

# Notes for 1-10-2021 SGH Leadership Team Meeting

This quarterly Leadership Team meeting was held virtually via ZOOM, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Participants were Bob Pledger, Buz Stone, Chris Curtin, Darrell Sheffield, Dave Teffeteller, Jim Wentworth, Jim Heilman, Ray Lorenzi, Jon Jones, Jody Webb, Dara Sinclair, Kat Carey, Elliott Segall, Todd Jackson, and Donna Shearer. Derrick Morris, John Shearouse, Billy Johnson, Wynn Mott, Jimmy Stewart, and Jeanette Rader were unable to attend.

## BOARD MATTERS

- Kim Wood will be retiring as Secretary. Thank you for all your good work over the years, and we look forward to seeing you again whenever you can participate!
- Jon Jones is joining as Co-Program Manager with Bob Pledger for hemlock treatments on the Chattooga River Ranger District and bringing his good friend Jody Webb to help as well. Welcome to both of you!
- Dara Sinclair is joining as Co-Lead Facilitator with Jim Heilman in Pickens County, focusing on the Bent Tree Community. Welcome, and congratulations for the excellent treatment project you, Jim, and Ray Lorenzi just completed – 422 trees treated in 2 ½ days!
- Kat Carey is joining as Co-Lead Facilitator with Wynn Mott in Union County, focusing on the Lake Winfield Scott Community. Welcome, and we look forward to your leadership on the LWS treatment project coming up this spring.
- Todd Jackson is joining as future Treasurer, starting in mid-April. Welcome, and oh how glad we are for your help!

## REVIEW OF FY 2020 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

### \* Final Progress Report as of 11-30-20

- All 19 HWA-infested Georgia counties in native hemlock range now served by our Hemlock Help Program.
- Hemlock Help Line available 7 days a week with 781 calls handled to date.
- 3 Hemlock Help Clinics with total of 41 attendees:
- 12 Facilitator Training Workshops with total of 57 new Facilitators trained.  
Total active Facilitators = 407 in Georgia and 88 in other states.
- 1 Hemlock Lesson for 14 youth & adults:
- 18 customized training sessions for 68 volunteers and public land managers:
- 3 presentations to civic/community groups with 88 attendees:
- 2 festivals / public events with info booth & saplings for adoption, 2 volunteers and 40+ visitors / contacts:
- 13 articles / news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines.
- 211 Facilitator visits made with charitable treatment of 2,198 trees.
- 13 hemlock treatment projects with 76 volunteers treating/retreating 1,876 trees:
- 10 hemlock rescue projects with 41 volunteers, 310 saplings rescued and potted for use in educational / service activities or future adoption:
- 158 hemlock saplings adopted; 61 large saplings donated to agencies / schools / nonprofits.
- 7 hemlock sapling planting projects with 53 volunteers planting 171 saplings and 54 other trees/shrubs:
- 44 Kioritz and EZ-Ject soil injectors repaired/refurbished; 8 new EZ-Ject Lite soil injectors assembled and prepared for use
- Total of 3,857 volunteer hours logged.

\* **Annual USFS summary reports** completed 10/1/19 - 9/30/20 (USFS's fiscal year) – SGH performed 5 hemlock treatment projects requested by the U. S. Forest Service on the Blue Ridge and Chattooga River Ranger Districts. Imidacloprid was applied by soil injection or soil insertion to treat or retreat designated trees. In addition, we conducted a trout stream restoration project at Rocky Flats ORV Trail on the Conasauga District. In total, 115 volunteers contributed 895 hours (including travel) to treat or retreat a total of 587 trees and plant 78 trees/shrubs along a trout stream.

\* **Recap of all trees treated** FY 2009 – FY 2020 by or with the assistance of SGH:

U. S. Forest Service	DNR State Parks	DNR Wildlife Mgt	Private Property	Other	TOTAL
8,534	2,976	3,395	13,806	5,678	39,315



## REVIEW OF FY 2020 FINANCIAL MATTERS

### \* Final Financial Summary as of 11-30-20

FY 2020 INCOME	Contrib Indiv	Contrib Member	Contrib Found	Contrib Non Profit	Contrib In Kind Goods	Contrib In Kind Svc	Contrib Corp	Gov Reimb
2020 Income by Source	\$115.00	\$28,797.71	\$1,688.95	\$1,991.80	\$1,170.41	\$1,227.00	\$987.65	\$0.00
2020 Income by Percentage	0.32%	80.04%	4.69%	5.54%	3.25%	3.41%	2.75%	0.00%
2020 Total Income	\$35,978.52							

