

Southwest Landowner Woods & Wildlife Conference

February 11, 2023 – Wytheville Meeting Center
Wytheville



	Time	Topic	Presenter
General Sessions Main Ballroom	8:30	Registration & breakfast	
	9:00	Introductory remarks	Jennifer Gagnon
	9:15-10:15	Program Kick-off Conserving your Legacy: Managing Hardwood Forests in Uncertain Times	Tara Keyser
-----BREAK-----			
Concurrent Sessions 1 TBA	10:30-11:30	a. Legacy Planning – What it is and Why it is Important/State of the Forest Resource b. How to Control Nonnative Invasive Plants c. Know Where you Stand on Your Land d. Ruffed Grouse in Southwest Virginia: Obstacles and Opportunities	Bill Worrell/Karl Didier Kyle Peer Jeremy Hutchins Charlie Mize & Charles Faires
-----LUNCH-----			
General Session Main Ballroom	12:30 – 1:10	Plenary Session Invasive Insects Impacting Woodlands in Virginia	Eric Day
Concurrent Sessions 2 TBA	1:15 – 2:15	a. Legacy Planning – Conserving your Family and your Land b. You Want me to do <i>What</i> in my Forest? c. Collecting and Propagating Native Seeds d. Implementing Quality Deer Management on Your Property	Matthew Miller/Karl Didier Joe Rossetti Leighton Reid Bill Bassinger
-----BREAK-----			
Concurrent Sessions 3 TBA	2:30 – 3:30	a. Legacy Planning – Legal Tools b. Ask a Natural Resources Expert- Justin Funk Moderator c. Principles and Practices for Pruning Trees Around the Home and Landscape	Paul Cassell Chris Sullivan, Mike Skinner, Bill Bassinger Hunter Musser, Phil Meeks Eric Wiseman
General Sessions Main Ballroom	3:40	Capstone Breeding Bird Conservation in SWVA & the Role of Private Lands	Ashley Peele
	4:30	Closing remarks, door prizes, evaluations	

Speakers/Planning Committee (*planning committee member)

Bill Bassinger

District Wildlife Biologist
Virginia Department of Wildlife
Resources
1796 Highway Sixteen
Marion, VA 24354
276-782-1625
bill.bassinger@dwr.virginia.gov

Paul Cassell

Cassell & Crewe, P.C.
135 West Monroe Street Suite A
Wytheville, VA 24382
276-228-5566
pcassell@cassellcrewe.com

Eric Day

Insect Lab, Manager
Virginia Tech
205-A Price Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-231-4899
ericday@vt.edu

Karl Didier

Forestland Conservation Program
Manager
Virginia Department of Forestry
900 Natural Resources Drive
Suite 800
Charlottesville, VA 22903
434-459-8278
karl.didier@dof.virginia.gov

Charles Faïres

Southern Appalachian Forest
Conservation Coordinator
Ruffed Grouse Society
412-443-0905
charlesf@ruffedgrousesociety.org

Justin Funk*

Area Forester
Virginia Department of Forestry
106 Forestry Lane
Galax, VA 24333
540-580-0863
justin.funk@dof.virginia.gov

Jennifer Gagnon*

VFLEP Coordinator
228 Cheatham Hall 0324
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-231-6391
jgagnon@vt.edu

Donnie Garman*

Area Forester
Virginia Department of Forestry
106 Forestry Lane
Galax, VA 24333
276-235-2658
Donald.garman@dof.virginia.gov

Daniel Hosack*

Area Forester
Virginia Department of Forestry
100 East Main Street
Room 106
Floyd, VA 24091
434-529-7099
daniel.hosack@dof.virginia.gov

Jeremy Hutchins

Elevation Surveying LLC
5204 Long Shop Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540-739-3338
elevsurv@gmail.com

Tara Keyser

Research Forester
USDA Forest Service
200 W.T. Weaver Boulevard
Asheville, NC 28804
828-257-4303
tara.keyser@usda.gov

Phil Meeks

Extension Agent
Virginia Cooperative Extension
515 A Hurricane Road
Wise Skill Center Complex A
Wise, VA 24293
276-328-6194
pmeeks@vt.edu

