

1-13-19 Meeting Notes for SGH Leadership Team Meeting

This quarterly Leadership Team meeting was held at the home of Donna Shearer, 37 Woody Bend, Dahlonega, beginning at 1:00 p.m. In attendance were Bob Pledger, Chris Curtin, Darrell Sheffield, Dave Teffeteller, David & Cindy Wasileski, Elliott & Brenda Segall, Frank & Linda Gheesling, Jen Houts, Jim Heilman, John Shearouse, Ray Lorenzi, Wynn Mott, and Donna Shearer. Billy Johnson, Buz Stone, Chris Disser, Derrick Morris, Jimmy Stewart, and Kim Wood were unable to attend.

BOARD MATTERS

- * **THANKS** for an outstanding 2018 year! We were able to accomplish a great deal, thanks to the dedication of our Leadership Team and all our wonderful volunteers. We are blessed by each and every one of you!
- * **Signing of Annual Acknowledgment** by all Board members, officers, and program managers – Everyone who was present signed, indicating that they have reviewed, understand, and agree to abide by the organizing documents of Save Georgia's Hemlocks, including the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and related policies approved by the Board. Those who were not present will be asked to confirm as soon as possible.
- * **Commitment to Serve** throughout calendar 2019 – Each January we ask our Board members, Officers, Program Managers, and other Leadership Team members to indicate if they are willing and able to continue their current responsibilities or wish to make changes. The following commitments were given by those who were present or were contacted by phone.

Billy Johnson committed by phone to continue serving as Lead Facilitator for White County.

Bob Pledger will continue to serve as Vice Chairman, Treatment Program Manager for eastern counties, and Lead Facilitator for Rabun County.

Buz Stone committed by phone to continue serving as a Board member, Saplings Program Manager for eastern counties, and a Facilitator.

Chris Curtin will continue to serve as a Board member, Saplings Program Manager for western counties, and co-Lead Facilitator for Gilmer County.

Chris Disser committed by phone to continue serving as Secretary for service projects and as a Facilitator.

Darrell Sheffield will continue to serve as a Board member and Facilitator but will not be able to be Education Program Manager for eastern counties due to his travel schedule.

Dave Teffeteller will continue to serve as a Board member, Communications Director, and co-Lead Facilitator for Gilmer County.

David & Cindy Wasileski will continue to serve as Facilitators.

Donna Shearer will continue to serve as Chairman and will, on an interim basis, cover the responsibilities of Education Program Manager for eastern counties and Treatment Program Manager for western counties until other team members are identified to assume those roles.

Elliott Segall will continue to serve as Liaison with Boy Scouts of America. He and Brenda will both continue as Facilitators.

Frank Gheesling announced his retirement as a Board member and Treatment Program Manager for western counties but indicated he and Linda plan to continue as Facilitators. He will also continue taking photos at SGH events and repairing Kioritz soil injectors as needed.

Jen Houts will continue to serve as a Facilitator and will also be liaison with The Nature Conservancy.

Jim Heilman will continue to serve as Lead Facilitator for Pickens County.

John Shearouse will continue to serve as Saplings Program Advisor and as a Facilitator.

Kim Wood committed by phone to continue serving as Secretary for festivals and educational events.

Ray Lorenzi will continue to serve as Lead Facilitator for Cherokee County.

Wynn Mott will continue to serve as Lead Facilitator for Union County.

Derrick Morris, Jimmy Stewart, and Jeanette Rader will be contacted regarding their commitment to continue serving in 2019.



REVIEW OF 2018 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

* Final Progress Report as of 11-30-18

- 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 940 calls handled to date.
- 14 Hemlock Help Clinics with total of 133 attendees.
- 12 Facilitator Training Workshops with total of 71 new Facilitators trained.
Total active Facilitator corps = 310 in Georgia and 78 in other states
- 3 customized training classes for 34 volunteers and public land managers
- 14 presentations to civic/community groups with 700 attendees.
- 10 Hemlock Lessons for 481 students and teachers.
- 14 festivals / public events with info booth & saplings for adoption – 73 volunteers and 2,227 visitors / contacts
- 37 articles / news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines.
- 106 Facilitator visits made with charitable treatment of 1,808 trees
- 17 hemlock treatment projects with 247 volunteers treating/retreating 2,637 trees.
- 10 hemlock rescue projects with 31 volunteers, 311 saplings rescued and potted for future use.
- 296 hemlock saplings adopted; 107 saplings donated to municipalities / schools / nonprofits.
- 4 hemlock sapling planting projects with 76 volunteers planting 29 saplings.
- 13 soil injectors repaired/refurbished.
- Total of 6,127 volunteer hours logged.

