

# 1-15-17 Notes for SGH Leadership Team Meeting

The meeting was held at the home of Donna Shearer in Dahlonega. In attendance were Bob Pledger, Buz Stone, Dave Teffeteller, Frank Gheesling, Kim Wood (by dial-in), John Shearouse, and Donna Shearer. Chris Curtin, Darrell Sheffield, and Derrick Morris were out of town.

## BOARD MATTERS

**THANKS for an outstanding 2016 year!** – Donna expressed her appreciation of each and every Leadership Team member and all our wonderful volunteers for their exceptional dedication to the cause of saving the hemlocks, can-do spirit in both ongoing and new initiatives, and positive engagement in the community. We accomplished a tremendous amount of good work in 2016 and are most blessed!

**Commitment to serve in 2017** – The members who were present expressed their willing to continue service through this calendar year. **Those who were absent will be contacted.**

**Signing of Annual Acknowledgment** – The members who were present signed the Annual Acknowledgment indicating they have reviewed, understand, and agree to abide by the organizing documents of Save Georgia's Hemlocks. **Those who were absent will be contacted.**

**Approval of updated Bylaws 1/15/17** – Our Bylaws have been updated to reflect several changes that have been approved during Leadership Team meetings but not previously incorporated into the official document. See the [About Us](#) page on our web site. The members who were present signed the certification. **Those who were absent will be contacted.**

- \* **Governance:** We will be guided by our Board members and officers as well Lead Facilitators, programs managers, and committee chair person.
- \* **Board of Directors and Officers:** The Organization will have a minimum of three and a maximum of nine Board members.
- \* **Terms of Office and Elections:** The general membership will vote to approve continuation of current board members and officers annually and to approve replacement personnel for vacant positions.
- \* **Specific Duties of the Secretary:** The revised scope of duties will be as described in the updated document.
- \* **Specific Duties of the Treasurer:** The revised scope of duties will be as described in the updated document.
- \* **Lead Area Facilitators:** The role of Lead Facilitators will be as described in the updated document.
- \* **Committees and Programs:** The role of program managers, committees, and their chairs will be as described in the updated document.
- \* **Bank Account:** The bank account will have at least two approved signatories and may have up to three, with the signature of any one being valid for check processing.
- \* **Contributions:** With the exception of grants, which generally have a specified purpose, the Organization prefers that donated funds not have usage restrictions set by the donor. However, if restricted donations are accepted, the Board will ensure that the use of funds is consistent with the donor's requirements.

## REVIEW OF 2016 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

**FY 2016 Progress Report** – The summary report was presented and discussed; a detailed version is available on request. The activity within many of our continuing programs surpassed that of prior years, and we expanded the scope of our programs in include two new initiatives – hemlock restoration on trout streams and hemlock field insectaries.

- \* **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 1,329 calls handled
- \* 14 SGH **Hemlock Help Clinics** with 136 attendees
- \* 12 **SGH Facilitator Training Workshops** with 78 new Facilitators trained and 18 Facilitators refreshed. We currently have a total of 243 active Volunteer Facilitators in Georgia and 57 in other states.
- \* 7 **other training classes** for 69 neighborhood volunteers
- \* 17 **presentations** to civic/community groups with 722 attendees



- \* 3 Hemlock Lessons with seedling potting at youth events, 12 volunteers, 237 student/teacher participants
- \* 14 festivals with 76 volunteers and 2,046 visitors/contacts
- \* 36 articles/news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines
- \* 13 hemlock rescue projects with 22 volunteers, 202 saplings and 245 seedlings rescued
- \* 179 hemlock saplings adopted; 40 small, 16 medium, and 18 large saplings currently available for adoption
- \* 230 seedlings and 27 saplings donated to schools/nonprofits; 10 large Carolina hemlocks adopted and donated to high profile public sites including Georgia State Botanical Garden, Oakland Cemetery, Trees Atlanta, and Elachee Nature Center
- \* 1 hemlock restoration on trout streams project with 18 volunteers planting 60 large saplings
- \* 3 other hemlock sapling planting projects with 15 volunteers planting 2 large and 12 small saplings
- \* 151 Facilitator visits made with charitable treatment of 2,080 trees
- \* 17 hemlock treatment projects with 200 volunteers treating/retreating 4,050 trees
- \* 25 soil injectors repaired/refurbished, 2 currently in process
- \* Total of 5,300 volunteer hours reported

