

Save Georgia's Hemlocks, Inc. – FY 2017 Strategy Plan

Mission: Save Georgia's Hemlocks is a 100% volunteer non-profit organization of concerned citizens dedicated to saving endangered hemlocks through education and charitable service.

Vision: Through our efforts of preservation, conservation and restoration, there will be a healthy population of hemlocks in Georgia for future generations.

Mission: Save Georgia's Hemlocks is a 100% volunteer non-profit organization of concerned citizens dedicated to saving endangered hemlocks through education and charitable service.

Goals:

Educate: Enhance public awareness of the hemlock woolly adelgid crisis, current practical options and emerging control technologies, and the aesthetic, economic and environmental reasons to take timely and effective action to save the hemlocks.

Enable: Ensure easy access to sound hemlock-specific instruction, advice regarding economical solutions, and availability of necessary resources.

Engage: Enlist our volunteers to provide direct assistance to property owners, nonprofits, and public land managers.

OBJECTIVES AND TASKS:

Education: Using decentralized model, provide educational resources, programs, and activities that reach and benefit members, volunteers, and a wide range of constituencies in support of saving the hemlocks.

- **Clinics** – Offer Hemlock Help Clinics for all program counties to raise awareness and encourage action.
- **Facilitator Training**
 - Offer Lead Facilitator Training to refresh technical knowledge, increase engagement, and secure commitment to full set of responsibilities.
 - Offer Facilitator Training Workshops to develop and maintain a corps of trained volunteers to serve as advisers and provide assistance within their communities.
 - Continue to communicate requirement for previously trained Facilitators to attend Facilitator training every 3 years to refresh their skills and knowledge.
- **Community Programs** – Offer presentations/exhibits to community/civic groups, property owners associations, and other audiences to raise awareness and promote community-wide action for saving the hemlocks.
- **Fairs & Festivals** – Participate in fairs, festivals, and other public events with primarily local attendance to raise awareness, gain members and volunteers, and encourage action.
- **Youth Programs** – Offer presentations and other educational activities for schools/youth groups to share the hemlock message with them and their families and orient them toward life-long environmental stewardship.
- **Citizen Science**
 - Engage volunteers to conduct research regarding hemlock pests other than HWA.
 - Engage volunteers to work with the Georgia Forestry Commission, beetle labs and other experts on raising predator beetles in insectaries and document the protocols.
- **Professional Credits** – Renew accreditation of SGH courses through GA Dept of Agriculture in order to offer continuing education credits to professionals.

Communications: Develop messaging materials and methods that raise awareness, provide accurate and up-to-date information and instructions, and respond to requests for advice and assistance.

- **Hemlock Help Line** – Maintain availability of the Hemlock Help Line 7 days a week to provide callers with information and advice and coordinate requests for Facilitator visits.
- **On-line Media**
 - Maintain web site as repository of information on HWA controls, services available through the Hemlock Help Program, contact lists of resources, treatment instructions and educational materials, and schedule of events.



- Manage Facebook page to present timely advice and share time-sensitive announcements.
- Identify or develop YouTube modules for hemlock treatment, planting, or other appropriate subjects.
- **Visual Media**
 - Develop appropriate visual materials to present the hemlock message at fairs, festivals, schools, and public events.
 - Prepare educational signage for specific sites to draw attention to the hemlock crisis and SGH efforts to help.
- **Print and Broadcast Media**
 - Ensure availability of appropriate printed materials for general and specific audiences and purposes.
 - Manage media initiatives (newspapers, radio, tv) to keep timely articles and notices in front of the public to create awareness, promote participation in upcoming events, and ensure adequate coverage of events and efforts.
 - Submit educational articles and notices of upcoming events to local newspapers, magazines, and organizational newsletters to create awareness and promote participation in upcoming events.
- **Mailings and Newsletters**
 - Utilize targeted mailings to property owners to raise awareness and encourage action.
 - Publish periodic SGH newsletters for Facilitators, members, donors and other interested parties to report on recent activities and accomplishments, give notice of future events and opportunities, and share research-based information.
 - Submit short articles to conservation, recreation, and professional organizations for inclusion on their web sites or in their periodic newsletters and mailings.

Service: Using decentralized model, manage service activities to enable property owners to do as much as possible for themselves as possible and to deliver direct volunteer assistance on private and public lands as resources permit.

- **Lead Facilitators** – Recruit additional Lead Facilitators as needed to strengthen communication, coordination, and capabilities in all program counties.
- **Facilitators**
 - Recruit additional Facilitators as needed to ensure adequate level of service in each program county.
 - Broaden focus beyond hemlock treatment to include education, saplings, insectaries, and outreach.
- **Volunteer Activities**
 - Help for property owners: Continue to advise property owners and assist with hemlock treatment efforts.
 - Help for public land managers: Continue support for DNR in parks, undertake further treatment in DNR Cartecay wildlife tract, continue support for USFS Blue Ridge District, and expand support for USFS to include Chattooga River District; determine if help is needed in Conasauga District.
 - Hemlock project planning assistance: Continue to assist POAs, nonprofits, and community groups in their project planning efforts as requested.
- **Treatment Resources**
 - Maintain list of retailers that carry appropriate treatment products and seek additional retailers as needed.
 - Maintain list of sources for application equipment available for public borrowing.
 - Maintain list of qualified professionals serving program counties and seek additional pros as needed.
 - Continue providing repair service for Kioritz injectors and evaluate new devices as they are discovered.
- **Expansion** – Expand Hemlock Help Program into Atlanta area.

