



May 8, 2023

Upcoming Events

[2023 Virginia Interagency Wildland Fire Academy – May 24 – May 28](#)

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

Employee News

Congratulations Cameron Lipscomb!

- ◆ We are pleased to announce that Cameron Lipscomb has been selected for the area forester position in the James River District, primarily covering Louisa County. Cameron has B.S. in Natural Resource Conservation and Recreation with a minor in Forestry from Virginia Tech plus 13 years of natural resource-based experience with Virginia State Parks and the DOF. He is currently employed with the DOF as a forest technician in Louisa County, where he has served for the past two years. We are very excited to continue work with Cameron in his new role. His start date in his new position will be May 10. Please congratulate him on this opportunity when you get a chance.

Becky Woodson Retirement

- ◆ Program Support Technician for the Forest Management Branch Becky Woodson retired on April 28 after 30 years of service. Through her career, she provided valuable support not only to Forest Management programs, but to Urban and Community Forestry (including Trees Virginia), Forest Health, the first years of the Forestland Conservation program, Forest Inventory and Analysis, Water Quality, Watersheds, and Utilization and Marketing. Becky set a high bar for customer service, often going to great lengths to assist customers and citizens with requests of all kinds.



At a small meeting of colleagues and friends, State Forester Rob Farrell and Deputy State Forester Ed Zimmer presented Becky with a certificate of appreciation and a state flag that flew over HQ. We wish Becky the best in retirement and thank her for her many years of dedicated service to DOF.

News You Can Use

Emerald Ash Borer Treatment Cost-Share Program

- ◆ Applications are now open for the [DOF Emerald Ash Borer Cost-Share Program](#), which offers cost reimbursement for treating ash trees to protect them from the invasive emerald ash borer. Landowners and organizations (including municipalities, not-for-profits, educational institutions and homeowner associations) can apply until June 16. The cost-share reimburses up to 50 percent of costs for emamectin benzoate insecticide trunk injections by a certified applicator, up to \$1,250 per landowner or \$5,000 per organization. A DOF forester must perform an assessment prior to treatment to be considered for cost-share funds.

Last Week

Spring Fire Season Ends

- ◆ During the 2023 spring fire season (February 15 – April 30), DOF suppressed 330 fires which burned 2,174 acres and damaged or destroyed 34 homes and other buildings with an estimated value of over \$1.2 million. DOF responders are credited with directly protecting 664 homes and other buildings with an estimated protected value of almost \$173 million. The largest fire was a 243-acre event in Buchanan County. For comparison, in 2022, Virginia had 387 fires on 4,128 acres, the largest a 355-acre fire in Lee County.

One Million Acres Conserved since Virginia's Land Preservation Tax Credit Established

- ◆ During a keynote session at the 2023 Virginia Land and Greenways Conference (sponsored by Virginia's United Land Trusts and held at Hotel Madison this past week), Senator Emmett W. Hanger Jr. announced that Virginia has officially conserved its millionth acre since the establishment of the Land Preservation Tax Credit (LPTC) incentive program more than 20 years ago. LPTC allows an income tax credit for 40% of the value of donated land or conservation easements, in which taxpayers may use up to \$20,000 per year. On Thursday, Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Matthew Lohr and Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources Travis Voyles gave the lunch keynote and conference closing remarks. The conservation of 1 million acres (an area larger than the entire Shenandoah National Park), includes working farmland, forests and properties set aside for recreational purposes. This effort makes Virginia stand out as a leader in the national scope of private land conservation.

State Forests Recertification Audits

- ◆ DOF has conducted 2023 recertification audits on the Commonwealth's state forests. Recertification audits included both Sustainable Forest Initiative and American Tree Farm Standards. After an audit of various state forest records at the Cumberland Office, the auditor visited Cumberland State Forest, Niday State Forest, Channels State Forest, Old Flat State Forest, Hawks State Forest, and Matthews State Forest. Audit results indicate the state forests are in compliance pending the official auditor's report.

DOF Partners on Virginia Tech Urban Forestry Program Article

- ◆ DOF staff from both Urban and Community Forestry and Utilization and Marketing contributed to an [online article](#) for the Virginia Tech Urban Forestry Program. The article, published on the Virginia Tech *Exponentially More Stories* webpage, features the many great accomplishments of the Virginia Tech Urban Forestry Program and the DOF's support of their efforts.

Charlottesville High School Career Day

- ◆ DOF's Urban Wood Project partnered with University of Virginia Sawmilling at the recent Charlottesville High School career day. Students touring the outdoor event learned about the aesthetic beauty, sustainability and value of wood that comes from their own neighborhoods. Giving Tree Sawmill Custom Sawmilling demonstrated log milling on a WoodMizer portable sawmill.

Rappahannock Electric Cooperation Pollinator Garden Ribbon-Cutting

- ◆ Urban and Community Forestry staff attended Rappahannock Electric Cooperation's ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new pollinator garden and presented a Tree Line USA designation award to the organization.

Petersburg Project Planning

- ◆ DOF recently met with Virginia State University staff and various project partners in Petersburg to plan for three upcoming tree planting projects in the city's public parks.

Encouraging Conservation at Virginia Tech

- ◆ DOF's Forestland Conservation Program staff gave a lecture on the tools and policies to encourage conservation on private land to a Virginia Tech Fish and Wildlife Policy class.

State Forests

- ◆ Staff were interviewed by National Park magazine regarding possible Data Center impacts to the Conway-Robinson State Forest.
- ◆ Staff assisted with a presentation on DOF's Hardwood Initiative practices at the Virginia Forest Summit, with an overview of practices employed on Sandy Point State Forest.

Central Region

- ◆ Matt Drake (forest technician), Paolo Alvarez and Tom Snoddy (area foresters) visited Appomattox Elementary School. First graders visited 9 stations to learn about agriculture and forestry. The students were taught about plant health, forestry and wood products, and fire prevention. (pictured)
- ◆ Jonah Fielding (area forester) & David Powell (district forester) taught the annual volunteer firefighter recruit school's wildland fire section in Albemarle County. Despite the challenging weather the recruits were engaged and enjoyed the day.
- ◆ Amy Bigger (area forester) participated in the Third Grade Ag Days held at the Southern Piedmont Research Station in Blackstone. Approximately 100 students from Lunenburg County visited the Forest Products station.
- ◆ Amy Bigger and Tyler Newton (natural resource specialist) set up a booth at Career Day at the Mecklenburg High School.



Eastern Region

- ◆ Cody Noblitt (natural resource specialist) and James Cochran (forest technician) hosted an activity booth for the Crewe Library Earth Day event on April 24 (pictured). Their booth focused on teaching “leaf to tree” identification and using leaves to produce art. Other booths at the event demonstrated principals of recycling, soil health, gardening, and pollinator awareness. This was the Crewe Library’s second time hosting this event, and attendance was double that of last year.
- ◆ On April 25, Cody Noblitt and Doug Audley (area forester) attended the Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District (PSWCD) Customer Appreciation dinner in Amelia County on Featherstone Farm. This dinner was a thank you to recognize all the producers (farmers) who have participated in conservation programs sponsored through PSWCD, including some forestry practices. About 45 producers attended, as well as representatives from FSA, NRCS, DCR, VCE and DOF.