**Recap of trees treated as of 11-30-16** – We treated (or helped property owners treat) a total of 6,130 trees:

USFS	DNR	Private Property	Other Property
1,382	304	3,436	1,008

This brings our 8-year total to 22,099 trees saved.

**USFS reports** – On January 12 we submitted the Performance Monitoring Report and Volunteer Hours Report that are required of us annually. In FY 2016 on the Chattooga Ranger District 55 volunteers contributed a total of 406 hours to treated or retreat a total of 943 trees. On the Blue Ridge Ranger District 33 volunteers contributed a total of 211 hours to treated or retreat a total of 319 trees.

**Use of Quarterly Activity Report form** – Some members indicated they were having technical difficulty using the on-line Quarterly Activity Report. The data captured on this report is very important as we are required to report a consolidated version of it to the IRS, with a copy to the Georgia Department of Revenue and available to the Georgia Secretary of State. It not only allows us to justify continuation of our 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, but also presents an excellent picture to prospective members, donors, and grantors of the breadth and depth of our mission-based activities. **Bob Pledger agreed to review the form to see if it can be made more user-friendly.**

## REVIEW OF 2016 FINANCIAL MATTERS

### Financial summary for FY 2016

INCOME - Contrib Indiv	Contrib Member	Contrib Found	Contrib Non Profit	Contrib In Kind Goods	Contrib In Kind Svc	Contrib Corp	Gov Reimb	Total Income
\$3,149.22	\$13,683.00	\$8,925.20	\$918.17	\$2,085.00	\$600.00	\$2,178.43	\$552.45	<b>\$32,091.47</b>
9.81%	42.64%	27.81%	2.86%	6.50%	1.87%	6.79%	1.72%	

EXPENSE 11 Clinics	12 Facil Trng	13 Other Educ	16 Public Comm	14 Saplings	15 Treatment	51 Gen Admin	52 Memb & Fund Raising	Total Expense
\$425.10	\$1,061.03	\$4,043.91	\$1,219.45	\$4,198.98	\$11,783.48	\$1,457.33	\$255.78	<b>\$24,445.06</b>
1.74%	4.34%	16.54%	4.99%	17.18%	48.20%	5.96%	1.05%	

**Status of grants and dedicated funds** – As of 11-30-16 we have funds on hand from the following grants:

- \* Cox Enterprises: \$1200.49 Unrestricted
- \* Lake Rabun Foundation: \$942.59 Rabun County only
- \* Norcross Wildlife Foundation: \$1,200.00 Rabun County only
- \* North Georgia EMC: \$2,500 Hemlock restoration on trout streams in NW GA
- \* Lacy Foundation: \$2,500.00 Unrestricted

**Recap of costs/budgets for special projects** – We did two special projects in 2016 that were unbudgeted.

\* Hemlock restoration at Toccoa Bend: The cost was \$466 to plant 60 trees. Average cost for similar projects in the future is \$400 per project.

\* Hemlock treatment at Laurel Ridge: The cost was \$1,640.81 to treat 244 trees with Imidacloprid and 31 very large ones with Safari. \$636.66 remains from the special funds raised for continuation of this project in 2017.

**Budget vs actual for FY 2016** – We received several unbudgeted grants during the year and therefore were able to do a great deal more with our saplings program and hemlock treatments.