Saplings: Using decentralized model, maintain a stock of healthy hemlock seedlings and saplings and conduct service activities to promote the planting and care of new hemlocks on public and private lands.

- **Live Plant License** – Renew license through GA Dept of Agriculture.
- **Rescue** – Identify more sites on which to rescue saplings and seedlings to use for future planting, donation to schools and other nonprofits, and adoptions.
- **Adoption** – Offer hemlock saplings for adoption in exchange for donations at fairs, festivals, and other public events or through private adoption.
- **Donation** – Provide free hemlock seedlings for youth programs and free hemlock saplings for community projects.
- **Planting** – Provide instruction and participate in hemlock planting projects, free on public land and in exchange for donation on private land, as resources permit.
- **Raising** – Provide free starter stock, planting materials, and instruction for schools, churches, and other community groups to establish distributed hemlock nurseries across north Georgia.
- **Hemlock restoration on trout streams** – Continue new initiative in partnership with Trout Unlimited for hemlock reforestation along trout streams, focusing on sites in northwestern counties supported by NGEMC grant, with ultimate goal of expanding this initiative onto national forest.
- **Hemlock field insectaries** – Continue new initiative in partnership with the beetle labs and Georgia Forestry Commission to establish new insectaries and/or augment existing ones; document protocols for maintaining insectaries.

Membership & Partnership: Create and nurture relationships with individuals and other like-minded organizations to support achievement of our goals and objectives, multiply our ability to educate and serve, and provide future leadership.

- **Volunteers & Members**
 - Develop materials to create interest and present opportunities for rewarding engagement in the hemlock cause.
 - Utilize fairs, festivals, presentations, and educational events as opportunities to attract new volunteers and members.
 - Develop a script and implement a program for contacting individuals who have attended an educational event or visited our info booth to explore their interests and promote active involvement as soon as possible.
 - Conduct one or more major SGH events including some combination of education, service, and volunteer appreciation.
- **Organizational Partnerships & Outreach**
 - Cultivate relationships and partnerships with other nonprofits in the community to foster the accomplishment of shared goals and objectives.
 - Identify and reach out to community groups/organizations that could provide us opportunities to share the hemlock message.
- **Government Agency Relations**
 - Develop and/or maintain relationships with local, state, and federal government entities to understand their roles and functions and discover resources that may be available to us.
 - Be in contact with these entities periodically (preferably quarterly) to ascertain their needs and how we can help.

Financial Management: Provide appropriate guidelines, oversight, and management of financial resources, records, and risk.

- **Budget** – Develop annual budget for planned programs and administration, and track actual income/expense against budget. Include budget vs actual report in quarterly financials.
- **Fund Raising**
 - Utilize fairs, festivals, and educational events to generate donations in support of our programs.
 - Send year-end appeal letters to individuals and organizations to encourage donations with new or renewing memberships.
 - Use grant money currently on hand for purposes intended, and seek new grants as needed for specific projects approved by the Board.
- **Financial Assistance**
 - Offer limited charitable assistance to property owners and nonprofits for hemlock treatment, as approved by the board.
 - Evaluate success of grant program intended increase the availability of qualified professionals to treat hemlocks in underserved counties.
 - Evaluate usefulness of a Hemlock Cost Share program in Rabun County using grant money specifically designated for that area.
- **Liability** – Maintain D&O insurance and coverage for special events as needed.

Administration: Manage business aspects of organization to ensure effective and efficient operation.

- **Compliance**
 - Provide appropriate guidelines, oversight, and management of all plans and practices to ensure they are legal, ethical, consistent with best practices, and in line with our educational and service goals.
 - Do annual review to ensure currency of federal and state compliance information
 - Manage annual renewal of corporate registration with Georgia Secretary of State in January, Live Plant License with Georgia Department of Agriculture in January, and business license with Lumpkin County in December. Prepare annual federal tax filing for board approval and submission by April 15.
- **Records**
 - Maintain information regarding organizational history, capabilities, and events.
 - Maintain current membership and contact information.
 - Maintain accurate donor information and either provide instant receipt or thank-you / tax receipt letter at end of month in which donation is received.
 - Maintain bank account and financial records to ensure accuracy.
- **Reports**
 - Receive quarterly activity reports from all leadership team members.
 - Prepare and post agenda and notes for quarterly leadership team meetings.
 - Prepare and post quarterly and year-end reports of accomplishments and capabilities.
 - Prepare and post quarterly and year-end financial reports.