* Recap of trees treated as of 11-30-18

	USFS	DNR State Parks	DNR Wildlife Mgt	Private Property	Other	YEARLY TOTALS
FY 2009				8		8
FY 2010	0	0	0	1,500	0	1,500
FY 2011	208	0	88	282	642	1,220
FY 2012	604	0	0	315	221	1,140
FY 2013	890	872	3,307	1,017	735	6,821
FY 2014	1,270	116	0	1,371	94	2,851
FY 2015	995	299	0	581	562	2,437
FY 2016	1,382	304	0	3,436	1,008	6,130
FY 2017	1,805	909	0	3,470	1,653	7,837
FY 2018	1,380	476	0	1,826	763	4,445
TOTALS	8,534	2,976	3,395	13,806	5,678	34,389

* Annual USFS summary for treatment projects completed October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018.

During the above period Save Georgia's Hemlocks (SGH) and its volunteers performed 10 hemlock treatment projects requested by the U. S. Forest Service. Imidacloprid was applied by soil injection to treat or retreat designated trees. To summarize these projects, 153 volunteers contributed a total of 1,203 hours (including travel) to treat or retreat a total of 1,588 trees with a total dbh of 18,441 inches. A total of 18.5 gallons of Imidacloprid 2F was used, all provided by the USFS. At a conservative rate of \$1 per diameter inch, this treatment would have cost \$18,441 if done by a licensed professional. A copy of the report is available on request.

Rock Creek, Murray County Willis Knob Horse Camp, Rabun County Panther Creek South, Stephens County Tallulah River Campground, Rabun County Tate Branch Campground, Towns County Sandy Bottom Campground, Towns County Andrews Cove Campground, White County	Chattooga River Trail Campground, Rabun County West Fork Campground, Rabun County Wildcat Creek Campgrounds #1 & #2, Rabun County West Wildcat Rd., Rabun County Low Gap Campground, White County Raven Cliffs Trailhead, White County
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REVIEW OF 2018 FINANCIAL MATTERS

*** Final 2018 Financial Summary**

FY 2018 INCOME	Contrib Indiv	Contrib Member	Contrib Found	Contrib Non Profit	Contrib In Kind Goods	Contrib In Kind Svc	Contrib Corp	Gov Reimb
2018 Income by Source	\$404.12	\$20,672.86	\$3,738.66	\$1,430.00	\$2,285.00	\$933.33	\$163.50	\$562.12
2018 Income by Percentage	1.34%	68.48%	12.38%	4.74%	7.57%	3.09%	0.54%	1.86%
2018 Total Income	\$30,189.59							

FY 2017 EXPENSE	Hemlock Clinics	Facil Trng	Other Educ	Public Comm	Saplings	Treat-ment	Gen Admin	Memb & Fund Raising
2018 Expenses by Category	\$80.00	\$480.71	\$3,946.93	\$6,462.36	\$2,661.83	\$6,093.87	\$1,287.98	\$319.37
2018 Expenses by Percentage	0.38%	2.25%	18.50%	30.29%	12.48%	28.57%	6.04%	1.50%
2018 Total Expenses	\$21,333.05							

Total Spending in FY 2018:

92.46% for educational & charitable service programs.
7.54% for administrative, membership & fund raising.