FY 2020 EXPENSE	11 Hemlock Clinics	12 Facil Trng	13 Other Educ	16 Public Comm	14 Saplings	15 Treatment	51 Gen Admin	52 Memb & Fund Raising
2020 Expenses by Category	\$0.00	\$1,379.64	\$6,133.69	\$3,927.24	\$2,440.66	\$9,379.92	\$1,211.64	\$417.40
2020 Expenses by Percentage	0.00%	5.54%	24.64%	15.78%	9.81%	37.69%	4.87%	1.68%
2020 Total Expenses	\$24,890.19							
	\$11,440.57	45.96%			\$11,820.58	47.49%	\$1,629.04	6.54%

\* **Status of grants and dedicated funds** – We have no unrestricted funds on hand at present and a total of \$6,391.41 remaining in 3 restricted grants. Two of those are designated for use on Lake Burton, and one is for use in the Laurel Ridge Community.

### \* Results of 2020 annual membership appeal

FY 2020 total	\$12,065.00	135 donations
FY 2019 total	\$10,765.00	117 donations

## FY 2021 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

### \* Intro to FY 2021 Strategy Plan

- Continue emphasis on partnerships
- Resume joint project with GATC to treat hemlocks on the Appalachian Trail
- Resume joint project with Georgia Canoeing Association to treat hemlocks on DNR waterways
- Initiate joint projects with Trees Atlanta, Fernbank, and Atlanta Botanical Gardens for Atlanta outreach

\* **Calendar for FY 2021** (known so far) – Please see the [Schedule of Events](#) page on our web site. We’ve scheduled most of our hemlock treatment projects for the year. We’ve also listed the dates of festivals we usually participate in, but we’re waiting to see which ones will actually take place and then decide on our participation. Dates for this year’s Facilitator training workshops and other events will be populated in the next couple of weeks.

## SERVICE – TREATMENT

\* **Hemlock treatment projects for USFS** -- See the [Schedule of Events](#) page.

- Blue Ridge RD – to be led by Jim Wentworth
- Chattooga River RD – to be led by Bob Pledger & Jon Jones

\* **Hemlock treatment projects with GATC** – 8 sites still awaiting approval by the USFS; Donna will check with Gregg Slezak on this.

\* **Other hemlock treatment projects** – tbd

- YMCA Camp High Harbour – Bob Pledger will check with Alan Barnes on this.
- DNR Smithgall Woods & DNR Cloudland Canyon – Donna will check with Phil Delestrez on these two.
- Project Chimps – Chris Curtin will check with the current head of PC on this.

\* **Paddlers for Hemlocks** – Dave Teffeteller will check with Alex Harvey and Dan MacIntyre on how and when we can restart this joint initiative with the Georgia Canoeing Association to treat the Cartecay hemlocks that are accessible from the river.

\* **Cartecay project** – Dave will also check with the mountain bikers in Ellijay to see if they’re interested in helping us treat the Cartecay hemlocks that are accessible from the trails.

## SERVICE - SAPLINGS

- \* **Sapling nurseries** – Estimated numbers of saplings currently on hand are: Buz Stone 100, Chris Curtin 75, John Shearouse 0, Darrell Sheffield 12, Donna 200. Elliott Segall inquired about the possibility of starting another nursery in Cherokee County and getting a document outlining the responsibilities and procedures for the nursery host. Donna and Dave will draft a document and share it with Buz, Chris, and Darrell for review.
- \* **Saplings needs for 2021** – It is estimated we'll need a total of 245 large and 288 small for festivals (if we participate), private adoptions, hemlock restoration projects, and possible insectary planting.
- \* **Sapling rescues** – tbd
  - Project Chimps – Chris Curtin will check on this.
  - Others to be scheduled, involving Facilitators who have expressed interest – Chris Curtin and Buz Stone have been provided a list of possible properties and list of Facilitators interested in sapling rescue. They will begin reaching out to the property owners, setting project dates, and recruiting volunteers this spring.
- \* **Hemlock restoration on trout streams** – tbd
  - Toccoa Bend with TU Blue Ridge – Donna will check with Carl Riggs and Jim Reich on this.
  - Soque River with TU Savannah River – John Shearouse is asked to check on this.
  - Conasauga River site with USFS – Donna will check with Ruth Stokes at USFS and Jess Riddle at Georgia ForestWatch on this. It may turn out to be an Eagle Scout project.
- \* **Other sapling planting** – A suggested goal is to plant 300-500 trees in FY 2021. EVERYONE is asked to try to identify public or neighborhood sites where we can plant more hemlocks. Jim Heilman will check with the Jasper Mayor about the possibility of a planting event on Arbor Day (Feb. 19) in Lee Newton Park. And Donna will check with Stacie James at UNG about a possible project at UNG's Hurricane Creek Research Site in Lumpkin County.

