

## Agency Strategic Plan

## Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:32 pm

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

## Mission and Vision

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department of Forestry is to protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians.

**Vision Statement**

We envision a healthy, abundant forest resource providing economic and environmental benefits to the Commonwealth on a sustained basis. We see a resource whose scenic beauty enhances natural surroundings and whose forested resource supports clean air, clean water, and a diverse population of wildlife. We further see a diverse forest resource as a part of natural ecosystems. We envision the economic benefits of forest industry to be in balance with the environmental values of the resource.

We envision the Department as the most effective forestry agency in the nation and as a leader in managing, conserving and protecting the resource.

We see an agency built on solid technology backed by strong ethics; one that is able to stay ahead of change and is quick to respond to citizens' needs, and one that is a leader in providing forest resource information. We see the Department responding to its employees' needs through leadership characterized by open communication to enable employees to form creative solutions to problems and who have the time and tools to provide exceptional forestry services to landowners, citizens and organizations. We see employees who are knowledgeable, motivated, pro-active and enabled to make decisions. Finally, we envision a workforce whose professional, unbiased, science-based recommendations impact positively upon an informed public and whose efforts result in complete overall customer satisfaction.

## Executive Progress Report

**Service Performance and Productivity**

- *Summary of current service performance*

In 1914, DOF began providing leadership over the monumental task of protecting Virginia's approximately 14 million acres of forest land from wild forest fires. With one State Forester Director and just a few other people, the agency began the enormous task of building a leading state forestry agency.

Almost 100 years later, DOF has grown, emerging from Bureau and Division levels of other state agencies to a full Department status under the Secretariat of Agriculture and Forestry. We provide world-class forest wildfire protection, and forestry and conservation services to assure the sustainability of the forest resource for future generations. DOF is the only state agency with mandates and a mission to deliver forestry programs and services to Virginians.

In addition to forestry protection and management services, DOF is one of 45 state agencies in Virginia's Emergency Response Team (VERT) and has worked with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to provide help to Virginians during many emergencies, including several ice, snow and hurricane storms. The Agency has done the same on the national level. DOF is a leader in emergency response, incident command organization, and multiple large forest fire incident management. DOF is prepared to assist in the Virginia's Homeland Security in addition to its forestry mandates.

DOF provides sophisticated forest wildfire protection, prevention and mitigation services to complex forest and human community issues that did not exist in 1914. Virginia's population has grown from approximately 2 million people in 1910 to more than 7 million today. Demand is intense for homes in forested communities and property values are near their highest levels ever. DOF now serves greater numbers of people, more complex forest and community relationships, and the some of the highest property values in history.

Development pressures are intense – like never before over the entire Commonwealth – for homes, commercial and industrial needs. Forests are harvested and changed to new uses at a rate similar to Virginia's early colonial historical rapid pace of converting forests into much-needed agricultural uses. These land-use changes have placed incredible demand on landowners and leaders, who otherwise would prefer to maintain farms and forests forever. DOF is part of the problem-solving effort to maintain a sufficient base of sustainable forests for future generations. DOF delivers unbiased, scientific-based information about forests to planners, legislators, landowners, local governments, forest products industry and the public.

Market and economic pressures have dramatically changed the way the forest products industry conducts business. DOF provides unbiased scientific-based information on forest resource type, estimated quantity, availability and forest

health to existing and prospective businesses.

Managing the forests in the remaining rural parts of Virginia is still a full-time effort of DOF's forestry staff statewide. Providing valued, third-party scientific assessments and recommendations for Virginia's private forest landowners, who control 77% of the commercial forest land, is an important part of each field forester's and technician's job. DOF delivers unbiased technical advice and help with state and federal cost-sharing program assistance to forest landowners.

