THE

EcoForester

SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER

Inside This Issue

When Is The Best Time To Plant A Tree?

By: Andy Tait

There is an ancient Chinese proverb that advises: "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now." This is true for forest stewardship actions as well. Trees grow slowly, so forest management plans cover at least a 10 year planning window. And it often takes that long to begin to restore a forest. So anytime I want to improve a forest and increase its health and resiliency, I start with that time frame in mind.

EF crew leader Reid Overton carefully plants an oak sapling during a recent restoration project. (more on page 8)

Invasives grow exponentially, so to paraphrase another old saying, treating one plant in time stops nine more from growing. If needed, invasive plant control should always be the first step in any forest stewardship action, and it can take a couple rounds of treatment over a couple years to get them under control.

Oaks are the keystone species that many wildlife species, from birds to bears, rely on for a reliable nutritious food source, and are very valuable for timber as well. However, due to a century of fire suppression and mismanagement, young oaks have declined sharply and now need our help to regrow. And it takes about 10 years to culture good oak regeneration to sustain this species on our landscape.

If you have an oak forest type (and they are the most common forest types around here) you need to culture oak regeneration to sustain your oak forest, which can take a decade. The most common first step in oak restoration is to reduce the dense under/midstory layer that is creating shady and, therefore, more moist conditions that favors other very common species. Oaks need some sun to establish and compete best on drier sites. So we need to create these conditions either through 3-5 prescribed, controlled burns over 10-15 years or via a mechanical midstory reduction to expedite the process. Finally, once abundant oak regeneration has been established then a timber harvest to remove a significant portion of the overstory is needed as oaks need more sun as they grow to compete into the future forest.

So, when is the best time to plan a sustainable, or in the case of oaks, an ecologically beneficially timber harvest? At least 10 years ago, or plan the harvest for at least 10 years in the future. And during this time-period it's important to reassess the process and see if oaks are regenerating to get the desired outcome.

Funding to carry out the forest stand improvement work that is needed before an oak restoration harvest is a major obstacle for many landowners. The USDA NRCS's Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) and the NC Forest Service's Forest Development Program (FDP) can provide cost share funding, but you have to apply and wait up to a year to get the funding. So, it's time to do spring planning for your forest now so you'll have the forest you want in 10 or 20 years.

Valuing Our Trees by The Products They Create

By: Rob Lamb *Board President*

Landowners are frequently in need of funding to help sustain their forests, and non-timber forest products can be an important and significant contributor to the bottom line. In the northern Appalachian Forests, and especially in Vermont where sugar maple is the most common tree species, maple syrup production is an important forest product and a big part of the rural economy. Income from maple syrup production often even exceeds the value that timber harvesting can provide.

Maple season in Vermont begins in the spring as winter temps rise above freezing and sap begins to flow. Maple trees are special because of the relatively high sugar content of their sap. Stands of trees tapped for maple are referred to as "sugarbushes." Small holes are drilled into the outer, living portion of the trunk. Each hole is then "tapped" with a small spout that is seated into the tree. Healthy maple trees can be tapped each year for their entire life without causing harm to the tree. The sap is collected in buckets or a system of tubing that runs into collection tanks. It is then transported to a "sugarhouse" where it is boiled in an evaporator to concentrate the sap into syrup.

EF Founder Rob Lamb carefully hammers a tap into a sugar maple tree. The tap will release approximately 15 gallons of sap between February and April that will be boiled down to make roughly 1/3 of a gallon of maple syrup.

While sugar maple is uncommon in southern hardwoods, there are still opportunities for southern Appalachian landowners to produce syrup from other more common trees, including red maple, birch, hickory, and black walnut. Black walnut syrup can even be valued at 5 or more times the amount of maple syrup.

EcoForesters' asked Rob to give a brief explanation of the process of making maple syrup. On warm days following freezing nights, sap moves from the spout into a tubing system that transports the sap downhill to collection tanks. The sap is transported using a truck and tractor from large sap tanks in the woods to the "sugar house" where it is processed into maple syrup. Spouts are removed at the end of the season and new holes drilled each spring. Taking raw sap from 2% sugar to syrup at 66% sugar requires boiling the sap to concentrate the sugar. It takes approximately 50 gallons of raw maple sap to make 1 gallon of maple syrup. This process takes place in a large piece of equipment called an Evaporator. There are many different designs, but the general goal is the same; to cook the sap as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Our wood-fired evaporator uses the newest and most modern innovations to produce the highest quality syrup.

