



January 03, 2023

Upcoming Events

[Eastern Region – Regional Meeting](#) – February 8, 2023 @ 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

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

Employee Spotlight

Connor Goolsby – Job Well Done!

- ◆ Below is an email Matt Wolanski (district forester) received from landowners Tom and Wanda Henschen, who recently worked on a project with Connor Goolsby (natural resource specialist):
 - “My husband and I had recently contacted Connor Goolsby concerning vegetation on a piece of property that we have purchased. After asking if he could offer any guidance on trees and shrubs to save, he promptly emailed back with his thoughts. He also offered to meet us at our property in order to see what trees and shrubs we have and offer his thoughts on how to handle things. This we did and we gained valuable knowledge about how to proceed. Following his meeting with us, we had follow-up questions that he responded to promptly on multiple occasions. He also offered his services for any future questions we may have about planting and care of our trees etc. We wanted to make sure we passed along our experience with Connor and have others be aware of how helpful, courteous and knowledgeable he is.”

Employee News

Leaving VDOF

- ◆ Southern Rivers District Forest Technician Mark Winebrenner’s last day with VDOF was December 19.

News You Can Use

Virginia Spotted Lanternfly Quarantine

- ◆ Reminder: The Virginia Spotted Lanternfly Quarantine expanded in 2022. You can find the map [online here](#). VDOF staff who work in the quarantine area should inspect their vehicles before leaving the quarantine area. A video describing this process was posted on the Virginia Learning Center (log into the portal and search “Virginia Spotted Lanternfly”). Contact Lori Chamberlin, lori.chamberlin@dof.virginia.gov, or Kristi Clore, Kristina.Clore@dof.virginia.gov, if you have any questions about this training.

Important Grants Update – Unique Entity ID

- ◆ In the past, the federal government required that applicants seeking federal funds supply us with their DUNS so that we could use this number to ensure they were eligible to receive federal funds.
 - In April of 2022, the federal government switched from using DUNS to “Unique Entity Identifier” or UEI. UEIs are obtained through SAM.gov.
 - As this process can take weeks, all grant recipients need to be aware of this change. More information is available on the U.S. General Services Administration website.
<https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/organization/federal-acquisition-service/office-of-systems-management/integrated-award-environment-iae/iae-systems-information-kit/unique-entity-identifier-update>
 - Finance is currently working on outreach to share with sub-recipients to ensure clear and consistent information.

Last Week

One Million Dollars in Forest Sustainability Funding Awarded to 68 Localities

- ◆ VDOF has announced awardees for the 2022 Forest Sustainability Fund. One million dollars will be distributed proportionately to 68 Virginia localities to partially offset the reduced real estate tax revenue that results from forestland use taxation. Localities can use these the funds for public education, outdoor recreation, or forest conservation projects. Passed by the 2022 General Assembly, the fund assists localities offering land use taxation to forest landowners. Land use taxation enables landowners to pay real estate taxes based on the productivity of their land for crop or timber production rather than on its real estate market value. This results in lower yearly taxes and enables landowners to keep their land as forests or farms.

Complex Incident Management Course

- ◆ The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) held their Complex Incident Management Course (CIMC) in San Diego, Ca., earlier this month. The national CIMC provides training for state emergency responders on multi-jurisdictional and all-hazard issues including wildfire. VDOF’s Assistant Director of Fire and Emergency Response Planning Jason Braunstein, cadre member and subject matter expert for planning section chiefs and incident commanders, coached state teams including CalFire, Oregon Department of Forestry and the Colorado Division of Prevention and Control. Braunstein serves as a CIMC steering committee member, representing VDOF, NASF and the Southern Group of State Foresters. The course is delivered up to twice a year (location rotates among the three state forester regions).

VDOF Completes 203rd Easement

- ◆ VDOF recently completed its 203rd conservation easement, an 812-acre property in Southampton County known as Vicksville Farms. Building on adjacent and nearby easements, the property protects a state critically imperiled plant species, over a mile of streams, and 56 acres of wetland. The VDOF easement program has now conserved over 93,000 acres of land.

Beech Bark Disease Confirmed in Augusta County

- ◆ Recently confirmed in Augusta County, beech bark disease damages the bark and vascular tissue of American beech trees via initial attack from the beech scale followed by colonization of Neonectria fungi. After receiving a report from Augusta County, VDOF forest health staff visited the site to collect samples, which were sent to the Virginia Tech Plant Disease Clinic. In Virginia, all confirmed cases have been on trees growing in areas with elevation greater than 1,000 feet, indicating a potential risk factor.

To date, beech bark disease has been confirmed in Rappahannock, Page, Madison, Rockingham, Greene, Bath, Highland, Nelson, Giles and Augusta counties.

Urban Ash and Oak Instruments

- ◆ Made possible through a collaborative effort involving the urban wood programs of VDOF, the City of Harrisonburg and James Madison University (JMU), the Industrial Design Class at JMU included a showcase of percussion instruments created from Harrisonburg urban ash and oak. The class created an amazing array of instruments that ranged from the “Rocktagon” to a plant stand that plays “biomusic.”

