

10-24-16 SGH Leadership Team Meeting Notes

The meeting was held at the home of Donna Shearer in Dahlonega. In attendance were Buz Stone, Chris Curtin, Darrell Sheffield, Dave Teffeteller, Derrick Morris, Frank Gheesling, Kim Wood, John Shearhouse, and Donna Shearer. Bob Pledger was out of town.

BOARD MATTERS

Quarterly reports needed – Any Leadership Team members who haven't already turned in their 3rd quarter activity report are requested to do so as soon as possible.

Annual memberships – The policy initiated in 2016 to require Facilitator trainees to be or become SGH members has been implemented smoothly. Memberships are from January through December; any new memberships received in December count for that month plus the following year.

Status of open Leadership Team positions – Kim Wood has agreed to serve as our Secretary; THANK YOU, KIM! We have a tentative prospect for Treasurer: if that becomes firm, the transition will take place in January 2017.

RECAP OF HIKE & HELP THE HEMLOCKS

For the seventh consecutive year, SGH and the Benton MacKaye Trail Association (BMTA) partnered with the U. S. Forest Service for Hike & Help the Hemlocks, an event that combines education and service in celebration of National Public Lands Day. This year's outing took place on September 24 at Fall Branch Falls / Stanley Creek near Cherry Log.

Following a short orientation and safety briefing, twenty-three volunteers worked in teams to treat or retreat 93 hemlocks. In the process, not only did the trees receive another five years of protection against the adelgids, but participants without previous experience had the chance to learn how to protect their own hemlocks. Ralph Heller's team focused on the new trail built by BMTA to relieve foot traffic on the lower end of the approach to the falls.

At midday everyone came together for a delicious picnic lunch and several interesting lunch-and-learn presentations. Jason McGaughey (USFS) introduced the Forest Service's new Foothills Landscape Community Collaboration (see article in this newsletter). Ralph Heller and Mike Pilvinsky reported on BMTA's many trail maintenance activities and some upcoming hikes. We heard a passionate message from Ralph Artigliere (Trout Unlimited) about the complex interrelationship of the forests and waterways, particularly in regard to the impact of the hemlock canopy along trout streams. Angela DelConte brought us hopeful news about the progress of biological controls (predator beetles) being released in the forests to combat the HWA. And Donna announced our new initiative in partnership with TU for hemlock restoration along trout streams, beginning on October 15.

A total of 29 people participated. THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR A GREAT OUTING!

In view of the many service activities that other nonprofits traditionally schedule for National Public Lands Day, the Leadership Team suggested that next year we should plan our Hike & Help the Hemlocks to coincide with one of BMTA's normal fall work days.

REPORT ON FOOTHILLS LANDSCAPE COLLABORATION

With the goal of realizing a shared vision to address complex conservation challenges across the landscape, the U. S. Forest Service is inviting community members to share their knowledge and interests in the Foothills Landscape of the Chattahoochee National Forest through a series of community conversations across north Georgia. Input is being sought in the following areas:

- Sharing a sense of place
- Providing sustainable recreation opportunities
- Managing healthy forests, fish & wildlife habitats
- Caring for unique habitats
- Protecting communities from wildfire

Several of the meetings have already occurred, but there are two remaining, and Leadership Team members who have not already attended one are encouraged to participate. Dates, times and locations are listed on our Schedule of Events page. Here are the web sites through which additional information about this program can be obtained:

- www.fs.usda.gov/conf
- www.tinyurl.com/FoothillsLandscapeCollaborate



REVIEW OF 2016 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES TO DATE

Education

- o 14 Clinics with 250 attendees
- o 9 Facilitator Workshops with 59 new Facilitators trained and 12 current Facilitators refreshed
- o 14 festivals with 76 volunteers and 2,046 visitors to our booth
- o 14 other presentations with 677 attendees

Service

- o 13 hemlock treatment projects with 176 volunteers treating/retreating 2,171 trees
- o 106 Facilitator visits made to property owners with charitable treatment of 1,689 trees
- o 23 soil injectors repaired/refurbished, 2 currently in process

Saplings

- o 12 hemlock rescue projects with 20 volunteers, 168 saplings and 245 seedlings rescued
- o 162 hemlock saplings adopted; 40 small, 16 medium, and 18 large saplings currently available for adoption
- o 230 seedlings and 27 saplings donated to schools/nonprofits; 10 Carolina hemlocks adopted and donated to high profile public sites including Georgia State Botanical Garden, Oakland Cemetery, Trees Atlanta, and Elachee Nature Center
- o 4 hemlock sapling planting projects with 33 volunteers planting 62 large and 12 small saplings (including our first project for hemlock restoration on trout streams)

Public Communications

- o 32 articles/news items published so far this year
- o Thanks to Dave, we have beautiful new window posters for display in store fronts and other public places. Please take some with you.
- o Dave also showed us the prototype for safety vest with a large SGH logo patch. The team approved it and Dave will order several for use on future treatment projects.
- o SGH directional signs -- Dave, we need half a dozen more and the metal H-shaped stands.
- o Safari instructions have been updated with two changes:
 - The conversion factor for measuring the product in a regular measuring cup if the special measuring device is not available is as follows: 6.25 oz. by volume in a regular measuring cup = 3.5 oz. by weight in the special measuring device.
 - The dosing amount per inch indicated for trees 40" dbh is the maximum rate, per the product label.