Lamb Sugarworks' partner Jim Olmsted seen loading wood into the evaporator. Maintained at between 600 and 700 degrees Fahrenheit, in one season the evaporator will boil down as much as 60,000 gallons of sap to produce over 1,000 gallons of maple syrup.

Cooking the syrup creates natural solids that must be filtered to achieve perfectly clear syrup. After filtering, the syrup is graded by color from lightest to darkest - golden, amber, dark, and very dark. Finally, the syrup is reheated to proper canning temperature to ensure long shelf life and put into glass and plastic containers, or stainless-steel barrels for long-term storage.

At Lamb Sugarworks we aim to continue the Vermont tradition of making maple syrup at a small scale with attention to detail. We tap approximately 3500 trees and produce between 1200-1500 gallons of syrup per year, making us a small operation by Vermont standards. We strive for sustainable and conservation-minded maple production. We are proud of our product and hope you will enjoy!

To learn more about the process of making maple syrup, or to order some quality Vermont syrup for your next pancake breakfast, visit the Lamb Sugarworks website: www.lambsugarworks.com.

PARTNER UPDATES: First Round of FOREST Fund Helps Restore Rare Bog and Riparian Areas

Despite delays due to COVID, EcoForesters' newly created FOREST (Forest Restoration and Stewardship) Fund helped three local land trusts double the amount of forest stewardship on permanently protected lands. Foothills Conservancy, Southern Appalachian Highland Conservancy, and Conserving Carolina all accessed funding in 2021 that helped fund necessary planning and restoration.

The FOREST Fund was created out of a need to help land trusts with their awesome responsibility of stewarding protected lands with high conservation values. Keeping those values on the landscapes require yearly monitoring to assure that stewardship objectives remain in place and easement rules are being followed. This leaves less time for assessing restoration needs and controlling non-native invasive species. Through careful planning with land trust staff, EcoForesters staff is providing expertise and funding to assure these important areas are preserved for future generations.

Two such areas were King Creek Bog and Oak Hill Community Forest. At King Creek Bog, Conserving Carolina was able to preserve one of the remnants of this ecosystem in May 2018 when they purchased a 52-acre property that contains part of a mountain bog in Flat Rock, NC. The EcoForesters Restoration Crew worked on nonnative invasive species (NNIS) control at King Creek Bog site for several days in 2021 between late October and late December. The main targets were autumn olive, tree of heaven, Chinese privet, oriental bittersweet, Japanese honeysuckle, multiflora rose, Japanese barberry, English ivy, and burning bush. In 2020, thanks to funding from private donors, foundations and small businesses, Foothills Conservancy purchased 652 acres to become the Oak Hill Community Park and Forest. Then, in October of 2021 the EcoForesters restoration crew was able to address two infestations of non-native invasive species in the northeast corner of the Oak Hill Community Forest. The target species were mature climbing kudzu, Japanese honeysuckle, princess tree, tree of heaven and small privet. Also, treated was English Ivy and wisteria with a small stand of mimosa, some scattered privet and Bradford pear trees.

Restoration allows this rare bog ecosystem to expand.

The success of our first year gives us hope that this funding model can be applied to additional conservation areas, including public lands. This year we will go back to industry partners to ask for their ongoing support of the region's forest in an effort to fund more work and value the benefits provided by healthy forests. By expanding this network, we will show how forests must be protected and restored to continue supporting the economic success of the Appalachian region. Please reach out to EcoForesters if your business would like to be added to the roster of organizations that support ecological forestry.

What Does Your Donation Support?

How do you reach the thousands of landowners that make up the largest segment of Appalachian forestland owners in a meaningful way? This question gets to the heart of how we achieve our mission to conserve and restore forests. Through community partnerships and innovation, EcoForesters is dedicated to effective landowner engagement that fosters a stewardship focused land ethic. Many landowners want to do right by their forest but just need help getting started. Our adaptive practices are made possible through grant funding and individuals like you. Please consider a donation and join the growing number of EcoForesters.

To Make Your Tax Deductible Donation, Go To

www.ecoforesters.org

EcoForesters also accepts donations of land and asks you to consider us in your legacy planning.

Many Thanks to Our Supporters and Partners!

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Donations from 5/2021-5/2022

SANDY MUSH COMMUNITY FORESTRY:
Finally, Back in the Field Again!

