

4-10-16 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, Frank Gheesling, Peggy Reich, Donna Shearer, Darrell Sheffield, and Dave Teffeteller. Buz Stone was unable to attend.

DISCUSSION WITH SPECIAL GUEST JIM SULLIVAN OF THE GA FORESTRY COMMISSION

* **Current bio-control activity:** Jim recapped the history of efforts to establish predator beetle populations to control the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) in Georgia in 2004. Through the work of rearing labs at Clemson, Young Harris College, University of Georgia, and North Georgia University, several species of beetles are being released on our public lands: *Sasajiscymnus tsugae* from Japan, *Laricobius nigrinus* and *Scymnus coniferarum* from the Pacific Northwest, and most recently *Laricobius osakensis* from Japan.

He told us about their life cycles, rearing requirements, and performance as bio-controls, and explained that the strategy of deploying multiple species of beetles is to take advantage of their different feeding cycles to extend the predation period. *Ln* feeds on 1st generation adelgids, while *Pnw* feeds on the second generation during the summer when other beetle species have ceased feeding. Both *Ln* and *Pnw* beetles spend part of their life cycle in the soil.

Adelgids prefer to feed on new growth on trees that are lightly infested. The best time to scout for infestations and possible release/insectary sites in January through April. The best time to release beetles is spring through early summer, but *Pnw* can also be caught and released in the fall after they emerge from the soil.

* **Potential role for SGH:** Recognizing that the process of acquiring, raising, releasing, and monitoring predator beetles has been (and is) challenging and expensive and requires a great deal of scientific expertise, we focused our questions on determining what our appropriate role should be to support the bio-control efforts. Two ideas emerged:

1. Make some funds available to help the beetle labs at North Georgia and Young Harris acquire more beetles, in particular the *Pnw* that can be wild-caught for immediate release.
2. Plant additional hemlocks to augment existing insectaries (such as Lula Lake or Baker Branch) or establish new ones (possibly at UNG or YH) and protect them chemically until they're large enough (20-40 feet tall with dbh of 9 inches) and healthy enough to support a balanced populations of adelgids and predator beetles. Preferred sites are at low to mid elevations (900 – 2200 feet). Getting a new insectary to productivity is a long-term project of at least 6-7 years but more likely 10 years.

Leadership team members voted to set aside up to half of our remaining Cox Conserves grant for the purchase of *coniferarum* beetles by the rearing labs for distribution to release sites and insectaries in Georgia. The team also approved donating, planting, and maintaining hemlock saplings to augment one or more insectaries. Jim Sullivan will be our advisor on these initiatives.

* **Upcoming bio-control event:** Three SGH members will participate in the Insectary Monitoring Workshop sponsored by the Blue Ridge RC&D at Warren Wilson College on Friday, April 15. It will include a field segment on evaluating HWA and hemlock tree/stand condition, monitoring, and sampling; and a classroom segment on microscope investigation and usage of ultraviolet light in bio-control research.

BOARD MATTERS

* **Consideration of candidate for Treasurer:** The Board considered and approved the kind offer from one of our Facilitators to serve as our Treasurer, on the condition that he is willing/able to use Quickbooks to maintain our books. Donna will make the inquiry.

* **Grant for new pesticide applicator:** Congratulations to Larry Loots, who studied hard, passed the exams for Ornamental and Turf Pest Control and Forest Pest Control with flying colors, and is now ready to begin helping property owners save their hemlocks in Gilmer, Fannin, Murray, and Pickens Counties. We will mail his grant check upon receipt of a copy of his license and insurance.



* **Quarterly reports:** The IRS and Georgia Secretary of State require certain information from us in our annual tax filing to support our 501c3 tax-exempt status. On a quarterly basis we collect and consolidate information from our Leadership Team, Lead Facilitators, and Facilitators about the kinds of hemlock-saving activities they have engaged in, number of trees treated or classes taught, number of people served or educated, and volunteer hours. We discussed each section and will ensure that our Leads and Facilitators also understand how to complete the report.

REVIEW OF 2016 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES TO DATE

* **Education**

- Hemlock Help Line available 7 days a week with 442 calls handled to date
- 6 SGH Hemlock Help Clinics with 124 attendees
- 3 Facilitator Training Workshops with 16 new Facilitators trained and 4 Facilitators refreshed
- 6 training classes for 51 neighborhood volunteers
- 5 presentations to community groups with 164 attendees

* **Public Communications**

- 1 festival with 7 volunteers and 75 visitors
- 8 articles written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines
- updated instructions and other educational materials posted on Resources page of web site

* **Service**

- Current total of 198 Facilitators in Georgia and 56 in other states
- 16 Facilitator visits made to property owners with charitable treatment of 34 trees
- 5 hemlock treatment projects with 55 volunteers treating/retreating 529 trees
- 6 soil injectors repaired/refurbishes, 4 currently in process

