

# 1-10-16 Notes for SGH Leadership Team Meeting

The meeting was held at the home of Donna Shearer in Dahlonega. In attendance were Bob Pledger, Buz Stone, Chris Curtin, Dave Teffeteller, Donna Shearer, and Frank Gheesling. Peggy Reich was unable to attend.

## BOARD MATTERS

### \* Thanks from Donna

I want to express my sincere appreciation to each member for so generously sharing your time, talents, energy, and other resources in your service on our Board in 2015. Because of you, hundreds more people have been made aware of the threat to the hemlocks; thousands more hemlocks have been saved; and the health and beauty of our north Georgia forests and waterways have been preserved and enhanced. Your dedicated hearts for the hemlock, wise leadership, and hard work are gifts beyond measure to all who live, work, and visit here.

On a personal note, I hope you know how deeply grateful I am for the proactive approach to meeting challenges, habit of inquiry and independent thinking, openness and tolerance, respect and transparency, and spirit of excellence that you possess as individuals and bring together to form the best team in the world. I am most blessed to serve with you and, most especially, to count you as friends. So, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you do and all you are.

I wish you and your families everything wonderful in the New Year and look forward to our best year ever as a team.  
Donna

### \* Welcome to Darrell Sheffield

We are delighted to welcome Darrell Sheffield to our Board. In his Board application (which was unanimously approved) Darrell said, "I have a deep love of the outdoors and of the southern Blue Ridge mountains. The Hemlock decline has deeply affected me, and I want to support those people and organizations that can make a difference."

Darrell, his wife Melissa, and their four children live in Alpharetta, where they are very active in their community. And although he is still working full time, he and almost his entire family have already contributed a great deal as SGH volunteers, including Facilitator training for him and son Mason and seven hemlock treatment projects in the past two years. Welcome aboard!

### \* Commitment to Service and Annual Acknowledgment

All who were present committed to continue service on our Board throughout 2016 and signed the Annual Acknowledgment indicating that they have reviewed, understand, and agree to abide by the organizing documents of Save Georgia's Hemlocks. Donna will contact Peggy Reich separately concerning these matters.

## REVIEW OF 2015 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

### \* Progress report as of 11-30-15

- 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 1,055 calls handled to date
- 10 SGH Hemlock Help Clinics with 69 attendees
- 8 SGH Facilitator Training Workshops with 20 new Facilitators trained and 12 Facilitators refreshed
- 2 Lead Facilitator Workshops with 19 participants
- Current total of active 183 Volunteer Facilitators in Georgia and 56 in other states
- 93 Facilitator visits made to property owners with charitable treatment of 481 trees
- 8 training classes for 118 neighborhood volunteers
- 14 presentations to community groups with 660 attendees
- 5 Hemlock Lessons and/or education stations for youth events with 500 student/teacher participants
- 12 festivals/events with 70 volunteers and 979 visitors/contacts
- 25 articles/news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines and 1 radio interview



- 11 hemlock rescue projects with 21 volunteers, 301 saplings and 270 seedlings rescued
- 173 hemlock saplings adopted, 72 saplings and 270 seedlings donated to schools/nonprofits
- 5 hemlock sapling planting projects with 64 volunteers planting 80 saplings
- 13 hemlock treatment projects with 138 volunteers treating/retreating 1,956 trees
- 8 soil injectors repaired/refurbished
- Total of 4,762 volunteer hours logged to date

**\* Recap of trees treated as of 11-30-15**

	USFS	DNR State Parks	DNR Wildlife Mgt	Private Property	Other	TOTAL
2009				8		8
2010	0	0	0	1,500	0	1,500
2011	208	0	88	282	642	1,220
2012	604	0	0	315	221	1,140
2013	890	872	3,307	1,017	735	6,821
2014	1,270	116	0	1,371	94	2,851
2015	995	299	0	581	562	2,437
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,972</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>3,395</b>	<b>4,485</b>	<b>1,692</b>	<b>15,969</b>