EcoForesters staff attended the recent Sandy Mush spring fling. Here, forestry associate Joey Borders shows two future foresters a sample of the invasive Chinese wisteria.

After a two-year, COVID induced absence, the Sandy Mush Coalition is pleased to be back at it and helping the Sandy Mush community! This flagship project for EcoForesters has been piloted with generous support from Brad and Shelli Stanback to positively impact rural communities. By bringing funding and wide-ranging expertise from area agencies and nonprofits, this project aims to connect landowners to resources and each other.

Our long-awaited Coalition Action plan, unveiled just as COVID was settling in, lays out the community priorities that were identified by landowners and community leaders to achieve the vision of healthy and resilient forests that protect water resources, natural assets, cultural heritage, economic opportunities, and quality of life for Sandy Mush community residents. This plan highlights areas of concern, while identifying targets and goals that will help achieve that vision.

The plan was shared with community members at this year's Spring Fling held at the Sandy Mush Community Center. Here families gathered to celebrate Spring together and rejoice with cakewalks, plant sales, and children chasing bubbles. The diversity of Sandy Mush was on display with a mix of homesteaders and long-time Sandy Mush families that live in and cherish this special community. EcoForesters booth highlighted common threats to forests and shared the Action Plan with local landowners.

USFS All Lands Strategy Aims to Leverage Funding and Help Private Landownders

USFS and NCWRC staff discuss restoration efforts on the Sandy Mush game lands.

Recently, EcoForesters staff was joined by USFS staff and the NC Wildlife Resource Commission (NCWRC) to tour our Sandy Mush Forest Restoration project (SMFRP). Supervisor for the National Forests in NC, James Melonas and Appalachian District Ranger Jennifer Barnhart requested a tour to learn more about our work on the Sandy Mush game lands and lessons learned from this public/private lands project.

EcoForesters has been diligently working with NCWRC Conservation Technician Chris Henline, to help restore valuable wildlife habitat in northwestern Buncombe County. Most wildlife species desire a range of habitat to support their ability to procreate, evade predators, and feed their young. Early successional habitat (meadows or <20-year-old forests) is often lost as forests age and must be recreated with active management. This process is done selectively to meet site specific needs, but also must address common forestry issues like non-native invasive species.

During the field trip, we discussed ways to use lessons learned during our project to move the *All Lands Strategy* forward. This strategy recognizes that a landscape approach to forestry is needed and private lands near public lands should be prioritized for outreach. As a non-profit organization that specializes in education and outreach, EcoForesters is uniquely qualified to assist the US Forest Service in this endeavor. We will continue to look for opportunities to expand our innovation and outreach in service to the region's forests.

5 Ways Climate Change Impacts Forests


Photo by Steven L Markos

1 Tree Migration

In response to climate change, some tree species will shift their ranges and migrate into landscapes in which they don't typically grow. Some tree species are migrating uphill and northward as temperatures increase, while other species are migrating downhill, and westward as changing precipitation patters create drier conditions. Species redistribution isn't necessarily a bad thing, but it's possible that some trees could go extinct, especially those with small ranges.


Photo by USDA.gov

2 Forest Fires

Climate Change is creating warmer temperatures, deeper droughts, and drier vegetation. These conditions will persist in the coming decades and lead to an increase in the extent, intensity, and frequency of wildfires. The majority of the blazes occur in western states. However, as the planet warms, North Carolina and other southeastern states could begin to experience larger wildfires.


Photo by Tupungato

3 Severe Droughts

With average temperatures rising due to climate change, historically dry areas across the U.S. are likely to experience less precipitation and increased risk of longer, more intense droughts. Research shows that trees respond to the stress of drought by closing their stomata, the pores that let in carbon dioxide. This forces trees to rely on stored sugars and starches, and if they run out of those energy sources before the drought is over, they can die from 'carbon starvation'. In addition, when trees lose too much water too quickly, air bubbles can form and prevent the transportation of water from the roots to the leaves, a process that can also result in death.


Photo by Immo Wegmann

4 Pests and Pathogens

When trees are exposed to a drought or wildfire, they become less resilient to pests and pathogens, and with climate change creating warmer, drier conditions in some regions across the country, forests could face increased outbreaks. Climate change will likely expand the range and prevalence of forest pests and pathogens because warmer temperatures and drier conditions could increase the reproductive rate of certain insect species. This phenomenon is already evident in the western U.S. where pest's populations are causing massive tree die-offs, with the bark beetle alone destroying 45 million acres of forest in recent years.