Matthew Miller

Extension Agent
Virginia Cooperative Extension
2110 North 4th Street
Wytheville, VA 24382
276-223-6040
mamille6@vt.edu

Charlie Mize

Public Lands Wildlife Forester
Ruffed Grouse Society
412-694-5969
charlie@ruffedgrousesociety.org

Hunter Musser

District Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation
Service
340 North Main Street
Suite 102
Marion, VA 24354
276-706-3066
hunter.musser@usda.gov

Ashley Peele

Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas
Coordinator
Conservation Management Institute
Virginia Tech
1700 Kraft Drive Suite 1375
Blacksburg, VA 24060
ashpeele@vt.edu

Kyle Peer*

Superintendent, Reynolds
Homestead
Virginia Tech
P.O. Box 70
Critz, VA 24082
276-694-4135
krpeer@vt.edu

Ellen Powell*

Conservation Education
Coordinator
Virginia Department of Forestry
900 Natural Resources Drive Ste. 800
Charlottesville, VA 22903
434-987-0475
ellen.powell@dof.virginia.gov

J. Leighton Reid

Assistant Professor
Virginia Tech
420 Smyth Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-231-4224
jlireid@vt.edu

Hunter Romano*

Extension Agent
Virginia Cooperative Extension
144 Seddon Street
Bland, VA 24315
276-688-3542
romano@vt.edu

Andrew Rosenberger*

Senior Private Lands Biologist
Virginia Department of Wildlife
Resources
75 Hampton Boulevard
Christiansburg, VA 24073
540-585-3628
andrew.rosenberger@va.usda.gov

Joe Rossetti

Hardwood Initiative Coordinator
Virginia Department of Forestry
900 Natural Resources Drive Ste 800
Charlottesville, VA 22903
540-359-1693
joe.rossetti@dof.virginia.gov

Mike Skinner*

Owner/President
Confluence Forestry & Land
Management Services, Inc.
4530 Susannah Drive
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540-320-3737
confluencefstry@comcast.net

Karen Snape

Generation NEXT Program
Coordinator
313 Cheatham Hall 0324
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-231-6494
ksnape@vt.edu

Chris Sullivan

Deputy Regional Forester
Virginia Department of Forestry
1240 West Main Street
Abingdon, VA 24212
276-692-7621
chris.sullivan@dof.virginia.gov

Bill Sweeney*

Area Forester
Virginia Department of Forestry
285 South Main Street
Ste. B
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-529-8549
bill.sweeney@dof.virginia.gov

Eric Wiseman

Associate Professor
Virginia Tech
228 Cheatham Hall
Blacksburg, VA 24061
540-231-5148
pwiseman@vt.edu

Bill Worrell*

SW District Forestry & Natural
Resources Extension Agent
Virginia Cooperative Extension
P.O. Box 697
Lebanon, VA 24266
276-889-8056
bworrell@vt.edu

Session Descriptions

9:15 – 10:15 Program Kick-off

Conserving Your Legacy: Managing Hardwood Forests in Uncertain Times. Tara Keyser, USDA Forest Service.

During this presentation, the audience will develop a more detailed understanding of the ecological and economic values associated with upland hardwood forests, including how past land use and forest management has influenced the current structure and composition of Virginia's hardwood forests. Tara will discuss the linkages between hardwood forests and the production of ecosystem goods and services, including water, biodiversity, wildlife habitat, and provide science-based information related to the key role sustainable forest management has in conserving Virginia's hardwood forests.

10:30 – 11:30 Concurrent Sessions

Legacy Planning – What it is and Why it is Important.

Bill Worrell, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Karl Didier, Virginia Department of Forestry

Karen Snape, Virginia Tech, Moderator

Your love of your land, your management ethic, your desire to see your property remain intact, in forest, and in family ownership – these are the components of your woodland legacy. Most woodland owners in Virginia cite legacy as a main reason for owning land. This session will provide details on why legacy planning is important and how to start planning yours.

How to Control Nonnative Invasive Plants.