**REVIEW OF 2015 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**\* Financial summary for FY 2015**

Current: Fiscal 2015\*

Dec. 1, 2014 – Nov. 30, 2015

Total Contributions	Educational Spending	Charitable Service Spending	Administrative Expense	Membership/Fundraising	Total Expenses	Cash on Hand
\$14,965.43	\$7,019.11	\$5,374.39	\$1,108.13	\$53.47	\$13,555.10	\$18,212.26
	51.78%	39.65%	8.18%	.39%		

Cumulative: Fiscal 2009 – 2015

July 1, 2009 – Nov. 30, 2015

Total Contributions	Educational Spending	Charitable Service Spending	Administrative Expense	Membership Fundraising	Total Expenses
\$106,127.37	\$44,271.96	\$35,082.88	\$6,451.37	\$1,708.90	\$87,915.11
	50.36%	40.28%	7.34%	1.94%	

Total Spending in FY 2015:

91.43% for educational & charitable service programs.  
8.57% for administrative, membership & fund raising activities.

Cumulative Spending FY 2009-2015:

90.72% for educational & charitable service programs.  
9.28% for administrative, membership & fund raising activities.

**\* Budget vs actual for FY 2015**

Our actual income and expenses were amazingly close to what we budgeted – within 2% in both categories!

INCOME	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	Diff \$	Diff %
	\$13,910	\$14,140	\$230	2%

EXPENSE	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	Diff \$	Diff %
	\$12,482	\$12,730	\$248	2%

<b>NET CHANGE</b>	<b>\$1,428</b>	<b>\$1,410</b>	<b>-\$18</b>	<b>\$0</b>
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**\* Status of dedicated Lake Rabun Foundation grants and Cox award funds as of 11-30-15**

Date	LRF Grant Rec'd	11 Hemlock Clinics	12 Facilitator Training	13 Other Education	16 Public Comm	14 Saplings	15 Treatment Charit Svc	Total Amount Used	Remaining Balance
9/20/10	\$1,500.00	-\$29.52	-\$147.95	\$0.00	-\$916.73	\$0.00	-\$405.80	-\$1,500.00	\$0.00
9/15/11	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$186.74	-\$349.40	\$0.00	-\$963.86	-\$1,500.00	\$0.00
7/1/12	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	-\$56.17	-\$44.59	-\$54.46	\$0.00	-\$1,344.78	-\$1,500.00	\$0.00
6/7/13	\$1,000.00	-\$60.00	-\$125.38	-\$78.06	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$527.38	-\$790.82	\$209.18
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$5,500.00</b>	<b>-\$89.52</b>	<b>-\$329.50</b>	<b>-\$309.39</b>	<b>-\$1,320.59</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>-\$3,241.82</b>	<b>-\$5,290.82</b>	<b>\$209.18</b>

Date	Cox Award Received	11 Hemlock Clinics	12 Facilitator Training	13 Other Education	16 Public Comm	14 Saplings	15 Treatment Charit Svc	Total Amount Used	Remaining Balance
2012	\$10,000.00						-\$2,439.60	-\$2,439.60	\$7,560.40
2013				-\$670.59	-\$245.00		-\$1,288.88	-\$2,204.47	\$5,355.93
2014							-\$994.38	-\$994.38	\$4,361.55
2015		-\$348.08	-\$348.09	-\$200.00			-\$340.00	-\$1,236.17	\$3,125.38
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>	<b>-\$348.08</b>	<b>-\$348.09</b>	<b>-\$870.59</b>	<b>-\$245.00</b>		<b>-\$5,062.86</b>	<b>-\$6,874.62</b>	<b>\$3,125.38</b>

**\* Results of year-end appeal response (November 2014 – January 2015)**

We received 65 donations totaling \$4,905.