* **Saplings**

- 2 hemlock rescue projects with 4 volunteers, 35 saplings rescued
- 39 saplings adopted, 8 saplings donated to schools/nonprofits
- 2 sapling planting projects with 3 volunteers planting 2 large saplings
- 9 large b&b saplings, 32 medium saplings, and 20 small saplings ready for adoption plus those in Mason Sheffield’s nursery and more available from 2 sources in Ellijay

REVIEW OF 2016 FINANCIAL MATTERS TO DATE

* **Financial summary as of 4-9-16**

Current: Fiscal 2016

Dec. 1, 2015 – April 9, 2016

Total Contributions	Educational Spending	Charitable Service Spending	Administrative Expense	Membership/Fundraising	Total Expenses	Cash on Hand
\$6,616.55	\$1,570.48	\$3,871.98	\$221.92	\$147.98	\$5,812.36	\$19,016.45
	27.02%	66.62%	3.82%	2.54%		

Cumulative: Fiscal 2009 – 2016

July 1, 2009 – April 9, 2016

Total Contributions	Educational Spending	Charitable Service Spending	Administrative Expense	Membership Fundraising	Total Expenses
\$110,803.92	\$45,160.24	\$37,946.42	\$6,823.93	\$1,856.68	\$91,787.47
	49.21%	41.34%	7.43%	2.02%	

Total Spending in FY 2016 to date: 93.64% for educational & charitable service programs.
6.36% for administrative, membership & fund raising activities.

Cumulative Spending FY 2009-2016: 90.55% for educational & charitable service programs.
9.45% for administrative, membership & fund raising activities.

* **Tax filing for last year**

Donna presented the tax filing documents for 2015, and the team approved them for filing.

*** Current status of membership appeal**

Based on membership appeal letters that were sent out after Jan. 10, we have received 12 new or renewing membership donations totaling \$945.00.

*** Current status of grants and applications**

6/7/13 LRF Grant – We have \$184.18 remaining. We will apply for a new grant next month.

2012 Cox Award – We have \$3,125.38 remaining and have pledged up to \$1,5000 to purchase beetles for UNG and YH beetle labs.

We have applied for a \$2,500 grant from North Georgia EMC and \$1,200 from Norcross Wildlife Foundation.

2016 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES – APRIL THROUGH NOVEMBER

*** Education**

– Hemlock Help Clinics and Facilitator Training Workshops – Classes are scheduled for White, Habersham, Cherokee, and Gordon during April and May. Dade/Walker training will be tied to the treatment project at Cloudland Canyon in June. We still need to schedule training for Gilmer, Murray/Whitfield, Rabun/Towns, Banks/Stephens, Fannin, and Union.

– Facilitator refresher training & Lead Facilitator Workshops – We continue to remind current Facilitators of the need to take refresher training, but not very many have done so yet.

– Community programs, fairs & festivals – Here are the community events scheduled for April through June. We still need volunteers for some of them.

Tues., Apr. 12	SGH Hemlock Help Clinic for Cornelia Garden Club
Sat., Apr. 16	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption at Bear on the Square Mountain Festival
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 education station w/ brief presentation & seedling potting for 5th graders at Bear Jamboree
Sat., May 28 & Sun., May 29	SGH info booth with saplings for adoption 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

*** Public Communications**

– On-line – Dave continues to keep our Facebook page current with announcements of upcoming classes, volunteer projects, and other events. Thanks, Dave!

– Print media – Amber Lanier Nagle has published an excellent article in the April issue of *Georgia Magazine* on “Restoring Georgia’s Mighty Giants.”

– New materials being prepared or needed – Dave is preparing new directional signs, reprinting our SGH rack cards, and getting pads of chemical tear sheets printed for distribution to retailers that carry treatment products. Donna has updated our mixing/dosing cards, Chemicals-Contacts-Sources, Introduction to Treating Hemlocks, and provided templates for Leadership Team business cards.

*** Service**

– Hemlock treatment projects – Here are the treatment projects scheduled for April through June. We still need more volunteers for all of them.

Sat., Apr. 23	SGH-USFS hemlock treatment project at Anna Ruby Falls
Sat., May 14	SGH-USFS hemlock treatment project at Anderson Creek
Sat., June 11	SGH-USFS hemlock treatment project in a Rabun County HCA (tbd)
Sat., June 25	SGH-USFS hemlock treatment project in a Rabun County HCA (tbd)

– Equipment needed for treatment projects – The team approved purchase of a few walkie talkie units for use on treatment projects. We decided against acquiring special GPS units since most cell phones have this capability.

– New personnel in government agencies – Donna provided team members with a document containing updated contacts for the U. S. Forest Service, Georgia Forestry Commission, DNR State Parks, and DNR Wildlife Resources.

– Injectors

- Dave has acquired a Kioritz soil injector on Ebay and is donating it to SGH. It may need some refurbishing, but WOW, what a find!
- We have 2 injectors in hand that belong to Hidden Lake POA, and Frank will take them for diagnosis and repair. We will need to have more tip springs, injection cylinders, and tank nuts made soon in order to facilitate timely turn-around of units needing repair.
- Several team members participated in a three-month evaluation of the new EZject soil injector made by Arbor Systems and prepared a detailed review of its design, operation, and application for hemlock treatment projects on the kinds of terrain we experience in Georgia and other Appalachian states. By agreement with Arbor Systems, this document will not be published or posted until they decide about making any of the design changes we suggested.