## SERVICE - OTHER

- \* **EZ-Ject soil injectors to lend** – The following people listed are hosting these injectors designated for lending to the public: Jim Wentworth, Buz Stone, Jim Heilman, Jimmy Stewart, Derrick Morris, and Donna.
- \* **Eagle Scout liaison** – We've partnered with a number of Boy Scouts for their Eagle Scout projects and found that we need to establish a standard process and set of expectations for the responsibilities of SGH, the Scout himself, and the support from his troop. Jon Jones and Elliott Segall will undertake creating a document describing the kinds of projects that are appropriate for this partnership, the respective sets of responsibilities, and the process and typical timeline. Bob Pledger and Buz Stone have offered to review it and provide additional input as needed. We will then be able to share it with the various Boy Scout Councils across north Georgia and with individual Scouts who inquire about partnering with us.
- \* **Hike & Help the Hemlocks** – This annual event has traditionally been a partnership of SGH and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association, and in the past several years Trout Unlimited has also joined in, to treat the hemlocks along some of our favorite hiking trails. It had to be canceled in 2020 because of Covid, but we hope to do it this year. We will most likely designate one of the larger treatment projects scheduled in the fall for this event. Stay tuned.

## EDUCATION

- \* **Training schedule** to begin January 30. Professional credits to be available for SGH courses in 2021 through GA Dept of Agriculture.
- \* **Fairs & festivals** – At this time, we don't know if the festivals we usually participate in will actually take place or if we will be able to participate. The group decided we'll evaluate the situation in March concerning the events scheduled for late spring.
- \* **Public Communications**
  - Signage – Dave has designed an outdoor sign to be installed at Foxfire, Lee Newton Park, and other locations where we have completed a significant treatment or planting project to draw attention to the plight of the hemlock.
  - Presentation and materials targeted to Atlanta audience – Dave and Donna will work on these. Dave will reach out to some garden clubs and neighborhoods in Atlanta to offer presentations.

## HEMLOCK CAMP MEETING / ANNUAL MEETING

This event had to be canceled in 2020 because of Covid, but the group would like to do it in 2021, preferably in August. The focus would be volunteer appreciation and education. Two locations and days were suggested – the ETC Pavilion in Ellijay on a Sunday or the large lakeside pavilion at Lake Winfield Scott on a Saturday. Chris Curtin will check on ETC when they resume scheduling, and Kat Carey will check on LWS.

## 2021 FINANCIAL MATTERS

\* **2021 Budget** – A draft budget was presented during the meeting, and an updated version has now been distributed to the Leadership Team.

\* **College scholarships / grants** – At our Leadership Team meeting in November 2020, the group voted to look into the possibility of establishing one or more scholarships or grants at local colleges for the purpose of supporting students who are pursuing areas of study and future careers benefiting the forests or forest health in general and hemlock preservation in particular.

- North Georgia Technical College – A \$5,000 scholarship was approved and established 11/30/20.

- University of Georgia – A \$5,000 scholarship was approved and will be established this spring **in honor of long-time SGH Board Member and UGA graduate Frank Gheesling**, who retired in 2019.

- University of North Georgia – The recommendation of a \$1,000 unrestricted gift to the beetle lab was approved.

- Young Harris College – The recommendation of a \$1,000 unrestricted gift to the beetle lab was approved.

Darrell pointed out the importance of publicizing these scholarships and grants to help raise awareness of the hemlock problem and the financial help that's available to students who want to make a career of helping the trees.

\* **Annual membership appeal** – This is our only special fund-raising activity of the year. **Dave** will prepare the letter, including mention of our new initiative for establishing SGH college scholarships / grants. Mail-out will be done in conjunction with **Arbor Day 2/19/21**.

## FUTURE 2021 MEETING DATES

\* April 11 (2nd Sunday)

\* July 11 (2nd Sunday)

\* October 17 (3rd Sunday)