**2016 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES**

**\* Preview of 2016 Strategy Plan**

**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 for all program counties to raise awareness and encourage action.
- **Facilitator Training**
  - Conduct Lead Facilitator Training to refresh technical knowledge, increase engagement, and secure commitment to full set of responsibilities.
  - Offer Facilitator Training Workshops to develop and maintain a corps of trained volunteers to serve as advisers and provide assistance within their communities.
  - Continue to communicate requirement for previously trained Facilitators to attend Facilitator training every 3 years to refresh their skills and knowledge. In 2016 this applies to Facilitators trained in 2009 – 2013.
- **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.
- **Fairs & Festivals** – Participate in fairs, festivals, and other public events with primarily local attendance to raise awareness and encourage action.
- **Youth Programs** – Offer presentations and other educational activities for schools/youth groups to share the hemlock message with them and their families and orient them toward life-long environmental stewardship.
- **Citizen Science**
  - Engage volunteers to conduct research regarding hemlock pests other than HWA.
  - Engage volunteers to work with the Forest Service, beetle labs and other experts on raising predator beetles in insectaries to be of service, learn, and evaluate the feasibility of making beetles available to non-public lands and/or starting our own insectaries.

**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 requested information and advice and coordinate requests for Facilitator visits.

- **On-line Media**
  - Maintain availability of the Hemlock Help Line 7 days a week to provide callers with requested information and advice and coordinate requests for Facilitator visits.
  - Manage Facebook page to present timely advice and share time-sensitive announcements.
  - 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 fairs, festivals, schools, and public events.
  - Prepare temporary signage to place during projects to inform the public about SGH service activities in progress and permanent educational signage to draw attention to the hemlock crisis and SGH efforts to help at specific sites.
- **Print and Broadcast Media**
  - Ensure availability of appropriate printed materials for general and specific audiences and purposes.
  - Manage media initiatives (newspapers, radio, tv) to keep timely articles and notices in front of the public to create awareness, promote participation in upcoming events, and ensure adequate coverage of events and efforts.
  - Submit educational articles and notices of upcoming events to local newspapers, magazines, and organizational newsletters to create awareness and promote participation in upcoming events.
- **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.
  - Continue to communicate requirement for annual commitment from all Facilitators to be active in the work of SGH.
- **Volunteer Activities**
  - Help for property owners: Continue to advise property owners and assist with hemlock treatment efforts.
  - Help for public land managers: Continue support for DNR in parks, undertake more treatment in DNR Cartecay wildlife tract, continue support for USFS Blue Ridge District, and expand support for USFS to include Chattooga River District.
  - Hemlock project planning assistance: Continue to assist POAs, nonprofits, and community groups in their project planning efforts as requested.
  - Reforestation on trout streams: Implement new initiative in partnership with Trout Unlimited for hemlock reforestation along trout streams, beginning with selected private properties for experience and data gathering, with ultimate goal of expanding this initiative onto national forest.
- **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.
  - Maintain list of qualified professionals serving program counties and seek additional pros as needed.
  - Provide repair service for Kioritz injectors and evaluate new devices as they are discovered.
- **Expansion** – Expand Hemlock Help Program to more counties (including Atlanta area as appropriate) to stay on leading edge of HWA infestation.

**Saplings:** Maintain a nursery of healthy hemlock seedlings and saplings and conduct service activities to promote the planting and care of new hemlocks on public and private lands.

- **Rescue** – With permission from property owners/managers, rescue hemlock saplings/seedlings that are not designated to be treated in order to have stock for adoption, donation, planting, and nurseries.
- **Adoption** – Offer hemlock saplings for adoption in exchange for donations at fairs, festivals, and other public events or through private adoption.
- **Donation** – Provide free hemlock seedlings for youth programs and free hemlock saplings for community projects.
- **Planting** – Provide instruction and participate in hemlock planting projects, free on public land and in exchange for donation on private land, as resources permit.
- **Raising** – Provide free starter stock, planting materials, and instruction for schools, churches, and other community groups to establish distributed hemlock nurseries across north Georgia.