Kyle Peer, Virginia Tech

Along with global warming, parcellation and fragmentation, nonnative invasive plants are a major threat to Virginia's forests. In this talk we will discuss controlling the five most relevant species that you will find in your woods: autumn olive, callery pear, tree of heaven, Chinese privet, and Japanese stiltgrass. We will also cover pesticide safety, how to properly read an herbicide label, and how to calibrate a sprayer.

Know Where you Stand on Your Land.

Jeremy Hutchins, Elevation Surveying, LLC

This session will cover ways that the landowner can be more proactive in the surveying of their land, such as deed research, boundary retracements, and recovering boundary monuments. I will cover the technical aspects of surveying and how and why you should take a more active role in understanding your land.

Ruffed Grouse in Southwest Virginia: Obstacles and Opportunities.

Charlie Mize & Charles Faires, Ruffed Grouse Society

This presentation will briefly cover ruffed grouse biology, explain their recent population decline, and discuss what is needed to stall the decline or bring the numbers back up. This will include concrete management practices that forestland owners can implement and will be explicitly related to other forest health trends and habitat requirement of a large suite of other species. We will present on what the Ruffed Grouse Society is doing in the region and locally in Southwest Virginia to restore habitat and support healthy forests, including support for local landowners to steward healthy habitat on their own land.

12:30 – 1:10 Plenary

Invasive Insects Impacting Woodlands in Virginia.

Eric Day, Virginia Tech

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Spongy Moth have spread to most of Virginia, but biocontrol and management are reducing their impact on forest health. New pests such as Spotted Lanternfly and Red Imported Fire Ant are not direct pests of forest trees but can impact harvesting and management.

1:15 – 2:15 Concurrent Sessions

Legacy Planning – Conserving your Family and your Land.

Matthew Miller, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Karl Didier, Virginia Department of Forestry

Karen Snape, Virginia Tech, Moderator

In this session, you will learn how to talk to your family about your wishes for the future of your land. If done correctly, planning for the future of your land can improve familial relationships and bring your family closer. You will also learn about the bevy of conservation tools available to Virginia woodland owners – tools that keep your land intact and in forest into the future.

You Want me to do *What* in my Forest?

Joe Rosetti, Virginia Department of Forestry

Ever wondered why foresters recommend what they do? Won't the forest just take care of itself? Joe will dive into several forest management activities that can help various hardwood forests, why foresters recommend them, and what may be appropriate for your property.

Collecting and Propagating Native Plant Seeds.

Leighton Reid, Virginia Tech

Collecting, storing, swapping, and propagating native plant seeds is a fun and inexpensive way to promote biological diversity on your own property. In this presentation, I will discuss the rationale for native seed collecting and practical and ethical considerations for collecting, storing, and propagating native plant seeds.

Implementing Quality Deer Management on Your Property.

Bill Bassinger, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

An essential component of quality deer management is achieving a balanced age structure in the deer herd. QDM strives to produce healthy deer herds in balance with existing habitat conditions by protecting young bucks from the harvest and ensuring an adequate number of antlerless deer are harvested. In this presentation, methods and practices will be discussed that landowners can institute on their properties to attain a properly balanced deer herd.

2:30 – 3:30 Concurrent Sessions

Legacy Planning – Legal Tools to Plan your Legacy.

Paul Cassell, Cassell and Crewe

Karen Snape, Virginia Tech, Moderator

There are financial and legal tools available to help you reduce the tax burden on your heirs. The tools that are best for your family will depend on your unique situation. Fortunately, you now have a team of trusted advisors to help you choose. Keep in mind, gifting and estate planning laws and tax codes change periodically. Professional advisors should be aware of these changes and be able to advise you accordingly.

Ask a Natural Resources Professional Panel.
Bill Bassinger, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources
Phil Meeks, Virginia Cooperative Extension
Hunter Musser, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Mike Skinner, Confluence Forestry
Chris Sullivan, Virginia Department of Forestry
Justin Funk, Virginia Department of Forestry, Moderator

Spend time getting to know local natural resource professions who can help you manage your woods and the wildlife that live in them. The panel will discuss the services they provide and how you can prepare to make the most of your time when they visit your property. This session will provide ample opportunity for you to ask questions.