Protecting the forest resources from insects, diseases and invasive plant species is a high priority of DOF's forest health monitoring team. Informing forest landowners about possible insect and disease threats helps landowners avoid or mitigate major destruction of forest resources. DOF has actively engaged in the detection of the pine bark beetle, gypsy moth, hemlock woolly adelgid and other invasive pests, helping save millions of dollars in forest resource value.

Interest and concern over water quality in the 1970s brought DOF solidly into the water quality silvicultural legislation, providing for enforcement duties and leading the non-regulatory approach in Virginia. DOF encourages best management practices (BMP) in silvicultural operations, believing that forest industry can regulate itself best when provided with accurate information about impacts of poor practices and a scientific-based approach to saving water quality from silvicultural practices.

While DOF has seen significant changes since 1914, DOF has worked quietly to strengthen its forest firefighting capability while working on cutting-edge technology in applied forest research and tree improvement; developing best management practices and monitoring timber harvests to protect water quality, and delivering high-quality forestry service and unbiased technical information to private forest landowners.

DOF measures its service performance through performance measures tied to its strategic goals and objectives. The Department of Forestry has achieved results in all service areas. Individual performance is good to excellent, but the overall goals and objectives can be met only with an increased workforce.

Landowner satisfaction is high according to surveys completed by landowners receiving services and information from DOF. Employees are frequently recognized for outstanding service delivery in the surveys. Agency cost-share and technical advice are often applauded by those who received them.

DOF measures the performance of its administrative functions through a wide variety of performance measures. These include prompt pay compliance (99 % of dollars paid within 30 days in FY 2004 against a target of 97%) and proportion of purchases made through the state mandatory eVA procurement system (98% versus the 95% target.)

DOF has demonstrated its commitment to technological innovation with the development of significant applications, such as IFRIS -- the Integrated Forest Resource Information System. IFRIS© provides an enterprise solution to agency performance tracking along with geo-spatial functions to provide mapping services and to maintain locations in the enterprise database.

DOF has played a lead role in creating current and detailed information about Virginia's forest resources by participating in the US Forest Service cooperative Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, providing annual updates on the state of the forest. DOF has also initiated a Forest Spatial Analysis Center, which uses satellite imagery and other GIS technologies to track forest cover, land-use changes and forest disturbances.

DOF implemented a training program for its employees to maintain and increase skills and knowledge for their jobs and help them to advance. The Employee Development, Growth, and Education Program (EDGE) was developed and implemented in 2004/2005. EDGE is the Agency's continuing education program. It was implemented to ensure the development of a highly skilled, professionally respected and motivated workforce. The program provides outlets through which employees can acquire training that will bolster their professional aptitudes and skills, assist them with their overall understanding of DOF and its responsibilities, and help them build healthy lifestyles. It also encourages employees to become actively involved in the agency, within professional organizations, and in their communities as an avenue for professional development. EDGE offers on-line training courses in technology and support skills as well as off-site training with courses ranging from forest health and productivity to technology. The agency's Forest Resource Management Academy was in place for three years -- offering more than 50 professional development courses -- until budget reductions force its cancellation.

- *Summary of current productivity*

Through ingenuity, determination, vision and passion to be the best, DOF has protected and enhanced Virginia's forest land for its landowners for more than 95 years. Accomplishments have been attained through the creativity of personnel, conservative and ethical management, and fiscal responsibility. Dedicated DOF employees using their creativity produced solutions to large, complex problems that have faced Virginia's forests over time. Individually, DOF employees use their skills and knowledge to accomplish and achieve success in work areas. Without a full workforce

covering all counties and needs, DOF misses many opportunities to improve the forest resource.

Virginia's collective forests -- of which 77 percent are owned by private landowners or other ownerships -- represent significant value to the Commonwealth. Conversion, or the loss of forestland base to other non-forest uses, is an important change affecting DOF's traditional productivity standards. Parcelization, or the increase in numbers of forestland ownership, is another change impacting traditional DOF productivity measures. These changes translate to forest ownership by more people, which impact the complexity and scale of DOF forest fire suppression capabilities, forest management activities, water quality enforcement, and overall management strategies.