**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 fairs, festivals, presentations, and educational events as opportunities to attract new volunteers and members.
  - 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 some 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 us opportunities to share the hemlock message.
- **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 actual income/expense against budget. Include budget vs actual report in quarterly financials.
- **Fund Raising**
  - Utilize fairs, festivals, and educational events to generate donations in support of our programs.
  - Send year-end appeal letters to individuals and organizations to encourage donations with new or renewing memberships.
  - Seek grants as appropriate for specific projects approved by the board.
- **Financial Assistance**
  - Offer limited charitable assistance to property owners and nonprofits for hemlock treatment, as approved by the board.
  - Offer grants to increase the availability of qualified professionals to treat hemlocks in underserved counties, as approved by the board.
  - Develop prototype for Hemlock Cost Share program and grant proposal to submit to Georgia Forestry Commission and provide other assistance for program implementation as needed.
- **Liability** – Maintain risk management plan including D&O insurance and coverage for special events as needed.

**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 corporate registration with Georgia Secretary of State in January, Live Plant License with Georgia Department of Agriculture in January, and business license with Lumpkin County in December. Prepare annual federal tax filing for board approval and submission by April 15.
- **Records**
  - Maintain information regarding organizational history, capabilities, and events.
  - Maintain current membership and contact information.
  - Maintain accurate donor information and either provide instant receipt or thank-you / tax receipt letter at end of month in which donation is received.
  - Maintain bank account and financial records to ensure accuracy.
- **Reports**
  - Receive quarterly activity reports from all leadership team members.
  - 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.

**\* Calendar of Events for 2016 (as known so far)**

Fri., Jan. 8	SGH presentation to Soque Garden Club
Sun., Jan. 10	<b>SGH Leadership Team winter meeting</b>
Mon., Jan. 11	SGH presentation and participation in Friends of Unicoi State Park meeting
Thurs., Jan. 28	SGH Hemlock Help Clinic for Forsyth County Master Gardeners
Fri., Feb. 12	SGH Hemlock Help Clinic & Facilitator Workshop in Pickens County, sponsored by Bent Tree Forest Conservation Committee
Thurs., Feb. 18	SGH Hemlock Help Clinic for Trees Atlanta & general public
Wed., Feb. 23 & Thu., Feb 24	Beetles Save Needles Symposium
Thurs., Feb. 25	SGH info booth at North Georgia Gardening Symposium
Sat., Mar. 19	SGH-USFS hemlock treatment project at Jones Creek HCA
Sun., Apr. 10	<b>SGH Leadership Team spring meeting</b>
Fri., Apr. 22	SGH education station with seedling potting at Earth Day Festival (elementary students)
Sat., Apr. 30	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Trout Fest
Fri., May 13	SGH brief presentation & education station w/ seedling potting for 5th graders at Bear Jamboree
Sat., May 14	SGH-USFS hemlock treatment project at Anderson Creek
Sat., May 28 & Sun., May 29	SGH info booth at Blue Ridge Arts in the Park Spring Festival
Sun., May 29	SGH info table and brief presentation at LRA Memorial Day Meeting
Sat., June 4	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Hemlock Day at Anna Ruby Falls
Sun., June 5	Hemlock Camp Meeting / Annual Meeting & Picnic
Sun., July 10	<b>SGH Leadership Team summer meeting</b>
Sun., Sept. 4	SGH info table and brief presentation at LRA Labor Day Meeting
Sat., Sept. 9 & Sun., Sept 10	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Trail Fest
Sat., Sept. 24	<b>SGH-USFS-BMTA Hike &amp; Help the Hemlocks – hemlock treatment project at Stanley Creek – Fall Branch Falls</b>
Sat., Oct. 1	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Foxfire Mountaineer Festival
Sat., Oct. 1	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Indian Summer Festival
Sat., Oct. 1 & Sun., Oct 2	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Georgia Marble Festival
Sun., Oct. 23	<b>SGH Leadership Team fall meeting</b>

