



June 12, 2023

## Upcoming Events

[Board of Forestry Meeting](#) – June 21 – 10:00am – 2:00pm

[Fall Fire Academy](#) – September 25 – 29

[2023 Virginia Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Course](#) – October 2 – 15

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

## Employee Spotlight

### *Thank You! – Matt Wolanski and staff*

- ◆ The below note of thanks was sent from Navy Federal Credit Union Team Schmitt (pictured) for the assistance Matt Wolanski (district forester) and his staff gave during a recent Earth Day and Arbor Day event.
  - “I would like to let you know how much we appreciate the assistance we received from Matt Wolanski, District Forester, and his staff, for providing seedlings, materials, and information for our Earth Day and Arbor Day event organized for my team at Navy Federal Credit Union. My team will be planting the 50 trees provided by Matt in various areas in his district. We greatly appreciate his cooperation and support for our volunteer efforts.”



### *Thank You! – Kevin Dawson*

- ◆ We received the following note of appreciation from Weyerhaeuser Environmental Manager Andrew Brown regarding Kevin Dawson (water quality specialist):
  - “I just wanted to reach out and share my most sincere thank you to Kevin Dawson for his help a few weeks ago during our internal SFI Audit. Kevin met us on a site to help explain our riparian hardwood restoration project and how we work with the VDOF. I know this was a busy week for him as it was Fire Academy, but Kevin did make the time to come out and support the Virginia team. His support did not go unnoticed, and we ended up receiving a notable practice for the RHR program and our cooperative work with the agency. The auditors were very excited to see how

engaged Weyerhaeuser and VDOF were and how well we work together. This speaks highly to both your team, Kevin and the others, and your support for them.

While you may take it for granted, I have been to other states where the state forestry agencies are almost an unknown entity to Weyerhaeuser. I really do appreciate Kevin's support and all the support the VDOF provides. I believe by working together benefits everyone and I look forward to more collaborations.

If there is anything I or Weyerhaeuser can do for you, please do not hesitate to reach out and let me know."

## Employee News

### Welcome to DOF!

- ◆ We are pleased to welcome Tom Baumann as the new Procurement Officer for the Agency. Tom transferred from the Virginia Department of Health where he was previously a Business Manager. His first day with DOF was May 25. He is eager to get to know you and the Agency, so please do not hesitate to reach out or stop by his office in the HQ Fiscal Department.



- ◆ Please welcome Doug Morris our new technician in the Mountain Valley District, primarily covering Alleghany and Botetourt counties. Doug is an Alleghany County native and has served the Commonwealth as a VDOT employee for the last 20 years. He's no stranger to DOF as he has been a part-time firefighter with us since 1990. In addition, Doug's commitment to serving others is evident in his almost 35-year membership in the Selma Volunteer Fire Department. Doug's start date was May 25.

### Telework Policy Update

- ◆ On March 23, the Telework Policy was updated by the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) in Richmond. The primary changes include:
  1. Updating Cardinal with 2023 Dates
  2. Simplifying the annual renewal process
  3. Removing the requirement for Cabinet-level approval unless the Telework Agreement is new or modified and includes more than one-day of requested remote work.
- ◆ Based on the current policy, there is no need for employees to submit a new Telework Agreement unless there are changes to their current approved Agreement. The renewal process can be a verbal conversation between the employee and his/her supervisor, and if no changes are made, the only action needed will be an update in Cardinal to show the new approved 12-month period. Cardinal now has the capability to provide a report of all agency employees with an approved Telework Agreement, to include number of days by employee. Once all Telework dates have been updated on 7/1/23, this report will be provided to the State Forester for his review and approval.
- ◆ Based on the updated policy, there is no need for each employee to resubmit a Telework Agreement as part of the annual renewal process.

