside. 119 large trees were planted to reforest an eroding hillside at the park, and 60 additional trees will be planted later this month. VDOF assisted volunteers with tree identification, site selection, root pruning and planting techniques.

- ◆ The Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District (covering the cities of Virginia Beach and Chesapeake) renewed their annual Farm Days after a COVID break the last two years. Over the course of four days in a two-week period, more than 1500 first grade students and their chaperones visited Hunt Club Farm in Virginia Beach or Triple R Ranch in Chesapeake to meet with many resource professionals.



- Kendall Topping (community forestry specialist), Scott Bachman, Evan Richardson (area foresters), Stephen Jasenak (water quality engineer), and John Rose (forest technician) rotated through the days to deliver the good news about forests. The students learned how trees impact our daily life, from clean air and water to the forest products we use every day – from the obvious like lumber and paper to the unique like rayon and cellulose sponges! The students were reminded that trees can be a crop, just like corn, wheat or soybeans. Timber is a renewable resource that is managed sustainably in Virginia and across North America (pictured).

## Central Region

- ◆ Mike Aherron, Drew Arnn (area foresters), Mark Winebrenner (forest technician), Matias Pineiro (forest technician), and Leslie Mace (water quality specialist) worked at an information table during the Southern Virginia Career Expo in Pittsylvania County. The two-day event saw approximately 4000 students from the surrounding areas.
- ◆ Kevin Dawson (water quality specialist) assisted with a SHARP Logger core class in Keysville with 11 people in attendance.
- ◆ Drew Arnn and Smokey Bear discussed fire prevention with students of Union Hall Elementary in Pittsylvania County during their fire prevention week.

## Western Region

- ◆ Bill Miller and Jon Perry (forest technician) participated in the Wise County 4-H Fourth Grade Ag and Safety Field Day, hosted by Virginia Cooperative Extension. Bill and Jon discussed wildfire prevention and working in the natural resources field with the students. One of the students was dressed as a wildland firefighter and served as a honorary member of a VDOF fire crew. Approximately 350 students were in attendance. (pictured)



- ◆ After a two-year hiatus due to COVID 19, the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable's Conservation Day Camp returned to Sugar Hollow Park in Bristol. Brian Ledford and Bill Miller (area foresters) made multiple presentations to the Washington County and City of Bristol's third grade classes over the course of two days. Brian showed the students how a tree grows, why the leaves change colors and other interesting qualities of forests. Bill used a PLT game to teach the students about forest succession. The students also played Smokey Plinko for prizes.

- ◆ Tristan Vest (forest technician) and Justin Funk (area forester) spent a fun-filled day teaching Carroll County elementary students about the importance of our forests and the role they play in keeping our waterways clean. They also talked to the students about all the different forest products that are made right under their nose in Carroll County and the surrounding towns, such as lumber, furniture, and hardwood flooring. The natural resources display was done in conjunction with many other activities during the field day, including beekeeping, meat processing, and animal and crop production. The natural resources station was manned on three different days through a cooperative effort between VDOF, NRCS, FSA, and the New River S&W conservation district, with nearly 200 students in attendance throughout the week (pictured).



- ◆ On a wildfire detail during Smokey's birthday, David Tompkins (forest technician) and Denny McCarthy (area forester) helped him celebrate late with the Salem Red Sox. The VDOF team reminded folks to help "Strike Out Wildfires!" Smokey Bear, David, Denny, and Mugsy (Salem Red Sox) have been celebrating Smokey's birthday and spreading the Wildfire Prevention message since 2017 (pictured).



- ◆ Brian Ledford (area forester) and Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator) assisted with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Fall Forestry Bus Tour in Smyth County. The first stop was hosted by the USDA Forest Service (USFS) at a 15-year-old northern red oak and white oak progeny test and seed orchard. The trees had just received their first thinning and may eventually produce seed for USFS nurseries. The second stop was hosted by Joe and Brian to discuss upland hardwood management. Techniques to initiate oak regeneration were discussed, and the

participants experienced a 30-year-old clear cut of oaks that had regenerated mostly to yellow-poplar, Frasier magnolia, and black birch.

- ◆ Collin Sapp (forest technician) provided a fire training for the Russell County Appalachian Community Corrections Alternative Program (ACCAP) Center. Twelve officers and 58 probationers were trained and are now ready to be dispatched locally for wildfires.
- ◆ Jon Perry was recently conducting a harvest inspection when the logging operator inquired about the usefulness and capabilities of the handheld GPS unit he was using. After their discussion, the operator purchased a GPS to map/calculate stand acreage and to mark/navigate to waypoints. The operator was struggling with using the GPS unit after purchasing it, so Jon spent an afternoon training him on the unit and how it could be effectively used for harvest planning.
- ◆ On October 5, Brad Carico (regional forester) and Andrew Vinson (water quality specialist), represented the Department of Forestry at Virginia Tech's College of Natural Resources and Environment fall undergraduate career fair. Brad and Andrew met with hundreds of interested students to provide information regarding careers in forestry and VDOF's summer internships. They collected dozens of resumes from interested students.
- ◆ On October 5, Andrew Vinson gave a guest lecture for the Forested Wetlands course at Virginia Tech. With approximately 30 students in attendance, Andrew and the students discussed careers in water quality, the impacts that forestry operations can have on water resources, and the best management practices that the industry uses to protect water quality.