



Save Georgia's Hemlocks
37 Woody Bend
Dahlonega, GA 30533
www.SaveGeorgiasHemlocks.org

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Yonah Preserve No-Cost Hemlock Treatment Proposal

Background

Hemlock trees are an extremely important natural resource in our community. Besides the beauty these magnificent evergreens lend to our public and private properties, they play a vital role in habitat for animals and shade-loving plants, air and water quality, soil conservation, and trout stream integrity. In addition, as recreation and tourism are key components of life in White County, healthy hemlocks contribute significantly to the revenue, jobs, and economic vitality of our community and to the enjoyment of all who live, work and visit here.

Problem Statement

The hemlock trees on Yonah Preserve are currently threatened by an infestation of the invasive insect Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA). The pest is known to be present throughout White County, Georgia. Many of the hemlocks on the Preserve already show the signs of distress associated with HWA, and any hemlocks not currently infested are likely to become so this spring and summer. Without treatment, the hemlock trees on Yonah Preserve will die over the next several years.

Proposed Project

Save Georgia's Hemlocks, Inc. (SGH), a 100% volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, proposes to treat the trees in the Preserve, starting with those along Turner Creek north of the reservoir. The project would be done on Tuesday, March 13, 2018 using volunteer labor at no cost to White County or Georgia DNR. Participation of some County or DNR personnel in the project would be welcomed. Our organization is seeking only permission and access.

Project Details

An informal survey of Yonah Preserve's primary watershed, conducted during Nov/Dec 2017, revealed an estimated 50 mature hemlock trees along Turner Creek north of the reservoir, which would be a priority for immediate treatment. There were approximately 20 more hemlocks found scattered in smaller drainage areas throughout the property that should be considered for treatment in the near future.

SGH would coordinate with White County Georgia officials and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to treat the trees using two or three teams of volunteers consisting of at least one highly experienced crew leader and two or three team members. SGH would provide the necessary volunteer training, supply all the equipment and supplies, manage and directly oversee the project, and prepare a report for the County and DNR upon completion of the project.

Application of a treatment containing the active ingredient Imidacloprid would be made using a handheld device to inject the material into the ground at the base of the tree near its feeder roots. The chemical has been shown to not migrate in the soil more than about one foot from its injection site. Once the material is taken up by the roots and distributed throughout the vascular system, it becomes a highly effective systemic pest control.

Safety of personnel and the environment is of primary concern during these treatment projects. Each project starts with a briefing on safety and treatment procedures, consistent with those specified by the Georgia Department of Agriculture, Georgia DNR, and U. S. Forest Service. Protection of the waterways is always emphasized.

Project Benefits

Accomplishing this project to keep the Yonah Preserve hemlocks healthy through a municipal - nonprofit partnership will benefit White County by helping protect its reservoir's watershed, improving aesthetics on the Preserve, supporting the economic vitality of the community, and contributing to the enjoyment of local residents and visitors alike.

You are invited to visit our web site www.SaveGeorgiasHemlocks.org or to contact me at 706-969-4728 for more information. Thank you for the opportunity to be of service, and we look forward to your response.

Billy Johnson
Lead Facilitator for White County
Save Georgia's Hemlocks, Inc.