

Notes for 10/13/21 SGH Leadership Team Meeting

This quarterly Leadership Team meeting was held virtually via ZOOM, beginning at 7:00 p.m. Participants were Buz Stone, Chris Curtin, Darrell Sheffield, Dave Teffeteller, Jim Wentworth, Jim Heilman, Ray Lorenzi, Kat Carey, Betty Larsen, Holly Cochran, Jon Jones, Derrick Morris, Todd Jackson, and Donna Shearer. John Shearouse, Billy Johnson, Jimmy Stewart, and Dara Sinclair were unable to attend.

BOARD MATTERS

* **Opening** – Chairman **Buz Stone** called the meeting to order. The minutes for our 7/7/21 meeting were provisionally approved (Buz will resend to everyone), and the agenda for our 10/13/21 meeting was approved.

* **Thoughts concerning this year** -- Consensus was that COVID affected several facets of the organization, but we were still able to accomplish a great deal in spite of these setbacks. Here are some of the key comments.

Facilitator training – Derrick said training conducted by Zoom has gone well except that attendance has been lower than last year. Also not being able to do the in-person demo / hands-on segment has limited our ability to assess the students' understanding and retention.

Festivals & awareness – Buz commented that it was a wise (but sad) choice to not hold our traditional Hemlock Camp Meeting this year with the ongoing Covid situation. Ray, Jim H, and several others mentioned missing festivals and the in-person outreach and awareness-raising opportunities they afford.

Hemlock treatment – Jim W. and Jon reported that SGH-USFS projects have gone well although sometimes we didn't have as many volunteers as we would have wished for. Kat commented on the strong relationship we have with the USFS and the good support they give us.

Saplings – Chris said sapling rescues went well this summer, but we need a more reliable pool of volunteers to call on for these projects. Buz recommended that we send an email to all Facilitators who have indicated an interest in saplings asking them whether they're still interested and if so whether week days or weekends are better for them.

Meetings – Dave and others said they have liked doing our quarterly Leadership Team meetings by Zoom because it eliminates travel time and seems to make the meetings more efficient.

Overall, everyone seems comfortable with their current responsibilities but recognizes the need to start putting understudies in place for additional support and flexibility.

* **Thoughts concerning next year** -- Goals for next year will focus on Facilitator engagement / retention and awareness-raising. The following ideas were discussed.

Facilitator training – Two more SGH instructors are needed. Derrick and Donna will interview and vet potential candidates and shepherd them into the role.

Dave would like to see us do more to engage new Facilitators and keep them engaged beyond their initial service or educational event commitment. He also suggested that instructors ask students how they became aware of the class.

Dave recommended that we revise the Facilitator program so there are two levels. Someone who has completed the training class but hasn't done their initial service commitment will be called a trainee. A Facilitator will be someone who has done both. Trainees will receive all their support materials immediately after training, but they will only receive their Facilitator certificate when they've completed their initial service commitment.

Derrick suggested doing Facilitator training in-person with demo / hands-on practice for classes with 5 or more participants and doing classes with fewer than 5 participants by Zoom. He also said it would be good to schedule training classes about 2 weeks before a treatment project or festival in the area so the new trainees could become engaged soon after their initial training.



Facilitator engagement – Dave has designed a Facilitator engagement survey that will be sent out in November to ask all our current Facilitators about their level and/or areas of interest to continue serving as Facilitators.

Kat commented that some Facilitators will have aged out of physical service but may still be able and interested to help staff our info booth or give short presentations to kids or adults.

Chris suggested we get an intern to receive and tabulate the Facilitator survey responses.

Support from Lead Facilitators – Donna would like to fully implement the position of Lead Facilitator as it was originally envisioned to include mentoring new trainees and Facilitators. She will work on recruiting additional Leads so there's coverage for all or most program counties and plans to conduct a Lead Facilitator training class in late January or early February to prepare for this new arrangement. Thereafter, instructors will notify Leads of new trainees so the Leads can reach out to them, get (and keep) them engaged, and mentor them as needed.

Festivals and awareness – Buz suggested three ways to increase awareness:

- Letters to the editor provide easy outreach opportunities with no advertising overhead.
- Rotary/civic organizations often need speakers for their meetings and events. SGH Resources page has the Hemlock Help Clinic powerpoint which runs 30-40 minutes. Dave has a 20-25 minute version he uses for environmental classes at Dalton State and offered to share this version with the Leadership Team.
- We could contact POAs and offer to provide hemlock information they can include on their web sites or in their newsletters and seek opportunities to make short presentations at their meetings.