INCOME		EXPENSE		NET CHANGE	
Budget	\$17,070	Budget	\$12,673	Budget	\$4,397
Actual	\$32,090.00	Actual	\$24,444.00	Actual	\$7,646
Difference	\$15,021	Difference	\$11,772	Difference	\$3,249

**Results of annual membership appeal** – The number and total amount of donation received through our 2016 annual membership appeal were somewhat less than in 2015. The reasons could relate to a variety of factors.

FY 2016	\$4,765	51 donations
FY 2015	\$5,205	64 donations
Difference	(\$440)	(13)

## 2017 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

### Corporate Matters

**Corporate Registration with GA SOS** – Renewed on January 12, 2017.

**Intro to 2017 Strategy Plan** – We will continue the education and service programs we’ve traditionally been engaged in, including increased education concerning biological controls and as many USFS and DNR treatment projects as our volunteer resources can manage. Our saplings program will expand to conduct more hemlock restoration projects on trout streams, hopefully at least two more hemlock field insectary projects, and implementation of distributed sapling nurseries. See the [About Us](#) page on our web site to read the full *Introduction to SGH Strategy Plan for FY 2017*.

**Calendar of Events for 2017** – Our calendar is populated with the major events for which dates are known at this time. See the [Schedule of Events](#) page of our web site.

**SGH Reorganization** – At our October 23, 2016 Leadership Team meeting, it was decided that the Organization will adopt a model of more decentralized responsibilities in order to increase organizational efficiency, effectiveness, capacity, continuity, and personal satisfaction among our Leadership Team members and other volunteers. One or more individuals serving as program managers will have complete ownership of a program, as indicated below.

**Education:**

Darrell Sheffield eastern counties,  
Derrick Morris western counties

**Treatment Projects:**

Bob Pledger eastern counties,  
Frank Gheesling western counties

**Saplings Projects:**

Buz Stone eastern counties,  
Chris Curtin western counties,  
John Shearouse technical advisor

**Public Communications:**

Dave Teffeteller and  
Donna Shearer

**Secretary:** Kim Wood

**Treasurer:** [open]



## Education

**Credits for SGH courses** – On January 12 the Georgia Department of Agriculture approved professional continuing education credits for the SGH Hemlock Help Clinic (1 credit) and SGH Facilitator Training Workshop (5 credits) in 2017 and 2018.

**Hemlock Help Clinics & Facilitator Training Workshops** – Except for occasions on which a special group requests only an overview level presentation, our Hemlock Help Clinics and Facilitator Training Workshops will be offered as a combined training event; we are discontinuing the option for participants to sign up for just the Clinic. **Darrell and Derrick are asked to have the class schedule in place by February 15.**

**Biocontrol** – We will create and post additional biocontrol educational materials this year, focusing in particular on knowledge/experience concerning adelgid life cycle, beetle life cycle and rearing protocols, field insectaries and release sites.

**Research** – We have been invited by Dr. Jean Williams-Woodward of UGA to consider partially funding a renewed project to study *Rosellinia* needle blight, a fungal disease that affects hemlocks and several other conifers. The request is for \$3,000 to pay for expendable lab supplies associated with the research. **Team members are asked to consider Dr. Woodward's request and provide their feedback by the end of the month.**

**New project management documents** – In support of our new distributed responsibilities model, new project management documents have been posted on the [Facilitators](#) page of our web site covering the kinds of projects listed below. Each set includes, at a minimum, a checklist (and budget if appropriate), project management instructions, and volunteer instructions.

- \* Hemlock sapling/seedling rescue
- \* Hemlock sapling potting
- \* Hemlock seedling potting in newspaper cups
- \* Hemlock sapling planting
- \* Hemlock field insectaries
- \* Hemlock restoration on trout streams
- \* Hemlock treatment

## Public Communications

**Facebook, print and broadcast media, signage, and other public communications materials** – Communications Director Dave Teffeteller will continue to manage these centralized functions. He recently produced some beautiful storefront posters, and Leadership Team members took supplies of them to distribute in their communities. He also acquired a stock of bright yellow safety vests and designed a handsome logo patch which will be sewn on and be available for team leaders on service projects. Thanks Dave!

