



Virginia Department of Forestry

100th Anniversary



*Serving Virginia's
Landowners and
Protecting Virginia's
Forest Resource
Since 1914*



Then

April 2014



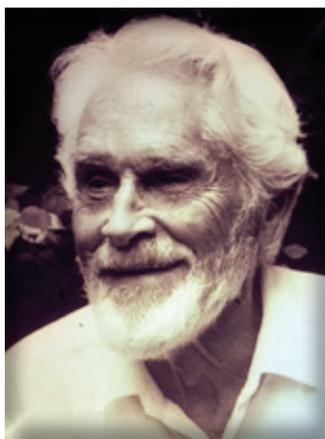
Virginia Department of Forestry Celebrates 100 Years

The Beginning

2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the Virginia Department of Forestry as an agency of the Commonwealth. There are only a handful of other Virginia state agencies that can claim the same longevity in service to our citizens.

The Virginia General Assembly created the Office of the State Forester, under the State Geological Commission, in 1914. The office was charged to "...ascertain the best methods of reforesting cut-over and denuded lands, foresting waste land, preventing the destruction of forests by fire, the administering of forests on forestry principles, the instruction and encouragement of private owners in preserving and growing timber for commercial and manufacturing purposes, and the general conservation of forest tracts around the headwaters on the watersheds of all water courses of the state."

The enabling act required the State Forester to teach a course on forestry at the University of Virginia, and directed that UVa pay for the operations of the office. UVa allotted \$5,000 for the first year. The Geological Commission appointed Chapin Jones as the first State Forester. Mr. Jones took office on March 1, 1915.



Chapin Jones, 1st State Forester

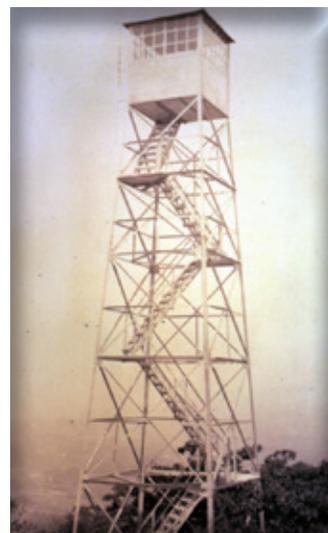
From March 1 through the fall, Mr. Jones was the one and only member of the Virginia Forest Service. Through a cooperative agreement with the US Forest Service and two private companies, several "patrolmen and

watchmen" were hired in the fall to warn Smyth, Grayson and Washington county residents of fire danger and to fight all fires they found.

Changes Through the Years

The first tree nursery was established in December 1916, with the first seed sown in spring 1917. Loblolly pine, shortleaf pine, white pine and Norway spruce were the first species grown. Inventory was given as 20,000 one-year seedlings. Most of these were Loblolly pines. Today, the two VDOF nurseries grow nearly 50 species of hardwood and softwood trees and sell 24 million seedlings annually.

The first fire tower was constructed on Little Stone Mountain, near Big Stone Gap, in 1917. Fires began to be tracked in 1917. That year, 1,460 forest fires burned 305,000 acres in Virginia. The No. 1 cause of fire that year is the same as it is today - burning of brush and debris.



From 1917 to the present, the Virginia Department of Forestry has battled more than 140,000 wildfires that together have burned more



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than 3.4 million acres of land (13 percent of the state's land base).

Assistance to landowners began in 1917. That year, 52 landowners with an average holding of 200 acres received assistance, and a list of 3,500 sawmills was compiled. Today, VDOF provides assistance to nearly 5,000 landowners each year.



The Gallion State Forest (now Prince Edward-Gallion State Forest) was acquired under the will of the late Emmett D. Gallion in 1919. This is Virginia's first state forest, which now number 23 across the Commonwealth.

The first edition of the book "Common Forest Trees of Virginia" was published in 1922. Ninety-two years later, the book is still being published and approximately 20,000 copies of the current edition (2012) are being sold each year.

The Agency developed its first set of Best Management Practices for Water Quality in the 1970s and began its timber harvest inspection program in the mid-1980s. In FY13, VDOF field personnel inspected 5,658 timber harvest sites on 233,714 acres.

Ensuring there is a sufficient number of working forests to meet the needs of forest industry and the public, VDOF launched its Forestland Conservation Division in 2007. It now has more than 100 conservation easements on more than 30,000 acres of forestland in Virginia.

Today, Forestry is a \$17 Billion economic engine in the Commonwealth. More than 103,000 Virginians owe their livelihoods to forestry – that's one out of every 33 working adults! The 240 employees of the Virginia Department of Forestry protect and serve landowners who own nearly 16 Million acres of forestland – that's 62 percent of the state's entire land base. This small but dedicated group of employees is committed to conserving our natural resources, ensuring the economic vitality of the forest industry, and protecting the lives and property of every Virginian.



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Celebrate with Us!

To celebrate this centennial, the Agency has a number of events and activities scheduled throughout the year and across the Commonwealth. You can help recognize this milestone by attending one or more of the following activities:

- ▲ NASCAR modified race at South Boston Speedway on April 5.
- ▲ NASCAR modified race at Langley Speedway in Hampton on April 12.
- ▲ The Toyota 400 NASCAR Sprint Cup race at Richmond International Raceway on April 26.
- ▲ Acting State Forester Rob Farrell and Smokey Bear at the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival Parades May 2nd and 3rd.
- ▲ An exhibit of VDOF vehicles at the Virginia Transportation Museum in Roanoke May 10 – June 30.
- ▲ An exhibit of 19 original Smokey Bear paintings by Rudy Wendelin at The Chrysler Museum of Art beginning August 9th – Smokey's 70th birthday – and running through February of 2015.
- ▲ Smokey Bear and our new State Forester will also be the grand marshals at the Richmond Christmas Parade in early December.
- ▲ You can also purchase one of the 5 Million Virginia Lottery scratch-off tickets called Money Money Money and see a VDOF anniversary message on the reverse side.
- ▲ Lastly, be sure to pick up a copy of the 2014 Virginia State Map, which is due out in June. The 2 Million copies of the map feature the Virginia Department of Forestry and our State Forests throughout.



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