Principles and Practices for Pruning Trees Around the Home and Landscape.
Eric Wiseman, Virginia Tech

Trees around the home and landscape often require pruning to keep them healthy, safe, and attractive. Before taking on a do-it-yourself pruning project, there are certain things you need to know about pruning principles and practices. In this presentation, you will learn how to identify pruning needs for your trees, which tools you will need for the job, and how to prune trees safely and effectively.

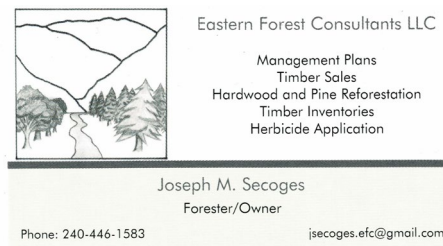
3:40 – 4:30 Capstone

Breeding Bird Conservation in southwest Virginia & the Role of Private Lands.

Ashley Peele, Conservation Management Institute

From 2016–2022, hundreds of volunteers collected data on the distribution and status of Virginia's bird populations, leading to the largest database on our breeding birds in VA history. This information provided insights on birds across the Commonwealth, including many species of conservation concern who breed in southwest Virginia. In this talk, I will share early insights about how bird populations are faring in our corner of the Appalachian Mountains, what has changed over the last 30–40 years, and the increasing importance of private lands for both migratory and resident bird species. Additionally, I will discuss the vital role of citizen science for wildlife conservation and opportunities to engage with bird conservation in our region.

Sponsors, Partners, and Supporters



Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law.



Speaker Bios

Bill Bassinger, District Wildlife Biologist, Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources

Bill has worked for the Department of Wildlife Resources for over 31 years. He is currently the District Wildlife Biologist charged with implementing agency programs in a six-county district comprised of Bland, Grayson, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, and Wythe counties. His work responsibilities involve providing guidance to influence wildlife populations, wildlife associated recreation, wildlife habitats, and human-wildlife conflicts on private and public lands. He routinely conducts wildlife surveys, provides technical assistance to landowners, develops county-level wildlife management strategies, assists with research projects, provides support to US Forest Service wildlife programs, responds to injured and/or captive wildlife, and continues to assist with the management of Virginia's elk herd.

Paul Cassell, Attorney, Cassell & Crewe, P.C.

Paul Cassell graduated from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1996. After that, he initially practiced in Charleston, West Virginia and then went to Washington, D.C. In 2002, Paul returned to southwest Virginia eventually establishing his law firm, Cassell & Crewe, P.C. with his law partner Trent Crewe, in Wytheville. Paul resides on his family farm with his wife, Melissa, and children, Christopher and Elizabeth.

Eric Day, Manager Virginia Tech Insect Lab, Virginia Tech

Eric was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has a bachelor's degree from Wilmington College, and a master's degree from the University of Illinois. Eric has worked at Virginia Tech since 1986 as Manager of the Insect Identification Laboratory. This job entails conducting pest surveys for new and invasive insects, including wood boring beetles and the spotted lanternfly. He also assists Christmas tree growers with pest management.

Karl Didier, Forestland Conservation Manager, Virginia Department of Forestry

Karl leads VDOF's efforts to acquire and steward open space easements, as well as protecting working forestlands through other innovative strategies, like Forest Legacy Planning and environmental impact assessments, and mitigation. Karl has spent many years working in the non-profit sector overseeing conservation on global and national scales. He has spent most of his career helping organizations develop, apply, and assess the impact of their conservation programs, especially those focused on forests and forest biodiversity. He has worked for Rainforest Trust, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and as an independent consultant in adaptive management of conservation projects. Karl has a B.S. in Biological Sciences from University of Southern California, a Master's and a PhD in Environmental and Forest Biology from the SUNY's College of Environmental Science & Forestry, and is an adjunct professor at the University of Florida.

Charles Faires, Southern Appalachian Forest Conservation Coordinator, Ruffed Grouse Society

Charlie Faires is the Southern Appalachian Forest Conservation Coordinator with the Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society where he works across public and private lands with state and federal partners. Charlie holds an Associates in Fish and Wildlife Management Technology from Haywood Community College and a Master of Forestry from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Prior to joining the Ruffed Grouse Society, Charlie worked as a consulting forester in Southeast Kentucky, working with industrial and family landowners to manage their forestland.

