

Notes for 11/5/23 SGH Leadership Team Meeting

Internal

This quarterly Leadership Team meeting for Board Members, Officers, Program Manager, and Lead Facilitators was held at Dahlonega Chamber of Commerce, 342 Hill St., Dahlonega, GA, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Participants were Chris Curtin, Kat Carey, Jonathan Micancin, Jon Jones, Holly Cochran, Jim Wentworth, Buz Stone, Donna Shearer, Betty Larsen, Dave Teffeteller, Darrell Sheffield, and John Shearouse. Derrick Morris, Todd Jackson, Jody Webb, Renee Gracon, Jimmy Stewart, Dara Sinclair, Nick Gardener, Kim Wood, Robert Patchett, Elliott Segall, Lee Higgins, Jim Heilman, Ray Lorenzi, Cary Allen, Bob Pledger, Jim Heilman, Alan Barnes and Al Battle were unable to attend.

Board Matters:

Buz Stone called the meeting to order and took roll. Meeting notes from the 7/16/23 meeting were approved. The agenda for the 11/5/23 meeting was approved.

Buz Stone nominated Jonathan Micancin to the Board. Jonathan is a conservation biologist and has been involved with SGH since 2019. Dave seconded the motion, and the Board approved unanimously. Bylaws, liability policy, and all documents have been provided.

Scholarship Fund:

SGH raised the required \$25,000 to be eligible for endowment with UNG. An additional \$3,000 was contributed as a restricted fund outside of the endowment. The restricted fund is not subject to the endowment rules of accumulating interest. In total, \$28,000 was sent to UNG and awards will be available in the coming spring. SGH was eligible to be included in the UNG RISE crowdfunding campaign to help reach the \$30,000 goal. Once the scholarship fund reached SGH's original \$30,000 goal, the matching donor was notified and contributed the remaining \$10,000. The Donna Shearer Scholarship is fully endowed with \$40,000. The environmental science center at UNG will notify Donna each spring when selecting recipients.

Dave noted we may want to do an email blast via MailChimp notifying members of the scholarship and offering information on how they can continue to contribute to the fund.

Kat wrote a letter to the editor in the Dahlonega Nugget during the RISE campaign. Donna suggested we may want to run publicity about the result of the scholarship drive.

Buz stated the University has an investment committee with a record of 10-11% return. Spending policies, etc. are all available upon request.

Mail Chimp:

Account is established and has been used as a free trial to date. Holly noted that carrying 1,500 contacts will cost around \$20/month. Dave stated that it's a good platform and we should continue using it. It will also help us clean up our files. We should use for purposes other than newsletter and it may be especially useful for coordinating contacts on follow up Chattooga treatment projects. Holly will provide all information regarding bounces/unsubscribes/etc. to Donna. Donna noted we may want to use it for upcoming classes since our participation is still down for Clinic/Fac training. MeetUp was set up as a free trial, and was not useful for recruiting volunteers and will not be used moving forward.

Chattooga River Project:

The hemlocks along Chattooga River corridor were discussed in the July meeting. The board embraced the project as an all-in effort that needed immediate attention. It started as a scouting run on sections 3&4 (both river and land access). The GA side of the corridor is partially in an existing HCA. The South Carolina side was not within a designated HCA. Buz and Jon scouted Camp Creek on the GA side and determined that it was viable as an option for injector treatment. That treatment is scheduled for December 9th with a local boy scout troop as the volunteer crew. Buz, Kat, and Holly scouted 3 trails on the SC side and determined all were viable options for treating by land at a later date. Buz and Holly met with Victor Wyant of SC forest service and he approved. Michael Starbuck approved our plans within the HCA on the GA side. Kat requested we recruit a videographer for the project. Buz contacted Michael



Persoon and he videoed the trip. A crew of 25 volunteers met at Woodall Shoals on Oct. 21st to initiate the treatment. In total, 178 trees were treated along the corridor.

The video produced by Persoon was played at the meeting. The board will provide comments to Buz regarding edits to the video by the end of the week. Buz will request Persoon make certain necessary edits before finalizing payment. Dave said we can use this in our year end newsletter. Jonathan stated we should use the video within the paddling community. Wildwater was a huge component of the success of this project. Buz noted we don't want to impose too much on their offer.

Moving forward, Buz would like for us to determine how much we can access by land, noting all terrain limitations in treating by land. Once we set the metric for land treatments, we can determine how much help we will need from Wildwater and other partners for future raft/kayak treatments.

After the Camp Creek treatment, Jonathan would like to take kayakers on several scouting treatments to determine what areas to treat and by the next board meeting we'll hopefully be able to set another big treatment trip for a spring 2024.