REVIEW OF 2016 FINANCIAL MATTERS TO DATE

Financial summary December 1, 2015 - Oct. 22, 2016

Total Contributions	Educational Spending	Charitable Service Spending	Administrative Expense	Membership/Fundraising	Total Expenses	Cash on Hand
\$29,102.67	\$5,551.07	\$13,325.79	\$1,384.33	\$806.91	\$21,068.10	\$26,246.83
	26.35%	63.25%	6.57%	3.83%		

Current status of grants and other major donations

- o Lake Rabun Foundation: \$1209 remaining, designated for use in Rabun County
- o Norcross Wildlife Foundation: \$1200 designated for use in Rabun County
- o North Georgia EMC: \$2500 designated for hemlock reforestation on trout streams in northwest GA
- o Cox: \$1738 remaining, undesignated
- o Lacy Foundation: \$2500, undesignated

2016 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES – THROUGH NOVEMBER 30

Education

- o Hemlock Help Clinics & Facilitator Training Workshops:
 - 10/29/16 Calhoun
 - 11/12/16 Dahlonega & Hiwassee
- o Fairs & festivals: none remaining
- o Community programs:
 - 11/5/16 Goleega POA presentation
 - 11/6/16 Glen Meadows POA presentation
- o Youth programs: need to schedule Hemlock Lesson for Mason Sheffield's class at North Forsyth H.S.

Public Communications

- Print media –articles: Dave will post publicity for remaining classes on Facebook; Donna will send articles/ notices to newspapers.
- New materials needed -- Nothing new is requested, but Kim Woods will do a limited mailing to waterway property owners in Fightintown Creek area using existing post card stock.
- Bio-control materials -- Need to prepare one publicity piece re beetles and one instructional piece re field insectaries early next year.

Service

- Current Facilitator corps: 235 Facilitators in Georgia and 57 in other states. In Georgia about 60 Facs are very active, another 40 somewhat active; in other states activity level is unknown.
- Hemlock treatment projects:
 - 11/4/16 R Ranch in Dahlonega
 - 11/16/16 Anna Ruby in Helen
 - 11/19/16 Laurel Ridge in Cherry Log

Saplings

- Rescue, potting, raising, adoptions: need to locate additional places to rescue saplings and places to establish distributed nurseries
- Reforestation along trout streams: need help from TU to identify planting sites in northwest GA
- Hemlock field insectaries: first project scheduled for 12/8/16 at University of North Georgia
- Status of permit to dig on national forest: still pending; USFS requests a letter describing our program and a promise not to use USFS saplings for commercial purposes

2016 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Future use of funds

- We have only two major projects between now and the end of the calendar year that will require significant funds.
 - The **SGH-BMTA hemlock treatment project at Laurel Ridge** on November 19 is likely to cost about \$1850. Derrick Morris has already raised most of the money needed through a GoFundMe account; SGH will contribute up to \$500; and the BMTA has promised to contribute a few hundred.
 - The **SGH field insectary project at UNG** is likely to cost about \$800, with half of that being for the purchase of large sheared saplings. We will use Cox funds for this project.
- **Annual appeal coming up.** The team recommended that we do it in conjunction with 2017 Arbor Day in Georgia. In January, Dave will post the campaign on Facebook, and Donna will post it on our web site. Dave will also prepare a letter to be mailed out to former donors, Facilitators, and other individuals chosen by team members in early February.

FUTURE

SGH is in our 7th year of operation and has grown steadily in membership, resources, and scope of services while remaining faithful to our original mission, vision, goals and guiding principles. Our Leadership Team is blessed with extraordinarily dedicated, talented, and experienced members, and the composition has been remarkably stable over the years, with the exception of the non-board positions of Secretary and Treasurer. We can be justifiably proud of the widespread public awareness we have raised concerning the hemlock issue, the thousands of people we have served, and the tens of thousands of hemlocks we have helped save on public and private land.