**Web site and Hemlock Help Line** – Donna will continue these centralized functions.

**Special signage** – At the invitation of SGH member Frances Seymour, we are planning an Arbor Day celebration on Friday, February 17 to place an educational/commemorative plaque for the historic Bleckley hemlocks in downtown Clayton. During the spring we will also provide educational plaques for special trees we have donated to public spaces such as the Atlanta Botanical Garden, Oakland Cemetery, Trees Atlanta, Elachee Nature Center, and Hancock Park. Thanks to Dave for the handsome plaque designs!

**Publicity re UNG Insectary** – On January 18 The Dahlenoga Nugget published an article about the recent project SGH conducted in partnership with local Master Gardeners and volunteers from the college to plant a hemlock field insectary on the campus of the University of North Georgia. Once the trees reach an adequate size, they will be used to increase UNG's capacity to raise predator beetles for release on public lands to control HWA. The article will be posted in the "SGH Articles" section of the [Resources](#) page of our web site. Thanks everyone!

## Service

**Hemlock treatment** – Bob Pledger and Frank Gheesling are scheduling projects to support the USFS in the Chattooga and Blue Ridge Ranger Districts and the DNR in eastern and western counties. Frank will also check with Danny Skojac in the USFS Conasauga Ranger District to see if they will need our help this year. Derrick will schedule resumption of the Laurel Ridge project in Cherry Log this spring, and Bob will schedule treatment projects funded by Rabun County grants as the needs are identified. **Bob and Frank are asked to have the schedule for USFS and DNR treatment projects in place by February 15 (or as soon as those agencies finalize their priorities).**

**Treatment products** – Leadership Team members are asked to continue seeking retail outlets to carry hemlock treatment products and offer to provide pads of the quick reference tear sheets of mixing/dosing instructions for their customers. The outlets we're aware of at present are listed on the [Contacts](#) page of our web site. Our goal is to have at least one source in each program county.

**Soil injectors** – We will continue offering our repair service for Kioritz soil injectors for the cost of parts only. Donna will contact Arbor Systems for an update on the status of a light-weight forestry model of the EZject soil injector we became aware of last year. We may also be able to evaluate the new Njekt soil injector if the manufacturer is willing to provide a test unit.

### **Biocontrol support**

\* Insectaries: Based on the needs of our public land managers and research labs, we hope to install two more field insectaries this year and conduct planting projects to augment two or more existing insectaries.

\* New lab coordinator: We are awaiting the announcement of a new coordinator for the beetle lab at UNG.

**Foothills Landscape Collaboration** – Based on the information gathered by the U.S. Forest Service during their Community Conversations meeting during the fall of 2016, they have announced four workshops that will be held between now and the end of August. Their invitation states, “These workshops will be focused on developing a plan that will be used to create a proposed action for the Foothills Landscape. This is a great opportunity to share your views, discuss ideas, and interact with other members of the collaboration community and Forest Service employees -- a time to roll up your sleeves and really get to work!”

The first workshop is scheduled for January 31<sup>st</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup> at the Lumpkin County Parks and Rec Community Center in Dahlonega. See the [Schedule of Events](#) page of our web site for more detail. Leadership Team members are encouraged to attend this or another workshop.

### **Saplings**

**Live Plant License** – On January 12 our license was renewed with GA Dept of Agriculture.

**Need for saplings/seedlings** – In light of the large number of hemlock saplings and seedlings that will be needed for adoption at fairs and festivals, donation at educational events, and large-scale planting projects, a schedule of need was presented. It is estimated we will need about 220 seedlings and about 250 saplings for the two school events and the ten fairs/festivals we'll be participating in this year. These numbers exclude current unknowns such as hemlock restoration projects and field insectary projects. Chris and Buz are asked to have the schedule for their sapling/seedling rescue/potting projects in place by February 15.

