



June 19, 2023

### Upcoming Events

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

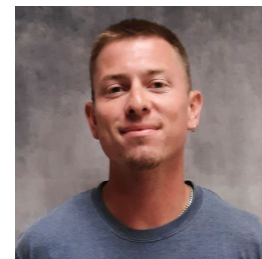
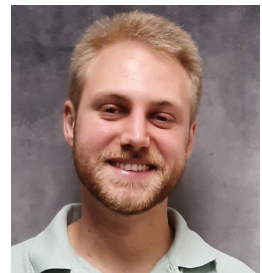
[2023 Virginia Certified Prescribed Burn Manager Course](#) – October 2 – 15

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

### Employee News

#### Welcome to DOF!

- ◆ Levi White has accepted the area forester position in the James River District, primarily assigned to Cumberland County. Levi graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in Forest Resource Management with minors in Wildland Fire Ecology, Natural Resource Recreation, and Urban & Community Forestry. He has 3 months of forestry-related experience with Bartlett Tree Experts, and 3 seasons of natural resources experience with Frederick County Parks & Recreation. He started with DOF on June 12.
- ◆ The Western Region would like to welcome Mitchell Kim to DOF. Mitchell is a recent graduate of Virginia Tech with a degree in Forest Operations and Business Management. Mitchell worked an Internship with Georgia Pacific before joining DOF. He enjoys outdoor hobbies such as fishing and kayaking. Mitchell started his position as an Area Forester in the Mountain Valley District on June 10. His primary coverage area will be Rockbridge and Bath Counties.
- ◆ On June 12, the Eastern Region welcomed two of the latest forestry graduates from Virginia Tech to serve as foresters in Southeastern Virginia.
  - Christopher “Riley” Leigh will be joining the Five Forks team focusing on the Brunswick and Greenville area. Riley originally hails from Williamsburg, where he attended Lafayette High School.



- Joining the Blackwater team – Waverly office is Caroline Norris. Caroline is from the Waverly area and was the Eastern Region DOF intern last summer. She graduated from Virginia Tech with a degree in Forest Resource Management and a minor in Wildland Fire ecology. She also served as the SAF student chapter secretary.

## Leaving DOF

- ◆ Jim McGlone (urban forest conservationist) is retiring from DOF on June 30 after 17 years of service. Congratulations, Jim! Enjoy your well-deserved retirement.
- ◆ Community Forestry Specialist Eli Podyma is leaving DOF to pursue a new endeavor. His last day with DOF is June 26.

## Last Week

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### Virginia Fallen Firefighters & EMS Memorial Service

- ◆ Zoe Sumrall (water quality specialist), Robbie Lewis (area forester), and Jeremy Falkenau (district forester) attended the 26th annual Virginia Fallen Firefighters & EMS Memorial Service in Richmond to honor 10 fallen firefighters who have been recognized under the Virginia Line of Duty Act in 2022.

### Monacan Powwow in Amherst County

- ◆ DOF organized and staffed an informational booth at the Monacan Indian Nation's annual powwow in Amherst County. The team discussed invasive species, forest management and conservation easements with attendees.



### Forest Fiber Supply Course

- ◆ Students from the Forest Fiber Supply course at Virginia Tech stopped by the Salem regional office as a part of their annual industry tour following the spring semester. Andrew Vinson (water quality engineer) gave them a brief tour of the facility and met with them to discuss careers in DOF and how the agency works with the forest industry to promote healthy forests and a sustainable forest industry across the state.

### Invasive Wavyleaf Grass

- ◆ Wavyleaf grass is an invasive plant that is becoming established in the state and is detrimental to native plants. Wavyleaf is a relatively new invasive plant that is listed on Virginia's noxious weed list. In 2023, the DOF Forest Health program will focus resources on treating wavyleaf infestations on state lands such as State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas. As part of the agency's increased efforts to combat this plant, Lindsay Caplan (invasive species specialist) toured Matthews State Forest with Zach Olinger (state forest forester and educator) to identify some of the more heavily used areas in preparation for wavyleaf surveys next week. Lindsay and Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) attended the Wavyleaf Grass Managers meeting at DOF HQ on June 6, which brought together wavyleaf managers from across the state to create a united front for treatment and education. Lindsay also visited Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center to survey for wavyleaf along its border with Powhatan State Park. She met with DCR staff to discuss the history of their wavyleaf

problem at the park and to visit various sites in the park in preparation for bringing in contractors for treatment.

### ***Emerald Ash Borer Cost-Share Program***

- ◆ Amanda Conrad (forest health technician) visited a property in Albemarle County to assess its suitability for the Emerald Ash Borer Cost-Share Program. This property had 16 eligible ash trees throughout the grounds and will likely reach the maximum amount of assistance an individual landowner may receive. So far this year the program has dedicated almost \$27,000 to help fund the treatment of approximately 300 ash trees across the state! Applications are still being received daily and will be accepted through June 16.

### ***Forest Management***

- ◆ On June 6, Joe Rossetti (hardwood initiative coordinator), hosted the first of three trainings for agency staff on the current status of the Hardwood Initiative, including cost-share, tax credit, management practices, and accomplishments for tracking purposes. While the session was for the Central Region, several eastern region foresters participated virtually as well. Thanks to Ember Jenison (helpdesk analyst) for making the virtual presentation run smoothly. Materials from the training are available on OneDrive; contact Joe if you need the link to them. Additional trainings are planned for June 20 and 22. Contact Joe if you would like to participate.
- ◆ Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist) attended the sixth and final session of the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute (VNRLI) held in Charlottesville. The themes from this session included creating open spaces, women in leadership, and collaborative leadership. Additionally, field trips to Monticello and the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers at UVA showed the value of memorialization and how African Americans were some of the original stewards of the land in the United States. VNRLI is a resource-based leadership development program and includes participants from around the Commonwealth. A number of DOF staff have participated over the life of the program.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager), Jesse Bander (natural resource specialist), and Heather Tuck (regional fire specialist) met with a homeowners association (HOA) in New Kent County to discuss pine mortality that has occurred in the woods throughout the community. The neighborhood and golf course were developed in a managed pine forest, which is now experiencing some decline. DOF staff spoke to the HOA president and grounds manager about pine bark beetles and how to reduce the risk of a bark beetle outbreak.

### ***Western Region***

- ◆ Western region water quality staff hosted a two-day training at the Galax office on June 6 and 7. Field staff from across the region were trained in Best Management Practices for water quality, water quality inspection and reporting procedures, pre-harvest planning, and water quality law enforcement. The training was a combination of both classroom and field instruction, where students got to write a preharvest plan for a site on typical mountainous terrain and assemble a case packet for a mock failure-to-notify conference. (pictured)