DOF staff must respond quickly to forest fires to keep those fires small and to protect the public. DOF uses technologically advanced equipment, well-trained staff, and trained volunteer fire departments, local prison work centers, regional jails, and paid, part-time firefighters located strategically throughout Virginia to assure a rapid response and effective suppression. With property values near record highs, resource protection is even more important today.

More than 180 full-time and 750 part-time DOF firefighters are trained and certified on an annual basis to nationally recognized standards. The DOF average wildfire loss is only .23 acres for every 1,000 acres protected versus a target of .75 acres lost per 1,000 protected.

DOF's water quality protection program is designed to reduce and eliminate erosion and protect water quality degradation as a result of logging activities. A statewide audit conducted on a quarterly basis to evaluate this program has shown positive water quality improvements for the past 10 years. DOF developed Best Management Practices in response to requirements of the Clean Water Act of 1979, with subsequent revisions in 1997 and 2002. DOF started an inspection program in 1987 on all timber harvesting operations greater than 10 acres for BMP implementation and to educate operators on the uses of BMPs to protect water quality.

In 1992, the General Assembly enacted the Silvicultural Water Quality Act authorizing DOF to act to prevent pollution of state waters from silvicultural activities. In 2002, the Act was amended to allow the issuance of a civil penalty against the operator who failed to notify DOF of a commercial timber harvesting operation. DOF has inspected 92 percent of the harvests where notification was received within 15 days of notification, exceeding the agency standard of 85 percent since 1992. DOF inspections of logging operations have resulted in the assessment of nearly \$2 million in civil penalties since 1994.

Penalties collected are placed in the Water Quality Penalty Fund and are used for education, demonstration of water quality protection techniques and research. DOF has completed nine demonstration areas across Virginia for use in the Forestry Water Quality Education program. DOF has developed and staffed exhibits at the bi-ennial East Coast Sawmill and Logging Equipment Exposition in Richmond, Virginia, which reach approximately 15,000 forestry professionals in a two-day period. DOF, along with Virginia Tech Extension and other partners, has helped train more than 5,000 loggers and foresters on harvest planning and BMPs since 1996 under the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program. DOF has undertaken and piloted a project using mediation as a tool in dispute resolution involving enforcement actions under the Silvicultural Water Quality Law.

Assisting private forest landowners by providing scientific-based information about forest soils, tree species, water quality, wildlife habitat, and management techniques remains an important and core strategy for DOF. Placing well-trained foresters throughout Virginia puts the agency closest to the landowners of more than 77 percent of Virginia's commercial forest land (approximately 12 million acres). DOF has 150 foresters and technicians assigned throughout the Commonwealth to serve almost every county.

To describe DOF's mission to the importance of the forest resources of Virginia, it is important to understand the value of the forests to Virginia. In the 2006 report on "Virginia's Forests: Our Common Wealth," the following major attributes and benefits of Virginia's forests and its industry were:

- 15.8 million acres of forest land with more than 15.3 million acres classified as commercial forest.
- Non-industrial, private landowners held 77.6 percent of Virginia forest land.
- Landowners received \$276 million in stumpage for their timber in 2003.
- Timber harvesting contributes more than \$927 million annually to the economy.
- Specialty and non-timber forest products contributed more than \$60 million annually to Virginia's economy.
- Forest-related recreational spending contributed more than \$2.4 billion annually to Virginia.
- Carbon sequestering and pollution control value exceeded \$1.7 billion annually.
- Every \$1 landowners received for their timber generated \$41.82 of Value – Added to Virginia's economy.
- Harvesting, processing and marketing of forest products generated more than \$23.4 billion annually to Virginia's economy and accounted for more than 144,000 jobs.
- In its entirety, Virginia's forests provided more than \$27.5 billion in benefits annually to the Commonwealth.

