

**Minutes of Albemarle County Natural Heritage Committee (NHC) Meeting
August 5th, 2021 – Virtual Meeting on Zoom**

Committee Members: Christine Putnam, Peggy Cornett, Bruce Gatling-Austin, Lonnie Murray, Emma Andrews, Kate Mallek, Michael Rodemeyer, Michael Callahan

Absent: Emily Luebke, Leah Jung, Kennon Williams, Nancy Weiss

Other Attendees: Kyle Rhodes (VDACS), Rod Walker (BR Prism)

Staff: Kim Biasioli, Carolyn Schaffer, Nicole Jones, Jim Barbour

There was a quorum of eight members present, and Christine called the meeting to order at 5:32.

Welcome to new member, Michael Callahan. Welcome to guests.

Peggy moved approval of the agenda, Lonnie seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.

Lonnie moved approval of the agenda, Peggy seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.

- Spotted Lanternfly Update from the Blue Ridge Prism & Discussion with guests Rod Walker (Blue Ridge Prism), Jim Barbour (ACPR), and Kyle Rhodes (VDACS)
 - SLF was discovered July 15th in Albemarle County along the Rivanna. ACPR is coordinating with VDACS to permit chemical treatments, set traps, and continue investigating up and downstream.
 - May have come in through nearby train tracks.
 - VDACS has provided information for posting at kiosks.
 - VDACS surveyed the property to delimit the population, set up circle traps.
 - Tree of heaven is preferred host. SLF can also be found on black walnut, black locust, hackberry, box elder.
 - Chemical treatment has to follow process through USDA and Albemarle County. Two treatments were done so far.
 - SLF sucks sap out of the tree and create a honeydew covering everything underneath. Does not kill the tree. Honeydew promotes the growth of sooty mold.
 - VDACS has hundreds of traps across the state.
 - Estimated 250-500 nymphs and adults found total so far in Albemarle location.
 - Section of trail being surveyed is about 1 mile. Still Meadows subdivision in Carrsbrook.
 - VDACS has surveyed along rail lines and other areas around Charlottesville. Not found in other locations.
 - Increasing awareness is important to get more people reporting. Working with VCE.
 - Grapevines can be very heavily impacted – concern about economic impacts.
 - Chemical injections only on tree on heaven.
 - BR Prism working with the state to help inform landowners; encourage removal of tree of heaven before SLF arrives.
 - Need for landowner education about SLF, how to preemptively control tree of heaven, particularly chemical application.
 - Signs are posted along the section of the Rivanna Trail. VDACS has gone door to door and distributed information to landowners and businesses on either side of the river.
 - Training ACPR staff in invasives ID and control is possible – would need to be organized, and could be coordinated with BR Prism.
 - Best way for NHC to help is with educating the public.

- County staff could reach out through CAPE email list and social media. **Action Item:** Emma will create a folder on NHC drive with educational materials. Kim will work with CAPE to get out an alert.
- VCE does more education than VDACS.
- Communication to landowners should include what they can do: 2 part message including how to report sightings and preemptively controlling tree of heaven.
- Significant economic impacts for agriculture and forest products industry have been identified in PA.
- Suggestion to create a process for dealing with this type of situation in the future.
- Three counties in northern Virginia have a quarantine to mitigate spread; impacts to residents and businesses need to be communicated.
- Share information with wineries, or organizations of wineries and economic development organizations.
- **Action Item:** Christine will start a google doc of organizations to track outreach efforts. NHC members will contribute.
- Need to provide information, especially about potential economic impacts, to Board of Supervisors. VDACS will present to BOS once they have more surveys done. **Action Item:** Christine will draft a letter on behalf of the NHC.
- Follow-Ups:
 - Important Site Updates
 - Lonnie visited paper birch site. Site is densely overgrown. He met with the botanist and learned that SNP is working on potential fire management to promote *C. canadensis* population; edge of range in Albemarle County.
 - Emma returned to orchids at the wetland at her property; new population of *P. peramoena* identified.
 - Subcommittee and Member Reports
 - Education Subcommittee has not met yet. Virginia Master Naturalists did a workshop on EDDMaps to identify/report early detection of invasive species. Master Gardeners kicked off garden center liaison program with Plant Northern Piedmont Natives to encourage nurseries to offer more native plants.
 - Wildlife Corridors – Southern Albemarle Mountains project is ongoing; interest from Virginia Tech to do additional research. Collision survey will be starting soon to identify hotspots along survey area on Route 29. Piloting the ROaDS app for Virginia with Master Naturalists; anyone can use it to map live animals or roadkill on the roadways.
 - Policy Subcommittee has not met.
 - Annual Report to the BOS
 - Christine has drafted the report. **Action Item:** NHC members to provide final feedback on the report by August 12th.
 - Lonnie moved to delegate authority to Christine to finalize the report. Peggy seconded. Approved by a roll call vote.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30. Next meeting date is September 2, 2021.