### **Preparations for rescue/potting projects**

\* Training: John Shearouse, technical advisor for our saplings program, offered to conduct a tutorial for sapling rescue and potting on Friday, January 20 – thanks John!

\* Rescue sites: Everyone is asked to be on the lookout for properties on which we can get permission to dig seedlings and saplings.

\* Materials: We have a great many pots and some of the soil amendments and additives on hand. Donna and/or John will acquire additional supplies and materials at wholesale and provide them to the team to meet the needs of the saplings program.

**Distributed nurseries** – Mason Sheffield is currently maintaining a sapling nursery at his home in Alpharetta, and Buz Stone, Chris Curtin, and Kim Wood expressed interest in doing the same on their properties. The thoughts behind having distributed nurseries instead of a centralized one are safety of the trees (not having all our eggs in one basket), convenience for volunteers who are rescuing and potting the trees, and easier access when saplings are needed for various events across all our program counties. When everyone's nursery sites are ready, we'll plan a nursery tutorial.

### **Membership/Partnership**

**Recruitment and engagement of volunteers & members** – We will continue engaging our volunteers in a wide variety of educational and service opportunities. Newly trained Facilitators will be required to sign up to help with at least one major event during the year, and existing Facilitators will be encouraged to do the same. We will place special focus on engaging younger volunteers through partnerships with organizations such as Scouts, 4-H, and college fraternities/sororities.

**Partnerships** – We greatly value and will continue to strengthen partnerships with the USFS and DNR, the Benton MacKaye Trail Association, Trout Unlimited, Forest Watch, and other long-time friends. We will also work to increase partnerships with other environmental and recreational nonprofits, industry groups, local municipalities, property owner associations and community/civic organizations, and educational entities.

### **Hemlock Camp Meeting / Annual Meeting**

**Firm plan** – This year’s Hemlock Camp Meeting will be held Sunday, June 25, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the ETC Pavilion on Legion Rd. in Ellijay – Thanks to Chris for making these arrangements!

**Need to finalize** – We ran short on time and did not fully discuss food, band, keynote speaker, participants in Friends Circle, activities, publicity, and more. *There’s a lot to do very quickly.* All Leadership Team members are asked to review the suggestions made after HCM 2016 (distributed by email) and provide ideas/comments by the end of the month.

### **2017 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**Annual membership appeal** – The group reviewed Dave’s draft of the letter and offered a few suggestions which he will incorporate before sending a final version.

\* Leadership Team members are asked to send their recipient lists to Kim Wood within a week so she can identify any possible duplications. Donna will resend last year’s master list to the Team for their reference.

\* Dave will supply the outbound and return envelopes and membership forms.

\* Leadership Team members are requested to print their own letters, customize them with brief personal notes, and mail them in hand-addressed envelopes between February 1 and 17 to coincide with Georgia’s Arbor Day celebration.

**Proposed budget for FY 2017** – A draft budget was presented. Leadership Team members are asked to review it and provide suggestions for any changes by the end of the month.

**Grants to new pesticide applicators** – It was suggested that we discontinue this offering. No final action was taken.

**Fundraising and grants** – Other than our annual membership appeal we do not plan any special fundraising activities. We will continue to seek new memberships at fairs/festivals, training workshops, and other events and offer saplings for adoption. At present we do not anticipate applying for any additional grants but will focus on using the ones we have in hand.

### **2017 MEETING DATES – Please mark your calendar now!**

**All Leadership Team members, Lead Facilitator, and Program Managers should plan to attend.**

\* April 9 (second Sunday)

\* July 16 (third Sunday)

\* October 15 (third Sunday)

Meetings will be from 1 to 5 p.m. at the home of Donna Shearer unless decided otherwise by the Leadership Team.