DOF now protects approximately 15.8 million total acres of forest land in the Commonwealth. The average size forest fire in Virginia in 2004 - 2008 was 10.6 acres. Each year during this same time period, a total of 1,006 fires burned approximately 10,663 acres of forest land in Virginia. Forest fire suppression equipment is safer and more effective on the fires than ever before. DOF has a small force of full-time and a large force of part-time firefighters better trained and equipped to assist with large fires. DOF has placed greater emphasis on training volunteer fire departments and part-time paid firefighters to increase the ability to respond and effectively suppress forest fires.

Better logging notification and timely inspections are resulting in better compliance by the logging industry with Best Management Practices. This results in cleaner water in streams flowing through forested areas where management activities are taking place. DOF uses training, pre-harvest planning, enforcement, and logging inspections to meet the goals in the water quality area.

DOF's programs and services serve a stronger forest products economy in Virginia, benefiting landowners, business and the public. The marketing and utilization staff attend forest products trade shows and provide information to businesses hoping to either expand their businesses or to locate in Virginia. In addition, the utilization and marketing staff provide specific forest resource information to forest products businesses and receive and respond to daily telephone calls from businesses.

DOF has 269 FTE (full-time equivalent) positions out of a total employment level of 323. DOF has averaged 284 FTEs during the past five years. DOF's FY 2009 appropriation is approximately \$26 million dollars. Removing funds used specifically as pass-through grants reduces the actual operating funds for DOF to approximately \$18 million dollars. Adjusted for inflation, DOF has steadily lost purchasing power since 1990.

DOF provides services in almost every county of the Commonwealth. The agency must receive sufficient operating budgets for fixed and variable operating expenses, and competitive salaries and incentives to maintain qualified staff. Equipment rotation and personal protective equipment are also necessary to assure the employees' safety and effectiveness on wildfires and emergency events. DOF must improve technology to deliver the information requirements of the forest landowners, forest products industry, planners and other organizations.

### Initiatives, Rankings and Customer Trends

- *Summary of Major Initiatives and Related Progress*

DOF has initiatives underway to increase program effectiveness; provide usable and timely forest information; provide greater safety for its personnel; reduce the forest fire losses; reduce stream sedimentation; increase the efficiency of its operations; provide more conserved working forests, and deliver valuable technical information to the public.

DOF has initiated the Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS© 2005 Virginia Department of Forestry). IFRIS is a progressive, flexible, centralized and geo-spatially-enabled enterprise information management tool that captures and delivers business-critical information via the Internet. Agency performance tracking and mapping (Phase I) is now deployed and wildfire incident and water quality law enforcement portions (Phase II) were developed in FY06-FY07 and deployed in FY09.

DOF created its Forest Spatial Analysis Center to provide high-quality maps, aerial photographs, and forest resource information to external clients and employees developing forest management plans. DOF is also leading all state forestry agencies in the development of a comprehensive forest resource information system with the inclusion of spatial information, and in the use of satellite imagery for forest monitoring.

DOF has embarked on an aggressive communications campaign to provide more information to the public about the services and programs DOF provides. A communication plan outlines services, programs and events focusing on the forest resources. DOF hopes its efforts will inform and educate the public, decision makers, leaders and forest landowners about the importance of the forests to Virginia's economy and its environment.

DOF has placed greater emphasis on the public's use of the Commonwealth's State Forest system. DOF will direct the public to specific uses that will provide passive forest recreational opportunities for individuals and families while also providing increasing educational opportunities. DOF hopes this increased use of the State Forest system will help the public understand and appreciate the value of Virginia's forest.

DOF will continue to operate its State Forests on a self-funding basis by managing forests to produce forest products for sale to the market. Funds from the sale of forest products pay for employee salaries and all operating expenses. Corporate donations of materials are enabling the State Forests to enhance their physical plant for the benefit of more Virginians.