– Chemicals

- – There are treatment product retailers in Union, Fannin, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Lumpkin, Pickens, Rabun, Walker, and White Counties. We still need to locate chemical retailers in Banks, Cherokee, Dade, Dawson, Gordon, Habersham, Hall, Murray, Stephens, Towns, and Whitfield Counties.
- – Jim Wentworth and Nelson Gonzalez-Sullow of the USFS have said it is their hope that the Environmental Assessment document currently being updated will allow for the use of Safari on the national forest.

*** Saplings**

– Adoptions – During April through June, we will need saplings/seedlings for adoption at Cornelia Garden Club meeting, Bear on the Square, High Meadows Earth Day, Trout Fest, Blackburn Elementary Bear Jamboree, Blue Ridge Arts Festival, Garden Club of Ellijay Plant Sale, Hemlock Day at Anna Ruby Falls, and Hemlock Camp Meeting.

– Rescue and potting – To meet the needs listed above for saplings/seedlings, we have rescue/potting projects scheduled April 8 and 21, May 26, and June 3.

– Hemlock restoration on trout streams – We have begun the planning phase for a new initiative to partner with Trout Unlimited to do hemlock restoration on trout streams. The first project will be this fall on non-government land, probably in Fannin County. Through discussions with Jim Wentworth, we understand that the experience and data we gain from that project will put us in a good position to apply for permission to do similar projects on the national forest in the future.

– Hemlock field insectaries – We have also begun discussions with Angie DeIConte at the UNG beetle lab about the possibility of planting a new insectary on campus to facilitate research and raising of Ln and/or Pnw beetles. If we receive approval, the first project will likely be late this fall.

*** Hemlock Camp Meeting / Annual Meeting on Sunday, June 5**

– Highlights – See flyer on next page for keynote speaker Bud Mayfield, catered food by Poole’s Barbecue plus potluck dishes, and band Downtown Roy.

– Friends Circle – Invitations have been extended to the following:

American Chestnut Foundation	Garden Club of Ellijay	Cooperative Extension Service
Atlanta Audubon Society	Georgia Adopt-a-Stream	Hike Inn
Back Country Horsemen of N GA	Georgia Appalachian Trail Club	Mountain High Hikers
Beetle Lab – UNG	Georgia Conservancy	Mountain Stewards
Beetle Lab – UGA	Georgia Forestry Commission	National Park Service
Beetle Lab – Young Harris	Georgia Forest Watch\	Over the Hill Hikers
Benton MacKaye Trail Assoc.	Georgia Native Plant Society	Sierra Club
Chattahoochee Nature Center	Georgia Tech Trailblazers	Trees Atlanta
DNR State Parks	Giant Bubbles	Trout Unlimited
DNR Wildlife Resources	Gilmer County Beekeepers Assoc.	Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper
Elachee Nature Center	Gilmer County Master Gardeners	U. S. Forest Service
Fernbank Science Center	Gwinnett Tech Horticulture Club	Yahoola Outdoors

– Other invitations & confirmations – A general invitation will not be published in the newspapers, but personal invitations will be emailed to all of our Facilitators, volunteers, members, donors, and others who have shown an interest in saving the hemlocks. Peggy will coordinate reservations and send confirmations.

– Budget:

Fee for use of pavilion	\$ 50
Entertainment	\$300
Food	\$400
Miscellaneous	<u>\$150</u>
Total Estimated Cost	\$900

The event will be free of charge to individuals staffing the exhibitors booths and anyone who is a current member. Current membership is defined as having made a donation of any kind since last December. For those who need to join or renew their membership, the requested donation is \$20 for an individual or \$40 for a family. We anticipate that donations will cover half or more of the cost.

THE 2016 ANNUAL
SAVE GEORGIA'S HEMLOCKS
HEMLOCK CAMP MEETING

A
 GATHERING OF
 KINDRED SPIRITS TO CELEBRATE AND PRESERVE THE MAGNIFICENT HEMLOCK

SUNDAY • JUNE 5 • 10AM to 3PM

ETC PAVILION • ON THE BANKS OF THE COOSAWATTEE RIVER • ELLIJAY, GA
 MAPS AND DIRECTIONS www.SaveGeorgiasHemlocks.org or Google Maps

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PLUS Environmental Displays and Demonstrations
 by Like-Minded Organizations and Friends of the Hemlock

Call 404 219-3876 or Email peggyreich1663@gmail.com **RESERVATIONS**
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COME HEAR Keynote Speaker - Dr. Bud Mayfield
 Premier Researcher of All Things Hemlock



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- Raising public awareness of the hemlock crisis and call for help.
- Recognizing and thanking our members, volunteers and supporters.
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