*** Status of Grants** and dedicated funds as of 11-30-18

Cox	\$104.70	(unrestricted)
Lake Rabun Foundation	\$1,961.30	(Rabun County only)
Northwest Georgia EMC	\$1,265.89	(hemlock restoration on trout streams in NW GA counties)
Norcross Wildlife Foundation	\$0.00	(Rabun County only)
Laurel Ridge project	\$391.41	(Laurel Ridge treatment project)
Yonah Mountain Pickleball Club	\$467.06	(White County only)

*** Final Results of 2018 Annual Appeal**

92 donations totaling \$9,015.00

*** Report on Hemlock Cone Pendants** (through 1-13-19)

Out-of-pocket cost for production of 51 pendants:	\$1,530.00
Donations from 36 pendants purchased	1,640.00
Value of 15 pendants remaining @ \$45	\$ 675.00

*** Report on 2018 Donors** and thank-you / tax receipt letters

We had a total of 347 individual and organizational donors in FY 2018. Most thank-you / tax receipt letters have been mailed, and the remaining ones will be mailed before the end of this month.

*** Report on 2018 Budget vs. Actual** (as of 11-30-18)

Income Class	Contrib Indiv	Contrib Member	Contrib Found	Contrib Non Profit	Contrib In Kind Goods	Contrib In Kind Svc	Contrib Corp	Gov Reimb	BUDGET INCOME TOTALS	ACTUAL INCOME TOTALS	DIFF
Budget Totals	\$1,360	\$14,975	\$2,000	\$1,250	\$2,680	\$810	\$1,225	\$1,200	\$25,500		
Actual Totals	\$404	\$20,673	\$3,739	\$1,430	\$2,285	\$933	\$164	\$562		\$30,135	
Difference	(\$956)	\$5,698	\$1,739	\$180	(\$395)	\$123	(\$1,062)	(\$638)			\$4,635
Net Change									\$1,238	\$8,857	\$7,619

Expense Class	Hemlock Clinics	Facil Trng	Other Educ	Public Comm	Saplings	Treatment	Gen Admin	Memb & Fund	BUDGET EXPENSE TOTALS	ACTUAL EXPENSE TOTALS	DIFF
Budget Totals	\$300	\$750	\$6,430	\$1,312	\$4,570	\$9,500	\$1,200	\$200	\$24,262		
Actual Totals	\$80	\$481	\$3,947	\$6,462	\$2,662	\$6,094	\$1,288	\$319		\$20,863	
Difference											(\$3,399)

2019 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES

- * Live Plant License – renewed with GA Dept of Agriculture 12-27-18 at no cost.
- * Corporate Registration – renewed with GA SOS 1-2-19 for a cost of \$30.
- * Intro to 2019 Strategy Plan – Posted on About Us page of web site.
- * Calendar of Events for 2019 – See Schedule of Events page of web site.

SERVICE – TREATMENT

* USFS Projects

In 2012, a Challenge Cost Share Agreement between Save Georgia’s Hemlocks, Inc. and the USDA Forest Service, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests was established and defines (among other things) the terms of our engagement to treat hemlocks on the national forest. While the USFS has provided with a list of the Hemlock Conservation Areas they would like SGH to treat this year and we are eager to get started, **we have received notice that all volunteer projects on USFS land must be suspended during the partial federal government shutdown.**

* Hemlock Treatment Projects in the east

The only 2019 USFS project requested in the east is the Upper Chattahoochee Campground in White County. It consists of 6 or 7 sites, several of which are currently inaccessible because of storm damage. Bob Pledger and Donna Shearer have scouted 2 of the sites that are accessible but will need USFS assistance to locate and/or gain access to the others. As there are more than 500 trees in this HCA, it is likely that the project will take 2 or 3 days to complete. Dates TBD.

A project will be scheduled at YMCA Camp High Harbour in Rabun County, and another one may possible be planned for the Hambidge Center in Rabun County.

* Hemlock Treatment Projects in the west

SGH has been requested to treat the following HCAs in 2019.

High Shoals (3 sites)	Bob Creek (1 site)
Swallow Creek (2 sites)	Lordamercy Cove (2 sites)
Falls Branch (2 sites)	Corbin (3 sites)
Scataway (2 sites)	

* Neighborhood Treatment Projects

Lake Winfield Scott, a USFS property in Union County – The property owners association has requested SGH to partner with them for a treatment project in the cabins area as we did 2014. Derrick Morris will lead this project in coordination with leadership of the LWS property owner association.

Laurel Ridge in Gilmer County – This project was initiated in 2016, continued in 2018, and needs completion in 2019. Derrick Morris will lead.

