



Save Georgia's Hemlocks

7/10/11 Board Meeting

A Board meeting of Save Georgia's Hemlocks was held Sunday, July 10 from 10 a.m. to noon at Smithgall Woods. In attendance: Donna Shearer, Dave Teffeteller, Doug & Tonya Richey, and Bonnie Mandel.

CONFIRMATION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

The following Board Members and Officers will continue their service: Donna Shearer as Chairman, Bob Pledger as Vice Chairman, Dave Teffeteller as Board Member, Bonnie Mandel as Treasurer, and Donna Moorlag as Secretary. New Board Members Doug Richey, Bruce Granger, and Frank Gheesling were confirmed, and we are delighted with the dedication and talents they bring to our mission.

There is one open position on our Board as Jimmie Walters has stepped down. Thank you, Jimmie, for all your wonderful support over the past 2 years! We are seeking an individual with a commitment to the goals of SGH, time and energy to devote to its efforts, a practical business mind, and preferably some experience in fund raising, grant writing, special events, community outreach, etc. Nominations are being sought. [Dave Teffeteller indicated he would contact Liz Cole of Mountain Conservation Trust and suggested we should advertise the position in our upcoming newsletter.](#)

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

We are proud of the accomplishments SGH has achieved in the first half of the year (6/30/11), thanks to the efforts of many members, volunteers, and friends:

- 9 Georgia counties served by Hemlock Help Program.
- Hemlock Help Line available 7 days a week, 486 calls handled to date.
- 60 Volunteer Facilitators in Georgia and 14 in TN/NC
- 3 Hemlock Help Clinics conducted with 64 attendees in Rabun, Gilmer, and Fannin Counties.
- Hemlock Lessons taught to 246 children in 7 elementary and middle school classes in Rabun, Fulton, Gilmer, and White Counties -- 2 with hemlock sapling planting and 5 with seedling potting.
- Hemlock information booth with seedling potting for 410 students, teachers, and parents at three special community events in Fulton, White, and Gilmer Counties.
- 7 presentations made to community groups with 303 attendees in Gilmer, DeKalb, Forsyth, Fulton, Lumpkin, White, and Rabun Counties. Five more are scheduled.
- Facilitator training conducted with 4 new Facilitators trained. [Bonnie indicated she would like to take Facilitator training.](#)
- "Saving Georgia's Hemlocks" half-hour documentary developed by SGH and produced/broadcast by Windstream Cable TV on Channel 4 "Common Cup" program; copies are available for distribution.
- 5 newspaper articles published; 1 newspaper interview.
- 2 charitable service projects for hemlock treatment.
- 28 new members gained 12/1/10 – 6/30/11.
- Over 900 volunteer hours 12/1/10 – 6/30/11.
- Current spending ratio of 91% for education and charitable service, 9% for administrative expenses.

Strategic objectives that needed special attention were discussed:

- [Education – Hemlock Help Clinics – Donna](#) – Clinics will be scheduled for this fall in Habersham, Towns, White, Union, Lumpkin, and Murray Counties.
- [Education – Programs for Middle Schools – Donna](#) – We will seek invitations to present Hemlock Lessons in middle schools in Habersham, Towns, Lumpkin, Union, Fannin, and Murray Counties.
- [Education – Community Programs – Donna with help from all](#) – We have 5 more community programs scheduled for this fall and will actively seek other opportunities to give presentations and do joint projects/events with other nonprofits such as Master Gardeners, AT and BMTA trail clubs, Trout Unlimited, and neighborhood associations.

- [Education – Awareness Campaign – Donna Shearer](#) – Donna reported 530 awareness post cards have been mailed to Fannin County Property owners and approximately 500 will be mailed to Gilmer County property owners during the week of 7/11/11.
- [Education – SGH Hemlock Documentary – Frank Gheesling and Bruce Granger](#) – They are in process of contacting other cable providers to see if there is interest in airing the program (or retaping it).
- [Fund Raising – Once Upon a Hemlock – formerly Jimmie Walters](#) – In view of the difficulty finding an illustrator for the children’s book, the group decided it should be produced as a coloring book with line art drawings. Dave offered to prepare thumbnail sketches by 8/1/11, and Bonnie offered she would then take the project to the Art Institute to see if it might be adopted as an art project.
- [Marketing & Communications –Member/Volunteer Materials – Dave Teffeteller](#) – As a group, we identified realtors, new residents, teachers, scouts, and other nonprofits as audiences for which we want to have focused materials that will serve dual purposes of providing useful information and gaining new membership/support. Dave committed to preparing drafts of a one-page item for each of these groups by 9/1/11. Then Donna will add them to the web site.
- [Program Outreach & Development – Fairs & Festivals – Donna Moorlag](#) – We have participated in the Mountain Flower Arts Festival and the 4th of July Festival in Dahlonega and plan to participate in the following: Mountain Heritage Festival 9/3-4 in Blairsville, Foxfire Mountaineer Festival 10/1 in Clayton, Fall Arts in the Park Festival 10/8 in Blue Ridge, and Apple Festival 10/15-16 in Ellijay. We will need to sign up volunteers for these events.
- [Service – Facilitator Training – Bob Pledger and Donna Shearer](#) -- Two more training programs will be scheduled for late summer/early fall.
- [Service – Charitable Service – Bob Pledger](#) – We would like to conduct a hemlock treatment project at Foxfire in Rabun County and are seeking other opportunities for charitable hemlock treatment/planting projects.

The Strategy Plan document will be updated to reflect the above and distributed during the week of 7/11/11.

FALL EVENT

After reviewing the amount of time, effort, and cost of the Hemlock Camp Meeting 2010 against the amount of funds raised and number of attendees who were truly our target audience, the group decided our resources will bear more fruit with several smaller events done in conjunction with other like-minded organizations instead one big event shouldered primarily by ourselves. The advantages will include continued interaction and synergy with other groups, spreading the effort over a broader base, and offering more dates and locations for people to participate.

The idea of a Hike/Ride for the Hemlocks will be pursued for this fall, possibly as a joint event of SGH, one of the trail clubs, Back County Horsemen of North Georgia, and possibly TU. [Dave will check with Wayne Jenkins to see if Forest Watch normally acquires any special insurance for an event such as a hike; Donna will do the same with Ralph Heller of BMTA.](#) The goals of any such events would be to raise public awareness of the hemlock crisis, share useful information with participants, and have a good time while increasing our community of members, volunteers, and friends.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Bonnie Mandel presented the financial reports through June 30, 2010.

- We currently have cash on hand of \$7,472.27.
- Income has exceeded expenses by \$2,011.26 during the first half of the year, putting us 41% ahead of where we were this time last year.
- We have used almost all the \$1500 grant that was received from the Lake Rabun Foundation for 4 specific initiatives in Rabun County. There is \$405 remaining to be spent for the fifth initiative – one or more charitable service projects in Rabun. [Bob Pledger is working with Buz Stone and other principals of Foxfire to implement a treatment project there.](#)
- Our actual income and expenses are both at about 50% of budget, so we are right on target for the mid-point of the year.

NEXT BOARD MEETING

Sunday, October 9, 2010 from 2 to 5 p.m. in Dahlonega