Everyone agreed that we'd like to resume participation in festivals and other public events, providing the Covid situation allows.

Hemlock treatment – Jim W recommended we recognize and thank our volunteers by name in our periodic newsletters. Jim W and Jon agreed that we can accommodate about the same number of USFS projects in 2022 as we did this year.

Donna mentioned she has a customized training class scheduled for later this month for the USFS Conasauga Ranger District, which may lead to requests for us to help them on a few projects in 2022. If that's the case, we'll need one more treatment project lead in that area. We also need to identify additional project leaders for non-USFS treatment events.

Saplings – Because of the large number of saplings that have been adopted from our three home-based nurseries, Chris and Buz said we need to do some sapling rescue projects to replenish our stock.

Jim H has indicated he is interested in establishing a nursery on his property in Jasper to make adoptions more convenient for people in the northwestern area of the state. Timeframe is next spring.

* **Anything else we need to talk about?**

To ensure organizational strength, flexibility, and continuity, Donna is planning to hand off more of her activities next year to current and future Leadership Team members. Buz suggested an in-person meeting with him, Dave, Chris, and Donna before our next meeting to discuss. Every member of our Leadership team needs to be training an understudy.

Our upcoming membership appeal letter will contain text and a revised membership form to add the option of a service commitment either in lieu of or in addition to a monetary donation.

ACTIVITY REVIEW Q3 2021

* **Progress Report as of 9/30/21.** See full Progress Report on About Us page for details.

- 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 902 calls handled to date.
- 11 Facilitator Training Workshops with total of 34 new Facilitators trained.
Total active Facilitators = 433 in Georgia and 92 in other states.
- 4 Hemlock Lessons for 88 students & teachers:
- 3 presentations for 60 adults:
- 8 customized training sessions for 16 volunteers and public land managers:
- 2 festivals with 9 volunteers and 135 visitors:
- 7 articles / news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines.
- 128 Facilitator visits made with charitable treatment of 1,074 trees.
- 20 hemlock treatment projects with 150 volunteers treating/retreating 2,784 trees:
- 14 hemlock rescue projects with 33 volunteers, 647 saplings rescued and potted:
- 196 hemlock saplings adopted.
- 158 saplings donated to schools, churches, nonprofits:
- 7 hemlock sapling planting projects with 95 volunteers planting 206 hemlocks and 40 other trees/shrubs:
- 13 soil injectors repaired/refurbished
- Total of 4,746 volunteer hours logged.

FINANCIAL REVIEW Q3 2021

* **Financial Summary as of 9/30/21**

INCOME	Contrib Indiv	Contrib Member	Contrib Found	Contrib Non Profit	Contrib In Kind Goods	Contrib In Kind Svc	Contrib Corp	Gov Reimb
2021 Inc by Source	\$421.00	\$25,792.24	\$1,472.03	\$250.00	\$1,856.75	\$720.00	\$2,095.15	\$58.20
2021 Inc by Percentage	1.29%	78.96%	4.51%	0.77%	5.68%	2.20%	6.41%	0.18%
2021 Total Income	\$32,665.37							

EXPENSE	11 Educ Hemlock Clinics	12 Educ FacTrng	13 Educ Comm Progs	16 Public Comm	14 Saplings	15 Treatment	51 Gen Admin	52 Memb & Fund Raising
2021 Exp by Category	\$0.00	\$809.36	\$4,459.20	\$4,163.41	\$4,616.72	\$8,486.27	\$1,648.31	\$946.88
2021 Exp by Percentage	0.00%	3.22%	17.74%	16.57%	18.37%	33.77%	6.56%	3.77%
2021 Total Expense	\$25,130.15							

* **Checking Acct Bal as of 9/30/21:** \$62,968.72

* **Spending Ratio as of 9/30/21:** 37.53% Education, 52.14% Charitable Service, 10.33% Admin.
We expect to have the percentage of Administrative expenses down below 10% by the end of FY 2021.

* **Report on annual membership appeal** as of 9/30/21: 125 donations totaling \$15,660.00
compared to 123 donations totaling \$11,825.00 this time last year.

* **Other grants and dedicated funds on hand:**

Lake Burton (private donation)	\$4,498
Lake Burton Civic Assoc	\$2,000
Lake Rabun Foundation	\$855
Laurel Ridge	\$391

UPCOMING TREATMENT PROJECTS IN Q4 2021

* USFS hemlock treatment projects

CHATTOOGA RIVER RANGER DISTRICT – Jon
Sun., Oct. 24 Wildcat Creek Recreation Area (HCA 600)

BLUE RIDGE RANGER DISTRICT – Jim W
All completed.