* DNR State Parks Treatment Projects

Rich Mountain WMA, Cartecay Tract – This project was initiated in 2013 as a joint undertaking of SGH and the Mountain Stewards. We hope to continue and expand it this year in partnership with the Mountain Stewards.

Smithgall Woods – SGH will assist the DNR and Friends of the Park in measuring/tagging hemlocks on March 16 and treating trees on March 23, with Saturday, March 30 being the treatment rain date. All 3 work days are from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Billy Johnson will lead our help effort on the 16th, and Donna Shearer will do so on the 23rd.

SERVICE - SAPLINGS

* Sapling Rescues this spring

Chris Curtin will schedule 2 more rescue/potting days in Ellijay and 1 rescue/potting day in Mineral Bluff.

Buz Stone indicated by phone that he will schedule 1 or 2 rescue/potting days at a friend’s property in Lakemont, hopefully in partnership with a Girl Scout troop.

Donna Shearer will schedule 2 rescue/potting days in Dahlonega.

* **Sapling Nurseries**

Chris Curtin reported she has about 70 potted saplings at her nursery in Ellijay.

Buz Stone reported by phone that he has potted 150-175 saplings at his nursery in Lakemont.

John Shearouse reported he has 57 in-ground saplings at his nursery in Lavonia.

Darrell Sheffield reported that his son Mason has about a dozen very tall potted saplings and about 50 small to medium potted saplings at his nursery in Alpharetta. Mason is also planning to offer hemlock saplings at his school's plant sale, offering to give all proceeds to SGH, but the group suggested he should keep half for his FFA unit or other conservation effort at his school.

Chris Disser committed by phone to set up a meeting with Woody Gap School to explore possibility of starting a saplings nursery there as part of their Mountain Heritage Program. Wynn Mott will also follow up and help.

* **Sapling Planting**

Chris Curtin will coordinate a sapling planting project and brief Hemlock Lesson this spring at Fannin Elementary School along their nature trail.

Donna Shearer will contact Jim Gibbs to follow up on saplings for planting in a new section of Gibbs Gardens.

* **Hemlock Restoration**

On Saturday, March 2 SGH will partner with Trout Unlimited (3 chapters), The Nature Conservancy, the USFS, and several college groups to do a large hemlock restoration project on Mill Creek in Murray County, with March 9 as the rain date. A flyer is included at the end of the attachments to these meeting notes. Donna Shearer, Chris Curtin, John Shearouse, Jen Houts, and Todd Baker will coordinate for SGH.

SERVICE - OTHER

* **Eagle Scout Projects**

Elliott Segall will coordinate Eagle Scout projects this summer. He also committed to draft an educational document for Eagle Scout candidates explaining the process for partnering with SGH, responsibilities of the Scout and his troop, and responsibilities of SGH by the end of January.

Bob Pledger reported that a Boy Scout he worked with has completed his work for Eagle Scout rank.

* **Partnership Projects**

Donna Shearer will coordinate the addition of more saplings to the field insectary at North Georgia during January.

She will also coordinate giving a Hemlock Lesson and conducting a sapling planting project with general ecology students at Truett McConnell on Arbor Day, February 15.

All members with ties to local colleges are asked to reach out to them to establish educational opportunities and service partnerships.

* **Annual Hike & Help the Hemlocks**

The group expressed their support for resuming our annual Hike & Help the Hemlocks event this fall. Donna Shearer will contact the Benton MacKaye Trail Association and Trout Unlimited about a place and weekday date.

* **Charitable Service**

Chris Curtin raised the subject of how SGH Facilitators who are providing charitable service to a property owner can obtain partnership help of some kind from the client. While affirming that our mission is to save as many hemlocks as possible through as many ways as possible, several members joined the discussion with questions concerning our policy on the subject and productive suggestions for improving the partnership aspect of charitable service.

Donna Shearer has current section of our Bylaws related to charitable service and some proposed changes for Board Members to review and comment on. In addition, Dave Teffeteller agreed to prepare a membership/partnership handout that can be used by Facilitators and clients during charitable service events.

EDUCATION

* **Clinics & Facilitator Training** – The schedule will begin in mid-February. Facilitator training not completed in 2018 for counties in left column will be on front end of training schedule (Dates TBD). Donna Shearer will handle invitations, and Kim Wood will handle confirmations. Instructors will be Donna, Derrick Morris, and hopefully Lead Facilitators in some counties.

