

Northern District 2011 Forestry & Natural Resources Selected Program Highlights

Preserving and Passing Virginia's Forestland to Generation NEXT

Forestland owners 65 years and older own 41% of Virginia's 10 million acres of private forestland. High land values and taxes that cause many heirs to sell land to meet financial obligations; a major force behind an annual loss of 27,000 forested acres. Virginia is on the cusp of the largest inter-generational transfer of family forests ever and landowners need to know how to protect their land. A common barrier to estate planning is using planning tools and having confidence in knowing where to start.

Focusing on Land Transfer to Generation "NEXT", a 12-hour in-depth short course engages landowners in successional planning. Course design draws from national curricula and utilized local experts to develop new material. In three years, 114 individuals (60 family units) have completed the course.

Following short-course participation, landowners better articulate their land transfer goals and have begun planning. Participants indicated the program would increase the likelihood of their property staying in the family (75%) and staying in woodland (81%). Participants estimated an average family savings of **\$525,000** as a result of the program, and follow-up surveys revealed that over three-quarters of the participants had begun forestland transition planning in the six months following the course. As these landowners continue executing their plans, **30,000 acres** of Virginia's forestland are expected to remain sustainable, family-owned, and intact.

Family Woods
Focusing on Land Transfer to Generation "NEXT"

TEN STEPS to SUCCESSFUL FAMILY FOREST TRANSITION

1. Discuss and *write down* your goals (vision) for the property and the family.
2. Discuss these written goals *with your family*.
3. Create a *family business* entity to own the land.
4. Have regular family meetings to discuss the business and *share your passion*.
5. Set family *employment policies* before you hire any family members.
6. *Discuss and write down* important decisions.
7. Create non-financial reasons for the family to *keep the property*.
8. Get your kids and grandkids out to work and *have fun on the property*.
9. Create a governance structure that will *survive your passing*.
10. Remember to *have fun!*

Adapted from: *Ties to the Land: Your Family Forest Heritage*. Clinton J. Dentz, CPA; Renee Levin, Ph.D.; Con P. Lynch; Susan Watkins. 2006. Oregon State University. Used with permission.

Growing Urban Forestry Capacity and Connections in Northern Virginia

Trees are a critical component of the green infrastructure of a developed community in providing clean air, water and livable communities. However, Northern Virginia has lost 35% of its urban forest in the last 20 years to development. Barriers to effectively manage urban forest resources often stem from the inability to enact local ordinances to address local issues. Additionally, many municipal leaders and decision makers are ill-informed of basic urban forest tenets. Thirdly, a disjointed urban forestry network has resulted in inefficient approaches by individual municipalities for issues common to the region.

The Northern Virginia Urban Forestry Roundtable was formed in 2006 with diverse stake holders to explore and address regional urban forestry issues. Quarterly meetings are designed and delivered by volunteers. Biennial conferences unveil broad issues. Over 340 different individuals have participated in one or more roundtable functions.

Mission Statement:

To enable people to make the best decisions regarding the forests & natural resources, within their realm of influence, resulting in environmentally sustainable management, growth, and quality of life for that person and that community.

As a result of roundtable efforts new enabling legislation was passed with the support of both urban forestry interests and the development community to allow certain jurisdictions to adopt a more efficient tree preservation ordinance. Additionally, roundtable participants worked together to have trees included as a voluntary measure in the State's Implementation Plan to meet air quality goals. The roundtable network has been credited with facilitating regional cooperation and idea sharing between municipalities as well as improving the knowledge of decision makers.

**Northern District - Forestry & Natural Resources Program
Annual Summary
January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011**

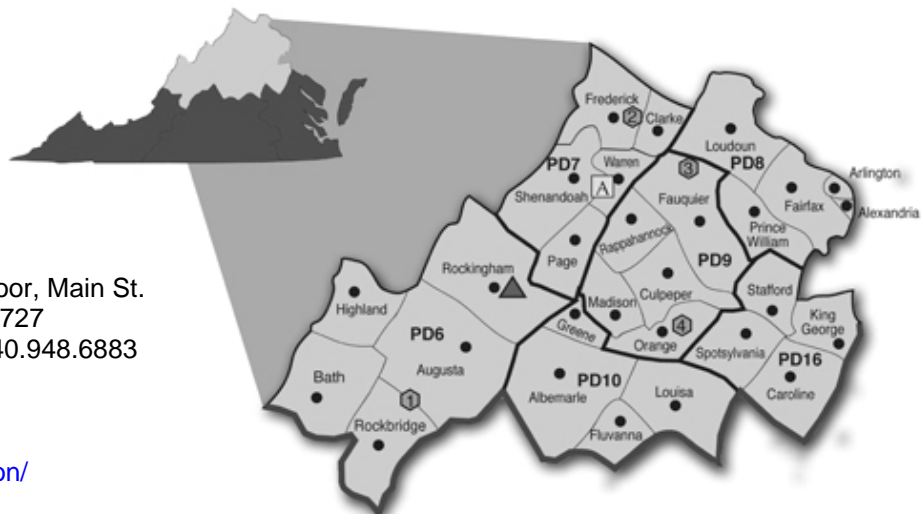
Contacts	Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	External Funding
37,851	375	1782	\$50,006

<i>Program Focus Areas</i>					
<i>Urban Forestry & Arboriculture Education</i>	<i>Natural Resource Professional Outreach</i>	<i>4-H/Youth Education</i>	<i>Natural Resources at the Interface</i>	<i>Private Forest Landowner Education</i>	<i>General Public Awareness</i>

Key Partners:

County/City Urban Foresters • Forest Products Companies • Forestry for the Bay • Local Conservation Organizations • Municipal Officials • National Park Service • Natural Resources Conservation Service • Northern District County Extension Offices • Piedmont Landowners Association • Private Arborists • Private Consulting Foresters • Private Sector Legal and Financial Professionals • Shenandoah Valley Resource Conservation & Development Council • Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute • Soil & Water Conservation Districts • The Montpelier Foundation • Trees Virginia • United States Forest Service • University of Maryland Extension • Virginia Department of Forestry • Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fisheries • Virginia Forestry Association • Virginia Loggers Association • Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives and Old Dominion Electric Cooperative • Virginia Master Naturalists • Virginia Tree Farm Program • VT College of Natural Resources & Environment • VT Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation

Northern District



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