Jeremy Hutchins, Land Surveyor, Elevation Surveying, LLC

Jeremy Hutchins is a licensed land surveyor with a diverse background of surveying knowledge ranging from small residential lots, large commercial properties to rugged mountain boundaries. With over 18 years of surveying experience, Jeremy has worked in South Carolina, Colorado, and Virginia. These locations have provided him with the opportunity to survey unique projects and grow professionally as a land surveyor. Jeremy graduated from Greenville Technical College with an Associates in Engineering degree in Geomatics Technology in 2007. He resides in Montgomery County with his wife, Emily, Huck (an aussie) and newborn son, Hayes.

Dr. Tara Keyser, Research Forester and the Director of the Center for Forest Restoration and Management, USDA Forest Service

Tara Keyser is a research forester and the Director of the Center for Forest Restoration and Management with the USDA Forest Service's Southern Research Station located in Asheville, North Carolina. Her research program focuses on the sustainable management and restoration of upland hardwood in the eastern US. She has extensive experience in implementing large, at-scale experimentally designed silvicultural studies that provide the science-based information necessary to refine existing and develop new silvicultural methods and tools in upland oak ecosystems.

Phil Meeks, Unit Coordinator and Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Phil Meeks has been the Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources in Wise County since 2013, and prior to that, he was an Extension agent with the University of Kentucky for 9 years. Originally from Tennessee, Phil has a B.S. in Forestry from the University of Tennessee.

Matthew Miller, Unit Coordinator and Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Matthew Miller is the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension agent right here in Wythe County. He has bachelor's and Master of Science degrees in animal science from Virginia Tech.

Charlie Mize, Public Lands Forester, Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society

Charlie Mize is the southwest Virginia Public Lands Forester for the Ruffed Grouse Society and American Woodcock Society. Hailing from central North Carolina, Charlie has worked in forestland conservation in the South and on the West Coast and holds a Master of Forestry and a Master of Environmental Management from Duke University and a B.S. in Sustainable Development from Appalachian State University. He is currently based in Abingdon.

Hunter Musser, District Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Hunter Musser has been a District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service since 2013. Prior to that, he worked for NRCS as a Soil Conservationist since 2010. He started his career with NRCS as a Soil Conservationist Technician in 2005. He is a native of Wythe County where he has been actively involved in his family's farming operation (beef cattle, straw, hay, vegetables) his entire life. Still live on the family farming operation.

Ashley Peele, Coordinator, Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas, Conservation Management Institute, Virginia Tech

Dr. Ashley Peele is an avian ecologist who has spent 18 years studying avian conservation and management in the US and Caribbean. She became Coordinator of the 2nd Virginia Breeding Bird Atlas in late 2015, after her PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Tulane University. Her graduate work focused on studying winter population dynamics of migratory songbirds in Jamaica. She has managed bird conservation projects for NGOs and worked on sponsored projects for the Florida Wildlife and Conservation Commission, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and US Geological Survey. Her research background and interests include avian microbiology, migration ecology, population biology, and the application of citizen science tools for bird conservation.

Currently, Ashley is a research scientist and course instructor at VA Tech in the Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation department, focusing primarily on migratory bird conservation and community science in the Appalachian region. In her spare time, she can typically be found hiking, gardening on her place near Pilot (VA), or birding around southwest Virginia.

Kyle Peer, Superintendent of the Reynolds Homestead Forest Resources Research Center and Virginia Cooperative Extension Christmas Tree Specialist

Kyle Peer is the Superintendent of the Reynolds Homestead Forest Resources Research Center in Critz, VA and has also been the Virginia Cooperative Extension Specialist for Christmas trees in the state of Virginia since 2005. As superintendent of the Reynolds Homestead his main responsibilities include maintaining the 800-acre property and buildings, helping to install and maintain forestry research projects for students and collaborators, and providing extension activities in the form of workshops, presentations, and publications. Kyle received his BS in Environmental Science from Richard Stockton College in 1994 and an MS in Forestry from the University of Maine in 1997.

