



Stakeholders gather in Charlottesville

Nearly 40 people from various forestry-and natural resources-related businesses, industry, non-governmental organizations, state and federal agencies as well as interested individuals came to Charlottesville recently to help the Virginia Department of Forestry work on its federally-mandated state assessment. This “self-appraisal” will be used to help guide the work of the VDOF as well as provide benchmarks from which federal authorities can effectively evaluate how well the agency is using its resources to deliver programs and services to Virginia landowners.

“The state assessment is a relatively new tool,” said Carl Garrison, state forester. “The nearly two-year evaluative process was mandated in the new Farm Bill and offers us the opportunity to directly engage people – called stakeholders – who have a vested interest in how our Agency operates. Through their valuable input, we can accurately report the success we are having helping Virginia’s forest landowners meet their objectives as well as how we are doing protecting the Commonwealth’s natural resources.”

The information and data gathered at the day-long meeting is being analyzed and will become an important part of the state assessment report that is due to the US Forest Service next year.



Wildlife management at Conway-Robinson State Forest

The first-ever series of deer hunts at the Conway-Robinson State Forest (CRSF) in Northern Virginia has concluded. The fourth and final hunt in the series took place Feb. 2, 2009 on the 440-acre property located in Prince William County.

Approximately 70 people submitted ballots to qualify

for the drawing to determine who would be able to participate in each of the four hunts. Those who were selected in the random drawing and qualified through a process of meetings and firearm certifications gathered several hours before

Upcoming Training

2009 Virginia Interagency Wildland Fire Training Academy

June 1-7, 2009

Longwood University, Farmville

[Learn more](#) about this training and [register online](#) if you decide to attend.

Upcoming Events

Ecosystem Services Conference

March 12, 13, 2009

Visit the Web site for this [conference](#).

Holiday Lake Forestry Camp

June 15-20, 2009

[Learn more](#) about supporting your adults' interest in forestry and the outdoors, and [register online](#) to nominate them to attend camp.

[Calendar of Events](#) from the Virginia Department of Forestry.

dawn at the CRSF pavilion to check in, have a safety briefing and choose compartments from which they would hunt.

“The hunters harvested a total of 35 deer,” said Terry Lasher, assistant regional forester and hunt coordinator. “While our goal was a little higher, we accomplished many of our objectives in this first-ever hunt on the property.”

Because this forest had never been hunted before, the deer population was deemed to be too large for the area. When the population gets too high, deer run the risk of disease and starvation, according to wildlife biologists with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF). Members of VDGIF were on hand to observe the hunt and to ensure that all hunting rules and regulations were followed.

Deputy State Forester John Carroll said he was pleased with the results and thanked all of the VDOF employees who worked to ensure a successful hunt.

No Burning Before 4 p.m. Until April 30

The Commonwealth’s 4 p.m. Burning Law goes into effect Feb. 15th – the start of spring fire season in Virginia. The law prohibits burning before 4 p.m. each day until April 30th if the fire is in, or within 300 feet of, woodland, brushland or fields containing dry grass or other flammable materials.

“This law is one of the most effective tools we have in the prevention of wildfires,” said John Miller, director of resource protection at the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF). “Each late winter and early spring, downed trees, branches and leaves become ‘forest fuels’ that increase the danger of a forest fire. By adhering to the law and not burning before 4 p.m., people are less likely to start a fire that threatens them, their property and the forests of Virginia.”

In 2008, there were 1,322 wildfires that burned 25,704 acres of forest land in the Commonwealth. This was a 12.4 percent decrease in the number of wildland fires compared to the number (1,509) of fires in 2007. While the number of fires was down, the amount of acreage burned increased 130 percent when compared to 11,200 acres that burned in 2007. Virginia saw the worst fire day in memory Sunday, Feb. 10, 2008. High winds across the state whipped up 354 fires that burned more than 16,000 acres.

To learn more about how to protect yourself and your property, go to the VDOF [Web site](#).



Tree seedlings selling fast; order yours before they’re gone

Each year, the Virginia Department of Forestry grows and sells more than 33 million tree seedlings. And every year, many of the 45 species sell out before the harvest season ends in April. If you are looking to plant tree seedlings or reforest your land this year, you still

have a few weeks remaining to order your seedlings. But don't wait too much longer as several species, including Black Cherry, Red Maple, Sycamore, Crab Apple, and Yellow Poplar, have already sold out.

Because most of the seedlings sold are used to reforest land, the minimum order quantity of a particular species is 50 seedlings. Order yours today by visiting the [VDOF Web store](#), calling the Augusta Forestry Center at 540.363.7000, or contacting your local VDOF office.

Carbon Trading and Ecosystem Service Markets

Hybrid vehicles are a visible way for citizens to limit their use of fossil fuels and reduce the "carbon footprint" of their lifestyle. This "green" initiative also occurs on a larger scale in governments and countries around the world, where a value is placed on the benefits of the environment. In Charlottesville, a two-day conference will explore the design and implementation of ecosystem service markets and the development of tools to enhance landowner participation in these markets.

The first day of the conference will feature a series of speakers giving a broad, national-level overview of ecosystem service market considerations and initiatives. The second day will feature a series of three panels: Carbon; Water Quality (nutrient trading), and Mitigation Banking. An interactive question and answer session will follow the panel presentations.

"Attending this conference will ensure a better understanding of how ecosystem service markets function and what opportunities exist for landowners," said Buck Kline, manager of ecosystem services for the VDOF. "Industry, government, non-governmental organizations, academia and Virginia landowners will all benefit from the information presented."

The conference will be held March 12-13, 2009 at the Omni in Charlottesville. Learn more about the conference and register to attend online at <http://www.cpe.vt.edu/esmes/index.html>

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