Photo by Indian Express

5 Carbon Competition

In recent years, polluting companies worldwide have announced plans to utilize forest carbon offset projects to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. These projects allow polluting companies to pay private landowners to capture, store and prevent carbon dioxide from reaching the atmosphere. Landowners who participate in these projects can earn "carbon credits" for preserving trees. But in addition to utilizing existing forests, some companies are purchasing and reforesting land in an effort to earn even more carbon credits, a strategy that could create economic uncertainty for the forest products industry.

Source: https://cnr.ncsu.edu/news/2021/08/5-ways-climate-change-impacts-forests/

Nantahala-Pisgah National Forest Planning Process Enters the Objection Phase

Every time that I write an update about the US Forest Service planning process for the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests, I think it will be the last one. But our involvement has been a lesson in patience and a reminder that the responsibility to manage over one million acres of public land over the next 20-30 years should not be rushed.

For background, for over ten years, a collaborative called the Nantahala Pisgah Forest Partnership has been meeting to discuss what we would like to see in the plan. We are a diverse group of stakeholders from the worlds of recreation, wildlife, conservation, and forest products that are advocating for our respective interests and seeking common ground. While we are far from being the only voices the FS is listening to, we are unique in that we have attempted to offer collaborative solutions to long standing problems. Our solutions were submitted together in solidarity and meant to be accepted together to assure all partner's values moved forward together.

In February, the USFS released their final plan that has elements of what our stakeholders wanted to see, such as guidelines for public involvement in project planning, an emphasis on ecosystem restoration through controlled fire and thinning, and an increase in timber harvesting in support of restoration goals and local communities. But to the chagrin of the Partnership, certain acres with potential Natural Heritage Areas and old growth ecosystems were not excluded from the management areas where timber harvesting is permitted. While the Plan does reference working more closely with the NC Natural Heritage Program to identify and protect ecologically sensitive acres, the Partnership feels like it does not go far enough to ensure these areas will be protected.

Historically, disagreements at the project level have resulted in delayed projects and have sowed distrust among stakeholders and the USFS. Our proposal

Mountain True biologist and EcoForester board member Josh Kelly counting the years of a tree core taken during the Crossover project field trip.

USFS staff and Partnership members discuss the Crossover project and how to make it stronger.

offered a solution to restrict what was allowable in these areas. But, in the end, the USFS decided that flexibility at the project level would be needed due to threats from climate change, increased recreational demand, and invasive species. The USFS indicates they will rely heavily on partner input and participation to create innovative projects that could achieve proper forest conditions without impacting ecological integrity.

Due to the absence of those identified areas being excluded from active management acres, the Partnership objected to the plan and asked the Forest Service to reconsider. The objection process will continue into the Fall with interested parties' meetings beginning in August. In the meantime, project planning continues to move forward under the current plan (adopted in 1986 and since amended) with an eye towards meeting the objectives found in the new Plan.

One such project on the Nantahala is the Crossover Project that includes several areas of concern identified by the Partnership. But this project also provides a glimpse into what collaborative project planning might look like in the absence of restrictions. I participated in a recent field trip to this project area with USFS staff and partners where contentious areas were visited. There were thoughtful discussions around potential old growth forests as well as how best to regenerate important oak species. It was clear to me that both USFS staff and partners genuinely want to work together and concessions on both sides were able to narrow the acres in contention.

Our partners in the Nantahala Pisgah Partnership plan to remain involved and actively help the Forest Service to achieve agreed upon ecological goals while avoiding controversial stands. This is a big forest and there is room to accomplish important objectives. EcoForesters remains optimistic that collaboration, innovation, and the adaptive management of solutions will continue, and I remain hopeful that common ground will be reached. Our conversations with partners and the Forest Service will continue and, like all forest planning, will adapt to changing conditions. So, stay tuned. I have learned not to assume anything during this process.

