



Northern District

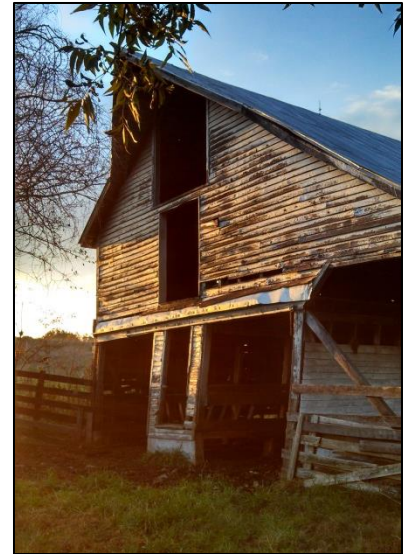
Forestry & Natural Resources Selected Program Highlights

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.

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 5 years, 149 individuals (79 family units) have completed the course.

Following short-course participation, landowners can 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 (74 %). Follow-up surveys reveal that in the 6 months following the short-course, over 74% have begun estate planning. Participants estimate an average family savings of **\$625,000** as a result of this program. As these landowners continue executing their plans, approximately **51,972 acres** of land is expected to remain open and family owned



Public Good of Private Wood

Extension’s Northern District is home to 45% of Virginia’s 8 million citizens who live in or near the region’s 4,708,782 acres of forests, 75% of which are privately owned. While the general public appreciates woodland, most Virginians are oblivious to their public value. A recent independent study commissioned by the Piedmont Environmental Council provides a conservative estimate of the public benefits value of Virginia forestland at \$698/acre. For the Northern District, this translates to value in excess of 3.25 million dollars annually in goods and services.

Historically significant sites, such as James Madison’s Montpelier, the Conway Robinson State Forest and the McCormick Farm, provides a unique opportunity to reach a sector of society who may not otherwise seek to build a research based natural resources related understanding and appreciation (Munsell, 2009). Professionals and trained volunteers have developed these sites to provide unique learning opportunities for both landowners and the general public with regard to the sustainability and public good of Virginia. Citizens from across the Commonwealth visit these sites primarily for heritage or recreational reasons.

Since 2011, 358 new individuals have been reached with organized field-tours lead by volunteers. Over 100 trained volunteers have contributed **1438 hours** (351 hours in 2014) in development, interpretation and stewardship of these sites, saving **\$32583.77** in staff time over the past four years.

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.

Northern District - Forestry & Natural Resources Program

Annual Summary

January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2014

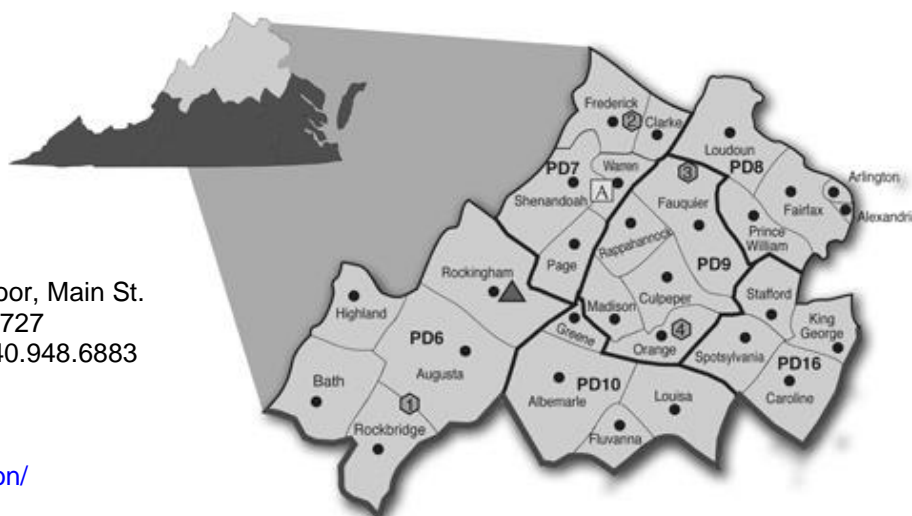
| Contacts | Volunteers | Volunteer Hours | External Funding |
|----------|------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 10,042 | 270 | 1335 | 207,553 |

| <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 • 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

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