

Save Georgia's Hemlocks, Inc. – FY 2021 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: 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 as requested by other organizations to raise awareness and encourage action.
- **Facilitator Training**– Offer Facilitator Training Workshops for all program counties and as requested by other organizations to develop and maintain a corps of trained volunteers to provide assistance within their communities **and serve as team leaders on service projects.**
 - Continue to communicate expectation for previously trained Facilitators to participate in at least one educational or service event per year 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.
- **Festivals** – Participate in festivals and other public events with primarily local attendance to raise awareness, provide information, gain members and volunteers, and encourage action.
- **Youth Programs**
 - Offer presentations and other educational activities for schools and youth groups to share the hemlock message with them and their families and orient them toward life-long environmental stewardship.
 - Support conservation-related youth programs, offering special opportunities for service and the necessary training and project management.
 - Engage school groups in hands-on education or service activities such as sapling rescue/potting projects and on-campus treatment or planting projects.
- **Professional Credits** – Maintain 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 and resources, treatment instructions and educational materials, and schedule of events.
 - Manage Facebook page to announce upcoming hemlock events and present time-sensitive information.
 - 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 festivals, schools, and public events.
- Prepare educational signage for specific sites to draw attention to the hemlock crisis and SGH efforts to help.
- Prepare photos and brief write-ups of service projects to share with USFS and other partner organizations.

- **Print Media**

- Ensure availability of appropriate printed materials for general audiences and purposes and explore the interests of other organizations to create targeted volunteer pieces.
- Manage media initiatives to keep timely articles and notices in front of the public to promote participation in upcoming events and ensure recognition of current initiatives and completed events.
- Submit educational articles to newspapers and magazines to create awareness, encourage action, and share useful information.

- **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: 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 of Facilitator capabilities beyond hemlock treatment to include education, saplings, 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 treatment support for DNR State Parks and Wildlife Management Divisions and all 3 USFS Districts as requested.
 - Help for other nonprofits: Continue to assist other nonprofits in treatment projects.
 - Hemlock project planning assistance: Continue to assist POAs, nonprofits, and community groups in their project planning efforts as requested.
 - Hemlock Restoration on Trout Streams – Partner with Trout Unlimited, the Nature Conservancy, and the USFS to plant hemlocks along publicly accessible trout streams where we have permission from the property owner or manager.
 - Paddling for Hemlocks – Partner with the Georgia Canoeing Association and other paddling organizations to conduct hemlock treatment projects along Georgia rivers where we have permission from the USFS and/or DNR.
 - Hiking for Hemlocks – Partner with the Georgia Appalachian Trail Club and Benton MacKaye Trail Association to conduct hemlock treatment projects along their trails on sites where we have permission from the USFS and/or DNR.
- **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 or purchasing.
 - Maintain list of qualified professionals serving program counties and seek additional pros as needed.
 - Continue providing repair for Kioritz injectors and evaluate new devices/materials as they become available.
- **Expansion** – Expand Hemlock Help Program into Atlanta area.

Saplings: Maintain a stock of healthy hemlock seedlings and saplings for planting, donation to schools and other nonprofits, and adoptions and conduct service activities to promote the planting and care of new hemlocks on public and private lands.

- **Volunteers** – Maintain list of volunteers interested in saplings activities and provide special training.
- **Live Plant License** – Renew license through GA Dept of Agriculture.
- **Rescue** – Identify more sites on which to rescue saplings and seedlings and schedule rescue/potting events.
- **Nurseries** – Provide starter stock, planting materials, and instruction to establish and maintain distributed nurseries of eastern hemlock saplings across north Georgia and ramp up effort to raise Carolina hemlock saplings from seed.
- **Adoption** – Offer hemlock saplings for adoption for donations at festivals and other public events or private adoptions.
- **Donation** – Provide free hemlock seedlings for youth programs and free hemlock saplings for community projects.
- **Planting** – Provide instruction and participate in hemlock planting projects for schools, other nonprofits, and public lands; **initiate hemlock planting projects with a goal of planting 300-500 saplings per year.**
- **Hemlock field insectaries** – Continue to support partnership with the beetle labs and Georgia Forestry Commission as requested to establish new insectaries and/or augment existing ones.

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 festivals, presentations, and educational events as opportunities to attract new volunteers and members; have schedule of upcoming classes and events on hand.
 - ~~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 a 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 opportunities to share the hemlock message.
 - Identify and reach out to colleges and other youth groups, probably via Facebook, FFA, and high school curriculum advisers, to engage them in education and service.
- **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 annual budget vs. actual.
- **Fund Raising**
 - Utilize festivals and educational events to generate donations in support of our programs.
 - Send annual membership appeal letters – close to Arbor Day in February 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.
 - Offer hemlock saplings for adoption to generate donations.
- **Financial Assistance** – Offer reasonable charitable assistance to property owners and nonprofits for hemlock treatment, as approved by the Board.
- **Scholarships** – Establish and maintain one or more college scholarships for individuals pursuing areas of study and careers benefiting forestry or forest health in general and hemlock preservation in particular.
- **Liability** – Maintain D&O insurance (renew in July) and coverage for special events as needed.
- **Tax Filing** – Prepare annual federal tax filing for Board approval and submission by April 15.

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 Live Plant License with Georgia Department of Agriculture in December, business license with Lumpkin County in December, and corporate registration with Georgia Secretary of State in January.
- **Records**
 - Maintain information regarding organizational history, capabilities, and events.
 - Maintain current membership and contact information.
 - Maintain accurate donor information and either provide instant receipts or thank-you / tax receipt letters.
 - Maintain bank account and financial records to ensure accuracy.
- **Reports**
 - Receive quarterly activity reports from all Leadership Team members and Lead Facilitators.
 - 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.