Restoring Western North Carolina's Forests One Partner at a Time

By: Reid Overton

EcoForesters is always looking for partners who share our visions of conservation and restoration through stewardship. We found some partners who fit that description in Russ and Stacy Oates. Russ is a retired wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service who is passionate about the conservation of the forests of Western North Carolina. He is focused on trying to repair some of the ecological damage done to this area by the poor forestry practices and timber harvests of the past. He and Stacy live on 214 acres of forested property in Yancey County that was purchased in 1996 and 2016. EcoForesters wrote the initial forest management plan for Russ in 2018 prioritizing biodiversity and ecological health of the forest including soil and water quality and wildlife habitat. Additionally, the plan focuses on recreation and a long-term goal of providing a mature forest resembling the pre-1900 forest. In order to accomplish these goals, Russ has set out to do some significant restoration and forest improvement work and partnered with organizations such as EcoForesters, the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy and the American Chestnut Foundation. The Oates property is part of multiple programs including the Audubon's Working Lands Initiative, USFWS Forest Landbird Legacy Program, and the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program. Russ and Stacy have received significant cost share dollars in the form of NRCS grants both for the forest restoration efforts and the establishment of Golden-winged Warbler habitat.

Russ and EF crew were having fun on the project. #whistlewhileyouwork

The Forest Restoration Project is the most labor intensive and potentially consequential of the ongoing efforts. The goal of this project is to restore a small part of the forest to a more desirable species composition and relative species abundance. This means pushing the forest towards a composition dominated by oaks and hickories, which are declining. The forest will still maintain a diversity of species including black cherry, yellow poplar, black and yellow birch, beech, basswood, serviceberry, and sourwood along with shrubs such as mountain laurel, rhododendron, spicebush, ninebark, and elderberry. The forest is currently dominated by a small subset of the original species due to the poor practices of the past. The project started with removing unwanted trees in selected areas to make growing space for the depleted species. The EcoForesters forest restoration crew is working with Russ on the planting portion of the project. We have been out with Russ for almost two weeks since last December planting saplings of multiple species of oak and hickory, black cherry, spicebush, elderberry, and multiple species of conifer. The crew has planted and caged over 500 saplings. Once the forest in the planting areas matures it will resemble the composition prior to harvest and be a more diverse and desirable habitat for wildlife.

The Oates property is providing significant bird habitat to a variety of species. The upper tract of land, where the restoration efforts are taking place, is reserved for the management of mature forest bird species. The bird species found in this habitat include scarlet tanagers, thrushes, warblers, and the rose breasted grosbeak. Three acres of the lower tract that border an old field has been cleared and planted to manage as Golden-winged Warbler habitat. Within those 3 acres a small orchard has been planted that includes apples as well as native species of persimmon, plum, paw paw, winterberry and spicebush. Dogwood and Hawthorne were kept to provide food for the birds in the area.

Russ and team carefully unpack tree saplings

Still missing is one of the most historically dominant and ecologically and economically important trees in the eastern forests: the American chestnut. Restoration of this species, driven to ecological extinction by an exotic organism, has been a long and difficult process, but the solution appears to be closer. The Oateses are partnering with the American Chestnut Foundation to participate with many other landowners in the first chestnut restoration effort using 100% American chestnut "mother trees" to be crossed with the Darling 58 (still awaiting approval for "release into the wild" from USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service), blight resistant chestnut. This crossing will produce genetically diverse, blight resistant restoration trees that can acquire the full stature of the species.

Russ has put tremendous thought, time, and labor into doing justice for the ecosystem and environment that he resides in. More partnerships such as this one could significantly improve the long-term ecological health of the forests of Western North Carolina, providing a real chance for the myriad of organisms that live in them to not only persist, but thrive long into the future.

Coalition Members Complete Controlled Burn

A significant piece of the Sandy Mush Forest Restoration project (SMFRP) is the broad coalition of partners and what they bring to the table. Agencies, NGO's, and forestry professionals are contributing resources and expertise to assist landowners in their management decisions. One such partner is Wildwood Consulting, a private forestry consulting firm that advises landowners and helps implement prescriptions identified through planning. One such management activity is controlled burning that reduces wildfire risk, improves habitat for some wildlife species and promotes fire dependent plant communities.

Landowners Bill & Jennifer Kaduck recently purchased land in Sandy Mush and immediately sought help in Wildwood to properly steward their investment. "Never having been involved with a prescribed burn, we were apprehensive about the fire getting out of control and damaging our property or that of our neighbors. We shouldn't have worried though, because the professional planning and careful work of over a dozen fire crew members ensured the fire was well contained and went according to plan."

Working with forester Richard Sanders, a controlled burn was scheduled. "We consider folks like Bill and Jennifer to be ideal clients. They are engaged, eager to get to know their new property and refine their goals, and they thoughtfully consider the trade-offs and choices they must make as landowners to steward the forest into the future. I'm thankful that this funding was available to make this first step possible."