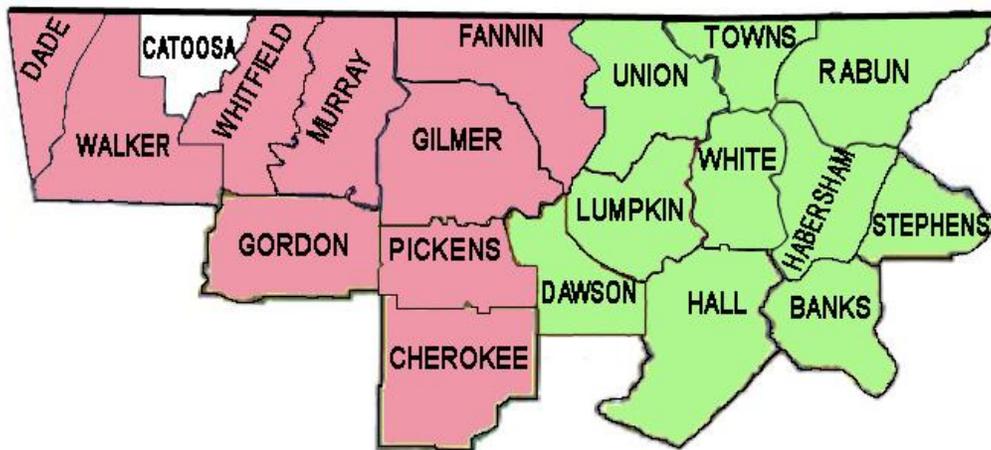
As we look forward, the challenges will be increased organizational efficiency, effectiveness, capacity, continuity, and personal satisfaction among our Leadership Team members and other volunteers. So the group spent considerable time discussing the following questions:

Scope: *What do we really want SGH to be doing? Are there some things we're currently doing that we should eliminate, cut back on, or change? Are there some things we should add?*

The general consensus was that we are engaged in the right educational and charitable service efforts relative to awareness and chemical treatment of trees and should continue them, but we should also increase our focus on biological controls.

Organization: *Would it be a good idea to migrate to a model of distributed responsibilities such that one or more individuals serving as program managers would take complete ownership of a program or part of a program? Should program managers be Board members or could they be non-Board members who report into the Board?*

The group felt strongly that we should migrate coordination of as many of our programs as possible to a decentralized model based on geography. Most program managers would be Board members, but other non-Board members could accept coordination responsibilities and would report into the Board. See map and responsibilities list below.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education: Darrell Sheffield eastern counties, Derrick Morris western counties – Hemlock Help Clinics & Facilitator Workshops to be offered together – Fairs and festivals – Community & youth programs & presentations – Input to annual information filing – Development of educational materials (to remain centralized for now) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Treatment Projects: Bob Pledger eastern counties, Frank Gheesling western counties – USFS & DNR – Neighborhood & charitable – Availability of chemicals – Soil injectors – Facilitator engagement (Bob) – Input to annual information filing – Bio-control support (to remain centralized for now) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saplings Projects: Buz Stone eastern counties, Chris Curtin western counties, John Shearouse technical advisor – Rescue/potting – Adoptions/donations – Hemlock restoration on trout streams – Hemlock field insectaries – Input to annual information filing – Distributed sapling nurseries (future?) – USFS cooperator for hybrid Carolina hemlocks (future?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Public Communications: Dave Teffeteller – Facebook – Publicity for training & events – Articles for newspapers & magazines – Annual membership appeal – Signage & all corporate design – Input to annual information filing – Hemlock Help Line, SGH web site, & annual report (to remain centralized for now) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secretary: Kim Wood – Membership & contacts records – Volunteer recruitment & coordination – Special event planning – Materials & other support for education & special events – Input to annual information filing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Treasurer: open – Income and expense records – Quarterly reports and input to annual information filing – Grant acquisition and administration – Disbursements – Hemlock cost share program (future?)

Capabilities: *Are there some skills, talents, positions we need to have for a strong, well functioning organization that we don't currently have? And if so, where/how should we seek them?*

The group commented that we could benefit from having one or more persons who could focus on developing or enhancing **outreach/partnership opportunities** with other environmental and recreational nonprofits, industry groups, local municipalities, property owner associations and community/civic organizations, educational entities.

In order to support **bio-control efforts** in a meaningful way, we will need one or more persons to focus on learning a great deal more about adelgid life cycle, beetle life cycle and rearing protocols, field insectaries and release sites, as well as the activities and needs of our public land managers and various research entities. This learning would provide the basis for preparation of educational materials to increase the public's awareness, understanding, and engagement and better insight into how we can all help.

This subject needs continued thought and discussion.

Continuity: *Given that none of us is getting any younger, what can we do to bring more young members into SGH and engage them on a path of growth toward leadership positions?*

Ideas included increased engagement with youth organizations such Boy & Girl Scouts, FFA, 4-H, environmental science classes and clubs at the high school and college level; possibly sponsoring creative hemlock-related educational or service events or contests.

This subject also needs continued thought and discussion.

THANKS EVERYONE!

NEXT MEETING

Sunday, January 8, 2017, 1:00 p.m. at 37 Woody Bend