Leighton Reid, Assistant Professor, Virginia Tech

Leighton Reid is an assistant professor of ecological restoration in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences at Virginia Tech. He is interested in restoring habitat to preserve biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and improve rural livelihoods, and he has ongoing research programs focused on tropical forest restoration in Ecuador and Madagascar and temperate grassland and woodland restoration in Virginia. Leighton also leads the Ecological Restoration undergraduate major at Virginia Tech and teaches courses in Ecological Restoration and Plant Materials for Environmental Restoration.

Joe Rossetti, Hardwood Initiative Coordinator, Virginia Department of Forestry

Joe Rossetti has spent his 18-year career in forestry in the woods of West Virginia and Virginia. Joe started with VDOF as an FIA forester in the Eastern Region, then the Area Forester for Prince George and Surry counties, then northern Virginia counties centered around Fauquier. While Senior Area Forester, Joe also managed the Conway Robinson and Whitney State Forests. Now the first Hardwood Initiative Coordinator for the agency, he still lives in Culpeper County with his family, chickens, garden, and 0.5 acres of forest.

Mike Skinner, Consulting Forester and Owner, Confluence Forestry

Mike Skinner holds bachelor's and Master's Degrees in forestry from Virginia Tech and has been a practicing forester for over 45 years. Judging from his resume, he is either good at a lot of things or just can't hold a job. He has worked for natural resource agencies in Kentucky and Virginia, has been a graduate research assistant, has worked in timber procurement for two different hardwood plywood mills, was regional manager for a timber dealership company, and is in his second stint as a consulting forester, as owner and president of Confluence Forestry. As a consultant he provides timber appraisals suitable for purchase, sale and tax purposes, acts as agent and harvest manager for private timber sales, has been qualified as an expert witness in timber-related disputes and provides general forest management advice to landowners. Mike is a member of the Association of Consulting Foresters, the Society of American Foresters, and the Virginia and West Virginia Forestry Associations and is a Registered Forester in West Virginia. He lives with his wife of 49 years on 22 forested acres on the side of Brush Mountain near Blacksburg, where he recreates with his passel of dogs and harvests firewood and ramps.

Chris Sullivan, Deputy Regional Forester, Virginia Department of Forestry

Chris Sullivan is a 1994 Virginia Tech School of Forestry grad, began his career intensively managing Champion Paper Company lands in Eastern North Carolina and ultimately Southside Virginia. Since 2002 Chris has led Department of Forestry efforts in Southwest Virginia and currently serves as Deputy Regional Forester for the Western Region.

Dr. Eric Wiseman, Associate Professor, Virginia Tech

Dr. Eric Wiseman is an Associate Professor of urban and community forestry in the Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation at Virginia Tech. He holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from Virginia Tech and earned a Ph.D. in forest resources from Clemson University. Dr. Wiseman's areas of expertise are urban forest ecophysiology and management, tree care best practices, and green infrastructure implementation. He worked full-time as a professional field arborist prior to his career in academia and has held the Certified Arborist credential of the International Society of Arboriculture for over 20 years.

Bill Worrell, SW District Forestry & Natural Resources Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Bill serves the forestry education needs for all twenty-one counties in VCE's Southwest District. Bill works to assess educational needs, develop and deliver objective, research-based educational programs to homeowners, forest landowners, forest workers, natural resource professionals, Extension Agents and local governments; respond to requests for forestry, urban forestry, and natural resources information; and work cooperatively with the local government and state agencies, assist with economic development, land conservation, and urban-rural interface issues. Bill has a Master of Forestry and a Bachelor of Science from Virginia Tech. He is a Certified Forester, with the Society of American Foresters, and a Certified Arborist.

Before joining Extension in 2005, Bill worked in Wytheville for the Virginia Department of Forestry as the Resource Conservation and Development Forester where he developed training and outreach programs for various audiences and developed grant proposals to fund conservation and education projects. Bill began his career as a procurement forester for a hardwood lumber and flooring manufacturing company where he worked in Appalachia, Virginia and in Richwood, WV.