Wildwood staff prepare the burn crew with a safety talk before the burn begins.

Wildwood staff begin the burn after careful planning and the right conditions.

Along with EcoForesters and Blue Ridge Resource Conservation & Development staff, the burn was implemented over 45 acres, carefully monitoring fire lines and weather conditions. We were also reunited with former EcoForester, Mary Vann Johnston who was running point and keeping everyone safe. For someone on their first controlled burn, it was incredible to watch the coordination and planning come to fruition.

Funding for the burn was made possible through the SMFRP and coalition partners that include the NC Forest Service and Ruffed Grouse Society. Bringing resources to rural communities is a big part of this pilot project and helping landowners become more active in their forest.

If you have an interest in controlled burning, please reach out to Wildwood Consulting at: richard@wildwoodconsultingllc.com

FOREST LANDOWNER WORKSHOP

JUNE 4th, 2022 - 10am - 1 pm @ Sandy Mush Community Center

Sandy Mush Game Lands Field Trip to follow - 19 School Rd, Leicester, NC 28748

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This workhshop is made possible by the Sandy Mush Forestry Coalition, a community forestry program helping rural landownders access funding and manage their forests.

Restoring Vital Habitat with the WNC Nature Center

By: Reid Overton

EcoForesters had the privilege to partner with the WNC Nature Center in February. The WNC Nature Center is a local AZA accredited zoo managed by the Asheville City Parks department. It is home to more than 60 species of animals that include mostly native with some exotic wild species and domesticated species. A large portion of the Nature Center is forested or cultivated with native and ornamental plants. The forested and vegetated areas of the Nature Center provide habitat for their residents in addition to visiting critters such as native songbirds and humans who want to spend the day with those amazing animals. Most of the nature center's natural spaces are infested with non-native invasive species (NNIS). This is typical of most forested habitat in sub/urban areas. NNISs are a major problem in our forests and natural spaces because they out compete native species and cause significant ecological damage. They can have an adverse effect not only on the native plants but also on the local wildlife. If NNISs outcompete native plants that local species depends on for food and shelter it can have a devastating effect on the native ecosystem.

We were thrilled to have the opportunity to aid WNC Nature Center in their mission of connecting people with the animals and plants native to the Southern Appalachian Mountain region by inspiring appreciation, nurturing understanding, and advancing conservation of the region's rich biodiversity. The forest restoration crew donated a day of their time to work with the crew and volunteers of the nature center. The day's main goal was to begin restoration of the songbird garden by removing NNIS. The songbird garden is a longtime staple of the ture Center and provides vital habitat to the native birds

EcoForesters staff and Nature Center volunteers made a great team!

Some invasive plants look similar to native ones and EF staff help differentiate the good from the bad.

of the area. The garden serves as an example of how people can manage an easy and cost effective space that aids in the survival of native species while making for a beautiful yard. The garden had become overrun by paper mulberry, oriental bittersweet, and Japanese spirea among other NNIS. EcoForesters led a team of volunteers and Nature Center staff in removing the NNIS using multiple low impact techniques. We prioritized hand pulling the vines and shrubs and cutting the non invasive paper mulberry trees. After a half day's work, the garden was cleared of invasives and ready for the continued revitalization and restoration effort planned by the Nature Center staff.

The restoration crew was able to move onto two more priority areas after completing the initial NNIS removal in the songbird garden. We focused on clearing out invasive vines and Tree of Heaven in a forest edge area near the playground. The goal in this area was to push back the encroachment of NNIS into cultivated guest areas. The team also cleared out a kudzu patch near the farmyard. The space that had been overtaken has the potential to be new or expanded habitat for some of the center's residents now that it has been cleared out.

The workday was a resounding success! Not only did the crew get to do some good work with an important partner but they got to hang out with some very cool animals.

EcoForesters

Our Misson

EcoForesters is a 501(c)(3) non-profit professional foresty organization dedicated to conserving and restoring our Appalachian forests through education and stewardship.

Please contact us with any questions about your forest or our mission!

How To Reach Us

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Please contact us if you know of anything!

We Are Hiring!

We are hiring for our new second restoration crew!

Do you know of any hard working individuals who love the outdoors? Send them our way!

For more information or to submit your resume, email: info@ecoforesters.org