Murray & Whitfield
Pickens
Gordon
Rabun (including Tate City)
Towns
Banks & Stephens

White
Cherokee
Fannin -- Derrick
Dade & Walker
Lumpkin & Dawson
Hall
Gilmer -- Derrick
Union
Habersham

* **Facilitator Training for TU Savannah River Chapter** – John Shearouse will confirm the date. He and Donna will be joint presenters.

* **Festivals** – Kim Wood will reserve booth space for us. Donna Shearer will send emails to recruit volunteers, and Kim will handle confirmations and scheduling of volunteers.

Hamilton Gardens Earth Day Expo, Hiawassee	4-20-19	Maybe
Bear-on-the-Square, Dahlonega	4-27-19 & 4-28-19	Yes
Trout Fest, Blue Ridge	4-27-19	Yes
Blue Ridge Arts in the Park	5-25-19 & 5-26-19	Yes
LRA Memorial Day Meeting, Lakemont	5-26-19	Yes
Hemlock Day at Anna Ruby Falls, Helen	6-1-19	Maybe
LRA Labor Day Meeting, Lakemont	9-1-19	Yes
Trail Fest, Dahlonega	9-7-19 & 9-8-19	Yes
Foxfire Mountaineer Festival, Clayton	10-6-19	Yes
Marble Festival, Jasper	10-6-19 & 10-7-19	Yes
New Salem Mountain Festival, Dade County	10-12-19 & 10-13-19	Yes
Georgia Mountains Brew Fest at Gibbs Gardens, Jasper	10-19-19	Yes

* **Public Communications**

- * Web site – Donna Shearer, Facebook and outreach to on-line forums – Dave Teffeteller; YouTube –???
- * Special publicity for classes, presentation, projects, and events – Dave and Donna
- * Follow-up publicity for projects and events – Dave and Donna; photos by Frank Gheesling
- * Storefront posters, awareness postcards, bumper stickers, rack cards, and other special pieces – Dave
- * Follow-up on educational signage for City of Clayton Bleckley Hemlocks, Foxfire hemlock, City of Clarkesville historic cemetery – Dave
- * Handout to attract volunteers, explaining the importance and rewards of volunteering and the kinds of educational / service opportunities available through SGH – Dave, David & Cindy Wasileski
- * Updated membership/partnership form for use on charitable service projects – Dave

HEMLOCK CAMP MEETING / ANNUAL MEETING

- * Date & time: Saturday, May 4, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- * Place: ETC Pavilion in Ellijay, reserved, \$150 for whole day.
- * Theme: Volunteer appreciation and education
- * Food: Poole’s Barbecue. Chris Curtin will contact them.
- * Music: Chris will find a good musician to provide background music.
- * Keynote speaker(s): Staff presenter from Hemlock Restoration Initiative to talk on their volunteer programs, and possibly 2 or 3 others to give short presentations. Donna Shearer will make contacts.
- * Other features: demo booths
- * Publicity, invitations, registrations, memberships – Invitations will be done mainly by email and on-line media rather than newspaper ads or flyers.

2019 FINANCIAL MATTERS

* **Draft 2019 budget** – Donna Shearer presented a draft budget with figures derived by taking the midpoint between 2018 budget and 2018 actual. Available upon request.

* **Annual membership appeal** – **All Leadership Team members** who plan to send out annual appeal letters but haven't provided their mailing list yet are requested to do so ASAP. Mail-out will be in conjunction with Arbor Day, Feb. 15.

SPECIAL CELEBRATION ON THE OCCASION OF FRANK GHEESLING'S RETIREMENT

Frank Gheesling has been a member of Save Georgia's Hemlocks since 2010 and has served on our Board since 2011. Throughout those years he and his wife Linda have shared their time and talents, energy and enthusiasm, and a huge amount of service to save the hemlocks. We all want to express our deep gratitude for all that they have contributed, wish them the very best as he steps down from our Board, and look forward to their continued participation in the future.

FUTURE 2019 MEETING DATES – PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!!!

- * April 14 (second Sunday)
- * July 14 (second Sunday)
- * November 3 (first Sunday)