Combating Heat Islands with Blandford Academy Students

- ◆ VDOF staff participated in planting 16 native trees with 6th grade students from Blandford Academy in Petersburg. VDOF staff partnered with a professor from Virginia State University on the effort, which will help combat excessive heat in the area. Students learned about tree species, planting and general care. Blandford Academy is in its first year of existence.

Virginia Tech Grove of Trees Dedication and Sesquicentennial Time Capsule

- ◆ VDOF staff attended the Grove of Trees dedication and sealing of the Sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) Time Capsule at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. The trees planted for the dedication were funded by the Virginia Trees for Clean Water Program.

State Forest

- ◆ The Commonwealth's Art & Architectural Review Board (AARB) approved in early December the submittal conceptual drawings for the Warner Swinging bridge Recreational Project on the Cumberland State Forest. Next step is submittal to the Department of Engineering & Buildings (DEB) for review and approval before putting the project out for bid and construction.
- ◆ Cumberland State Forest recently sold approximately 33.8 acres of mainly hardwood sawtimber attracting eight bidders for an estimated volume of 444 MBF (Thousand board feet) comprised of 157.2 MBF of White Oak and 167.2 MBF of Yellow Poplar for \$185,250.00 or \$5,480.76 / acre.
- ◆ Big Woods State Forest and South Quay State Forests will be participating in a review led by Virginia Tech to determine if prescribed fires on those State Forests in Virginia support habitat for the imperiled Southern Plains Bumblebee (*Bombus fraternus*). Doctoral candidate, Jennifer Weber, and her advisor, Adam Coates, have identified this bumblebee at two military bases in Virginia that use prescribed fire to accomplish their land management objectives. Likewise, at several Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) locations in Virginia, including South Quay Sandhills Natural Area Preserve, prescribed fire is used to maintain desired vegetative conditions and wildlife habitat. Few pollinator surveys have been conducted to determine how prescribed fire may be impacting specific pollinator species at South Quay. *B. fraternus* specifically is listed as a species of Greatest Conservation Need, Tier II by the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources. Developing a better understanding of how fire may be shaping habitat and resources for this pollinator will assist our agency as we plan and implement prescribed fire. Additionally, information obtained in this project may shed additional light on management conditions that best support other desired species.
- ◆ The Commonwealth is scheduled to close on the addition of approximately 360 acres to the Charlotte State Forest on December 29. The additional acreage is being acquired from The Conservation Fund as phase 3 and was previously a part of the Stanley Land & Lumber Company lands being conserved in both fee acquisition as a State Forest and in conservation easement. Funding for the acquisition was from the USFS Forest Legacy Program (75%) and the State Forest Mitigation & Acquisition Funds.

- ◆ Ecosystem Services - an approved DGS Category B Contractor is currently developing a proposal for replacing an existing crossing on First Mountain State Forest that will also improve Trout Habitat and remove parking area from the floodplain for better recreation by the public. The proposal will take a conceptual design from that engineering students James Madison University developed in their studies of the site.

State-Owned Lands

- ◆ The Sussex I & II Corrections timber sale was sold to Real Tree Wood Corporation. The sale will be a total harvest of approximately 86 acres and a thinning of another 36 acres.

Good Neighbor Authority (GNA)

- ◆ Harvesting will be commencing on the Garden Mountain Timber Sale - part of the Round Mountain West GNA project located in Bland County. The 122-acre harvest will address past Gypsy Moth defoliation, while also creating younger stands of hardwood.
- ◆ The third timber sale for the Ewing Mountain GNA is being posted. The sale will cover approximately 71 acres of timber in Grayson County consisting of 1,189,973.3 MBF of mostly White Pine.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ The Hardwood Initiative continues to develop, step by step. On December 13 and 14, Joe Rossetti (hardwood coordinator) and Jerre Creighton (research manager) worked on several hardwood-related projects at the Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest (ABSF) and Cumberland State Forest. Guided by locations and information from Mike Womack and Shannon Lewis (state forest foresters), they first installed a new crop tree release study at ABSF. The study will determine the response rate of white oaks of intermediate crown class (medium size and vigor) to release from competition from surrounding trees. Additionally, they relocated an older crop tree release study on ABSF that will be re-measured. Finally, they used the Hardwood Assessment Tool to evaluate a stand at Cumberland that may be a candidate for a demonstration area.

Eastern Region

- ◆ Andrew Murray and Eli Podyma (community forestry specialists) assisted Delaney Beattie (urban and community forestry project coordinator) in planting 120 bareroot seedlings with Maymont's horticulture staff and volunteers. This planting will establish a forested riparian buffer for a stream running through the grounds of Maymont Park in Richmond.
- ◆ Andrew Murray and Eli Podyma assisted Meghan Mulroy-Goldman (watershed specialist), Molly O'Liddy (urban and community forestry partnership coordinator), and Caitlin Verdu (watershed program manager) in teaching 6th graders at Blandford Academy in Petersburg how to plant trees. Eighteen new trees were planted on school grounds with the students, school staff, and VSU plant biology professor Sarah Witiak.