* GATC hemlock treatment projects on Appalachian Trail – Pete Buak & Donna

Fri., Oct. 15 Jacks Knob Trail (HCA 503)
Sun., Oct. 24 Blue Ridge Swag (HCA 508)
Wed., Nov. 3 Popular Stump section (HCA 502) and Sapling Gap area (HCA 504)
Wed., Nov. 17 Junction of Dockery Lake Trail & AT (HCA 500)

UPCOMING SAPLING PROJECTS IN Q4 2021

* Sapling rescue/potting

Thurs., Oct. 28 Dahlonega – Donna
TBD 1 project in Gilmer County, 1 in Toccoa Bend – Chris
TBD 3 projects in Rabun County—Buz

* Hemlock planting

Thurs., Oct. 14 Yahooola Creek Park in Dahlonega, in coordination with Master Gardeners
Wed., Oct. 20 White County High School in Cleveland. in coordination with Environmental Science program
November 19 Toccoa Bend with TU Blue Ridge, in coordination with Carl Riggs and Jim Reich. Soil is very sandy in this area so red clay will be brought in to achieve effective planting.

John will be bringing some large containerized saplings down from North Carolina for use on future projects or for adoption. Chris has a dozen or more large saplings at her nursery that will be used for a hemlock restoration project on the Toccoa River in November.

UPCOMING EDUCATION IN Q4 2021

* Facilitator Training schedule – via Zoom

Fannin, Gilmer & Towns	Sat., Oct. 16
All counties	Sat., Nov. 6

The Facilitator Guide and presentation have been updated and will be made available to the Leadership Team in late November.

* Fairs & festivals – Participation is dependent on availability of volunteers.

Community Service Fair	Sat., Oct. 23	Dahlonega
Hornaday Conservation Weekend	Sat., Nov. 13	Blairsville

* Public Communications

Signage – Buz and Dave are working on a new sign for installation in a prominently visible place at Foxfire.

Jim H will place one of our corrugated outdoor signs that Dave designed in Lee Newton Park in Jasper and run an article in Pickens Progress newspaper about installation.

Kat will keep one sign at Winfield Scott and return the other 2 signs to Donna to redeploy.

Dave has designed a beautiful new table cover for use at festivals and other educational events.

YouTube videos – Digging Hemlock Saplings video that Brianna Ross filmed and Dave edited is currently posted. Dave has added tags and will gauge views. Potting and planting videos may be ready by the end of the year.

Presentation materials – Presentation and accompanying materials for Atlanta audience are in development. Buz suggested partnering with Fernbank for the roll-out; will contact the Director and request advice. We discussed partnerships with Trees Atlanta, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Landscape Atlanta, and Ansley Park / Sherwood Forest Garden Club, and City of Atlanta parks.

FOLLOW-UP FROM 7/7/21 MEETING

- * **Lake Tugaloo treatment** – Buz will get with GA Power Land Dept to get the ball rolling to scope the project. Chris suggested that since treatment will be an ongoing commitment, it will be best to define the area to be treated. A project proposal would be required to bid out the project to one or more professionals who would visit the property and provide a cost estimate. If the estimate is more than the remaining funds from the private donation, the Board would decide whether to scale the project down or allocate additional funds to complete it.
- * **Foxfire retreatment** – Buz has reached out to the Foxfire Director and a Boy Scout troop leader to partner with us in the retreatment of the hemlocks there. The Scout Master will set a Saturday or Sunday date for early next year.
- * **Laurel Ridge treatment** – Derrick will select a date for this project to pair with classes in Spring 2022. If additional funds are needed, he offered to solicit donations from the neighborhood that SGH would match.
- * **Cartecay treatment** – Dave indicated this project will be scheduled for Spring 2022. He has contacts with paddler and mountain biking associations that we could partner with.
- * **Project Chimps** – Chris indicated that if they still want our help for sapling rescue/potting and / or hemlock treatment, it will be scheduled for Spring 2022.
- * **Quickbooks** – Todd reported that he is updating our files and expecting to be up to 2020 by year end. Todd and Donna will get together to review our compliance with accounting standards.

MEETINGS IN 2022

Darrell and others said they would like to do an in-person meeting for the first one – currently scheduled for Sunday, January 9, 2022 in person at Donna’s home. The main course will be catered, and members will bring potluck sides.

Additional quarterly meetings in 2022 may be in person or virtual, as the Board chooses. Dates and method will be chosen and the January meeting. If virtual, meetings will be the second Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. If in person, they will be the second Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m.