Buz stated we should reach out to Mountain High Hikers and schedule some dates in the next month to hike areas they may be aware of on the SC side. John Shearouse has contacts in Walhalla Boy Scout troops that he will reach out to for future treatment projects.

Kat noted we need to be careful how we blend this with regularly scheduled treatments. Jim W stated we need to keep engagement with the volunteers on BRRD and keep those areas on our schedule. Holly, Jon and Jim W will coordinate with FS offices to determine treatment priorities for 2024.

Holly asked for guidance on FS policy for retreating larger trees (DBH 24"+). Donna stated that historically SGH has recommended retreatment within the year and FS may or may not follow up. She stated that, in this case, we're doing the work and all we need is the chemical. We could retreat the larger trees the following year.

The need for more detailed treatment logs was discussed. It would be helpful to have a GPS for each raft, but Dave noted the learning curve may be a setback there. John Shearouse brought up i-Tree device for tree GPS. It's an instrument within itself, built for tree location. They are very accurate and uninhibited by tree canopy. They're expensive but grant funding or renting/borrowing one from GFS or a University may be possible.

We need to create an online accessible google map/google earth doc showing all areas treated and proposed hike in sites to determine parameters for future paddling treatments.

Saplings:

Betty has 40 saplings on her property that are ready to dig. Chris and Holly scouted the Procko property in Blue Ridge and there are around 100 saplings of various size. There are also around 100 saplings at the Verner property in Rabun. We need to schedule digs prior to year end. Holly will coordinate with Jim Heilman to dig the Blue Ridge properties. Buz has around 100 potted, Chris has around 80-100.

Holly has been in touch with Michelle Berrey regarding planting three trees at Whitepath Golf Course on Wednesday November 8th in memory of Paul Berrey. Holly will notify Chris and Donna once Michelle confirms the location on course.

Five trees will be planted at Blairsville Boy Scout Camp Saturday, November 11th.

Festivals:

SGH had good turnout at 2023 festivals. Blue Ridge Arts Fest, Marble Fest, Bear on the Square, and Trout festivals were the most productive. Holly will take inventory of festival supplies and order screened sides for Marble Festival booth. One more booth commitment remains for Q4 at Blairsville Boy Scout Camp.

Treatment:

One treatment project remaining for Q4. Jon Jones will lead the project at Camp Creek with Boy Scouts on Dec. 9th.

Financial:

REVIEW OF 2023 FINANCIAL MATTERS as of 9/30/23

Starting 2023 Balance	\$72,039.68
Total Income	\$18,579.65
Total Expense	\$21,075.18
Net Change	-\$2,495.53
Investment (Fidelity)	\$40,000.00
Op Ckg 9/30/23	\$29,544.15
Total Balance	\$69, 544.15

*Report on Annual Appeal as of 11/5/23: 194 donations totaling **\$48,387**

Dedicated Funds:

Gheesling UGA Scholarship	\$1,475.00	
Private donation, Rabun	\$0	Seed, Tugalo, Burton projects
Lake Rabun Foundation	\$2,254.90	for use in Rabun County (used after 9/30)
Lake Burton Civic Assoc	\$1,824.14	for use in Rabun County (used after 9/30)
Laurel Ridge	\$391.00	
Rock Creek Project	<u>\$0.00</u>	Rock Creek Project Mar 5
TOTAL DEDICATED FUNDS	\$5,945.04	

Donna Shearer Scholarship Fund as of 11/22/23: \$40,290

REVIEW OF FY 2023 STRATEGIES & ACTIVITIES as of 9/30/23

- 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 375 calls handled.
- 3 Hemlock Help Clinics with total of 19 attendees.
- 3 Facilitator Training Workshops with total of 17 new Facilitators trained.
Total active Facilitators = 431 in Georgia and 93 in other states.
- 8 Presentations for 150 adults
- 1 Hemlock Lesson for 222 students and 2 adults
- 1 Customized training sessions for 11 volunteers and public land managers
- 10 Festivals with 60 volunteers and estimated 2548 visitors:
- 3 Articles / news items written by, with the assistance of, or about SGH published in newspapers/magazines
- 23 Facilitator visits made with charitable treatment of 3,661 trees
- 15 hemlock treatment projects with 175 volunteers treating 8,207 trees:
- 2 sapling rescue projects with 12 volunteers, 125 saplings rescued and potted for use in educational / service activities or future adoption:
- 80 hemlock saplings adopted.
- 55 saplings donated to schools, churches, nonprofits
- 3 hemlock sapling planting projects with 16 volunteers planting 58 donated hemlocks:
- 7 soil injectors repaired/refurbished
- Total of 3,364 volunteer hours logged.

2024 MEETING DATES

Sunday, January 7th 2024
Starting at 1:00 p.m.
Dahlonega Chamber of Commerce
342 Hill Street, Dahlonega