

Virginia Forest Landowner e-Update

March 2025

Featured Events

Fifteen Minutes in the Forest

- Fourth Fridays at 12:15
- March 28 – The Woods in Your Backyard
- Watch archived videos on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube Premier](#)

Woodland Owner Retreats

- March 28-29
 - Central Virginia Beginning Retreat, Appomattox
- May 30-31
 - Southwest Virginia Beginning Retreat, Abingdon
- September 5-6
 - Southeast Virginia Advanced Retreat, New Kent

Online Woodland Options for Landowners Short Course

- April 7 – June 9
- Online/Self-paced

Visit the [Events Calendar](#) for details!

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Good morning, Forest Update Subscribers,

These have been a couple of tough years for vegetation in many parts of Virginia. From the active [fall 2023 wildfire season](#), the ongoing [spongy moth outbreaks in the Valley](#), summer droughts, [Hurricane Helene](#), and multiple flooding and ice events this winter, there are trees and branches down everywhere. Which means there is a lot of fuel on the ground. So this is a reminder that [Virginia's 4 PM Burning Law](#) is in effect from February 15 to April 30. The Burning Law bans open-air burning before 4:00 PM within 300 feet of the woods or dry grass, which could carry fire to the woods. Burning is allowed between 4:00 PM and midnight if the burner takes proper precautions and always attends the fire.

In addition to weather and insects, some of the vegetation in my yard has also been impacted by large omnivores. Two juvenile black bears have roamed our farm for a couple of years. In addition to raiding our trash cans (which are now in bear-proof structures), they have discovered the crabapples that line our driveway. The crabapples are large enough to form a lovely canopy of white blooms, but they are still relatively small – 4 to 6 inches in diameter and 20 feet tall. This winter, the bears climbed the trees and ate the crabapples. The result? Broken tops and branches galore. In addition, one bear relieved himself next to the driveway and left such a large pile of seed-filled scat that everyone who pulls into our driveway gets out of their vehicle to inspect it (I am thrilled our friends appreciate a large pile of bear scat). I've posted photos of both the tree damage and the scat on the [VFLEP Facebook page](#).

So, what to do about the bears? Well, nothing for now. They are cool enough I'm willing to share my vegetation with them. As long as they stay out of my blueberries!

In other news, I've been sharing information about the Beneficial Ownership Reporting Rule for several months now. This reporting requirement is for most small businesses, including family businesses like LLCs and FLPs. If you have any type of small business, [check](#)

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[here to see if you are required to report.](#)

Despite ongoing litigation, the reporting requirement is now back in place, with a deadline of March 21, 2025. However, FinCEN has stated they will not be penalizing businesses for failing to comply with the March 21st deadline and they will not be taking enforcement action against anyone who fails to comply with the current deadline. FinCEN has announced that no later than March 21st, it will again extend the reporting deadline while it works to revise existing reporting requirements later this year. Visit <http://www.fincen.gov/boi> to keep up to date on this ever-changing situation. If you decide to report, it is free and does not require a credit card number.

Finally, are you a family woodland owner interested in learning more about forest carbon programs and sharing your thoughts and insights? We invite you to participate in one of our upcoming **woodland owner focus group sessions**! We are conducting focus groups (short meetings) as part of a research study led by the *Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation at Virginia Tech*. The goal of this study is to understand the factors that woodland owners think about when considering engaging in forest carbon programs. We hope our research will help improve contract options and promote fair participation. Contact Kalani Perera kalanip@vt.edu for more information.

Useful Resources

- [Disaster Relief](#)
- Stay updated on the [Beneficial Ownership Information Reporting Rule](#)
- [Tax Tips for Forest Landowners: 2024 Tax Year](#)
- [Storm Preparation and Tree Resiliency](#)
- [State of the Forest 2024: Annual Report on Virginia's Forests](#)
- [Forest Health Review: 2024 Report on the Health of Virginia's Forests](#)

We have a busy spring schedule of landowner events for you to choose from!