**\* Sharing and scheduling of teaching activities**

In view of our teaching resources, time, and the level of interest in various counties, the team agrees that Clinics and Facilitator Workshops may be offered for combinations of counties. Donna will continue to teach some of the classes, and other team members (with help from Lead Facilitators where possible) will conduct others. The initial plan is as follows:

<b>Counties</b>	<b>Trainers</b>
Rabun & Towns	Bob & Buz
Banks & Stephens	Bob & Buz
Habersham	Donna
White	Donna
Fannin	Dave
Union	Dave
Lumpkin & Dawson	Darrell & Donna
Hall	Donna

<b>Counties</b>	<b>Trainers</b>
Gilmer	Frank & Chris
Pickens	Donna
Cherokee	Donna
Gordon	Donna
Murray & Whitfield	Frank & Chris
Dade & Walker	Donna
Atlanta Area	Donna



**2016 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**\* Proposed budget for FY 2016**

INCOME	2015 Actual	2016 Budget	Assumptions for 2016
Individuals	\$1,322	\$1,400	Unsolicited donations, non-member donations at fairs/festivals, sapling adoptions, injector repairs
Foundations	\$0	\$2,500	We still have \$209 from 6/7/13 LRF grant & \$3,125 from Cox grant. We will ask for an additional \$1,500 from Lake Rabun Foundation & \$1,000 from Norcross Wildlife Foundation.
Corporations	\$300	\$300	Corporate memberships
Nonprofits	\$253	\$400	\$250 from POAs; \$150 reciprocal memberships from BMTA, Mountain Stewards, & TU
Memberships	\$9,291	\$9,000	Annual appeal, fairs/festivals, sapling adoptions
In Kind	\$2,931	\$3,270	Mostly saplings & seedlings donated to SGH for our use: 300 saplings @ \$10 & \$270 seedlings @ \$1
Government	\$43	\$200	Reimb to SGH for injector repairs not billed directly to gov clients by Cleveland Tool & Design
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$14,140</b>	<b>\$17,070</b>	

EXPENSE	2015 Actual	2016 Budget	Assumptions for 2016
Clinics	\$1,143	\$500	16 Clinics @ \$25 for printing, refreshments, and room fees; not planning to do any ads for Clinics.
Fac Trng	\$1,914	\$1,400	2 Lead Facilitator Workshops + 10 Fac Trng Workshops @ \$166 for printing, refreshments, room fees, and ads for 10 Workshops.
Other Educ	\$2,555	\$2,275	14 presentations, 5 Hemlock Lessons & 8 classes for neighborhood volunteers @ \$25; 12 festivals and events @ \$75; 1/2 cost of HCM (\$700)
Saplings	\$3,384	\$3,600	Cost/value of saplings we offer for adoption, donate, or use for reforestation; value of seedlings we donate to schools; also planting materials.
Treatment	\$1,590	\$2,120	4 jugs Safari @ \$315, 3 gal Imid 2F/2L @ \$95, manufacture of injector parts \$575
Pub Comm	\$951	\$1,000	phone, web site, printing
Admin	\$1,140	\$1,028	\$691 D&O, \$30 Corp Regis, \$20 PayPal, \$125 Chamber, other memberships \$165
Mem/Fund	\$53	\$750	Annual appeal \$50; 1/2 cost of HCM (\$700)
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$12,730</b>	<b>\$12,673</b>	<b>Does not include costs for insectaries.</b>

**\* Financial assistance to new pesticide applicators**

We will continue this program in FY 2016. Larry Loots submitted his application in October 2015 and has been approved to receive a grant upon completion of his licensing in 2016.

**\* Fund raising and grants**

The only change we will make to our income stream this year is to require that individuals who take our Facilitator training become SGH members, with the minimum membership donation of \$20 to help cover the cost of materials.

We do not plan any extraordinary fund raising efforts but will continue to raise funds through memberships, donations, and sapling adoptions. We may apply for another LRF grant when the current one is used up and may apply for one or two other small grants for special purposes such as hemlock restoration on trout streams or hemlock field insectaries.

**NEXT MEETING:** Sunday, April 10, 2016