## Last Week

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### *Sonar Detectors for the Northern Long-Eared Bat*

- ◆ DOF staff met with Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) representatives to discuss potential harvesting impacts and limitations due to the endangered Northern Long-Eared Bat. In cooperation with DWR, two sonar detectors were placed in Cumberland State Forest as part of a long-range North American bat survey. Over the next two months, the detectors will be moved to other state forests to help identify additional potential habitats.

### *Board of Trustees Meeting for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation*

- ◆ DOF Forestland Conservation Program staff attended the Board of Trustees meeting for the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF). At the request of the Board, DOF and other participating agencies presented on funding opportunities available to leverage VLCF funds to complete land conservation projects, which for DOF includes the U.S. Forest Service's Forest Legacy and Urban and Community Forestry programs. Other agencies covered a range of funding opportunities such as the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Preservation Trust Fund administered by Virginia Outdoors Foundation. At the meeting, the Board also approved the opening of the FY2024 VLCF grant round that totals over \$16 million (including \$2.4 million for projects in the forest preservation category.) Applications are due in August.

### *"All About Oaks" at Northern Virginia Urban Forest Roundtable*

- ◆ DOF Assistant State Forester Terry Lasher participated in the Northern Virginia Urban Forest Roundtable event "All About Oaks." The successful event included approximately 100 urban forestry professionals. The group enjoyed multiple morning sessions on the regeneration, diagnosis and management of oak species. The afternoon session was held outdoors at the Conway Robinson State Forest in Prince William County. A plant health care truck was brought in to demonstrate optional management strategies for yard oaks and U.S. Forest Service staff led a tour to discuss oak regeneration in the state forest.

### *Inflation Reduction Act Funding Deadline*

- ◆ The Inflation Reduction Act public-facing portal closed for applications on June 4. DOF submitted a request with the theme of assisting smaller Virginia communities with urban forestry projects. Virginia municipalities and urban and community forestry partners also worked with DOF staff to submit applications and the agency provided support letters to partners applying for funding independently. This historic funding will provide foundational support for related activities across the Commonwealth.

### *Invasive Emerald Ash Borer Treatment in Shenandoah Valley*

- ◆ DOF's Forest health staff treated eight ash trees at McCormick Farm's Shenandoah Valley Agricultural Research and Extension Center. The chemical treatment protects trees threatened by the invasive emerald ash borer for approximately three years. A representative from Rainbow Ecoscience company demonstrated new injection equipment for treating ash trees in the future.

### *Forest Management*

- ◆ Amanda Conrad (forest health technician) conducted emerging pest surveys for beech leaf disease (BLD) in several counties around central Virginia. This is part of an ongoing effort to monitor and track the spread of pests and diseases that are yet to be seen statewide. All survey locations were negative for BLD presence but will continue to be monitored in the future.

- ◆ Forest Health staff are participating in summer surveys for the elm zigzag sawfly (EZS). This survey program was initiated by the U. S. Forest Service and North Carolina State University to learn more about the distribution and impacts of EZS, an emerging pest that feeds on all species of elm trees in Virginia. Selected elm trees will be monitored monthly to see if EZS is present, and the severity of damage it causes. The feeding pattern of the pest is a very distinctive "zig-zag" starting from the edge of elm leaves and working inwards. If you think that you have seen evidence of this pest, please send photos to the Forest Health team. Learn more here: <https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/ENTO/ento-543/ento-543.html>
- ◆ DOF has received several reports of spongy moth defoliation and there will be further investigation.

### Central Region

- ◆ Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist) and Lindsey Long (community forestry specialist) appeared in an article in the *Springfield Connection* on Eagle Fest, an annual event held at Mason Neck State Park in Fairfax County highlighting environmental and conservation organizations. Jim's and Lindsey's photograph appear on page 9 of the periodical:  
[http://connection.media.clients.ellingtoncms.com/news/documents/2023/05/17/BFLS\\_051723\\_anUbE3S.pdf](http://connection.media.clients.ellingtoncms.com/news/documents/2023/05/17/BFLS_051723_anUbE3S.pdf)