Events

Fifteen Minutes in the Forest

The award-winning Fifteen Minutes in the Forest video series features a wide-array of topics and are shown the 4th Friday of each

month at 12:15 on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube Premier](#)

- March 28 – The Woods in Your Backyard
- April 25 – Bobcats in the Bush
- May 23 – Brush Piles
- June 27 – Before the Storm
- [Watch 100+ Fifteen Minutes in the Forest videos on our YouTube Channel](#)

[Bobwhite Webinar](#)

- March 5
- 6 – 7:30
- Online
- Free

Register [online](#)

[Remote Pilot \(Drone\) Certification Test Prep Workshops](#)

These 2-day workshops will prepare participants with the knowledge necessary to take the FAA Remote Knowledge Aircraft Test (aka Part 107). The workshop provides participants with an overview of federal regulations, best flight operational strategies, and safety.

- March 5 & 7, or June 12 & 13
- Virtual
- \$250
- [Learn more and register online](#)

Introduction to Forest Farming

- March 13
- Orange
- Contact Luke Bello, bellol@vt.edu for details.

[The Woods in Your Backyard Online Course](#)

University of Maryland Extension is offering this 10-week, self-directed, non-credit course. The course will help landowners convert lawn to natural areas and enhance stewardship of existing natural areas.

- March 24 – June 2
- Online
- \$125
- Register [online](#)

For more information, visit:

https://go.umd.edu/the_course.

[Landowner Retreats](#)

Landowner Retreats are co-hosted by the Virginia Department of Forestry and Virginia Cooperative Extension. Retreats provide information on hardwood and pine forest management, legacy planning, management planning, and more. They combine classroom, field trip, and hands-on activities to teach concepts of sustainable woodland and wildlife management. Registration opens 8 weeks prior to events.

- Central Virginia - Beginning Woodland Owner Retreat
 - March 28-29
 - [Agenda](#)
 - [Holiday Lake 4 H Educational Center](#), Appomattox
 - Register [by mail](#)
 - Register [online](#)
- Southwest Virginia - Beginning Woodland Owner Retreat
 - May 30-31
 - [Southwest Virginia 4H Education Center](#), Abingdon
- Southeast Virginia - Beyond the Basics: Advanced Woodland Owner Retreat
 - September 5-6
 - [New Kent Forestry Center](#), Providence Forge

Online Woodland Options for Landowners Short Course

This 10-week, self-paced, not-for-credit course is for landowners of any acreage who want to gain an introductory level of understanding of basic woodland management and become better stewards of their land. Registration includes 5 books and an optional in-person field trip.

- April 7 - June 9
- Online/Self-paced
- \$55/family
- [Syllabus](#)
- Register [online](#)
- Register [by mail](#)

Virginia Forestry Summit

- May 7-9
- [Hotel Roanoke](#), Roanoke
- Registration opens Spring 2025

An Urban Forestry Tour in the Star City of the South

On this tour of Roanoke (and a little of Salem), we will eat lunch at, and tour the grounds of the

famous Fishburn Mansion, a 42-room Georgian-revival home built in 1907. We'll learn about using Missouri Gravel Beds to propagate trees, community gardens, and hear from the local tree Stewards. Next, we'll travel over to Virginia Western Community College, a Bee Campus USA, and have a guided tour of their arboretum. We'll end the afternoon at Sherwood Memorial Park in Salem where we'll learn about Virginia's Big Tree Program and see Virginia's Champion Atlas cedar. We'll also learn about efforts to protect urban ash trees from the emerald ash borer.

- May 9
- 12:30 – 4:30
- Roanoke
- \$30 – includes lunch and transportation
- [Tentative agenda](#)
- Registration opens Spring 2025

Visit the Blue Ridge PRISM website for
[programs on nonnative invasives](#)

I look forward to seeing you in person this year!

Jennifer

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