DOF initiated a major emphasis on land conservation to retain forest cover and improve the quality of water flowing through forested watersheds. DOF administers the Forest Legacy Program to acquire conservation easements and forest acquisitions for the State Forest system. This program enables the DOF to actively seek and place additional forestland under permanent conservation. In addition, DOF works with other organizations to find new incentives and better ways to help landowners keep their lands as forestland. Success in this area will help Virginia maintain more of its forest landscape, aesthetic beauty and forest products industry resource base.

DOF will continue to focus efforts to help existing forest products industries and companies to remain viable. DOF provides forest resource information to assist new forest products companies to locate in Virginia and helps existing businesses make informed decisions about their future and new markets from Virginia's forest resources.

New and safer forest fire equipment is essential for DOF personnel and others who operate the equipment. DOF purchases tractors with environment-controlled operator enclosures to eliminate the risk of smoke damage to the operator and to provide a safer environment for the operator when operating the tractor near intense heat and smoke. Funding is necessary to maintain the replacement of older tractors, but budget reductions have pushed replacement cycles from 20 years to 25 years. DOF will continually look for more advanced, effective equipment for more effective forest fire control. DOF has developed and put in position brush-type forest-fire-equipped trucks to access rugged mountain land.

DOF's Forest Protection Division has initiated a major campaign, called FireWise Virginia, to inform the public – and provide mitigation funding – about the buildup of forest fuels due to storms from the last couple of years and other wildfire issues. As a result, DOF is helping communities take a positive step towards removing these dangerous fuels around urban forest home communities. DOF has made federal funding available to communities to reach this initiative. More than 4,000 at-risk woodland home communities have been identified in Virginia. More than 75 projects to mitigate potential wildfire damages have been completed to date.

DOF is instrumental in the re-establishment of diminished species, such as Shortleaf Pine and Longleaf Pine -- both with natural ranges in Virginia. DOF recommends diminished species where appropriate and assists landowners with their establishment on private lands. Both species have been declining, with Longleaf near extinction.

DOF was awarded a three-year federal grant to reduce the risks from southern pine bark beetle. DOF has worked to re-establish the American Chestnut tree. Because of its tragic mortality from an introduced fungus, DOF conducts its own research and cooperates with the American Chestnut Foundation to actively obtain a blight-resistant American Chestnut. DOF will continue to research the production of an American Chestnut resistant to the fungus blight.

DOF will review all nursery operations to assure that the highest quality forest tree seedlings are available to the landowner in the appropriate species at the lowest cost. One nursery was closed and production was shifted to the remaining two nurseries. Costs will be reviewed and reduced where possible, and new species will be offered where markets exist for them. DOF will research the best seed sources and growing techniques to produce annual crops of forest seedlings for annual plantings on reforestation, erosion control, wildlife and riparian buffers.

DOF is rapidly expanding its tree genetics improvement program. The third-generation loblolly pine seed orchard is being developed so that future reforestation in Virginia will have the best possible seed sources. DOF has a long history of research and development in improving forest tree seed sources in Virginia. This program continues to pay large dividends for forest landowners. Trees produced from this program are larger, better quality and faster growing. The tree improvement program has resulted in significantly more wood growth per acre of land and helps to maintain a healthy forest resource base on fewer available forest acres.

DOF has begun to switch its communications system from a DOF-owned and operated two-way radio communications network to the Statewide Agency Radio System (STARS). DOF maintains a system of towers (old fire lookout towers), base station radios, repeaters, mobile units and hand-held radios. DOF has joined the new Statewide Radio Agency System administered by the Department of State Police. DOF's transition to STARS will occur over a multiple-year period and will continue to operate its network until the STARS system is complete.

- *Summary of Virginia's Ranking*

DOF strives for excellence in the delivery of all services and programs. DOF is a member of the National Association of State Foresters; the North Carolina Tree Improvement Cooperative, and the Virginia Tech Growth and Yield Cooperative. DOF employees hold leadership positions in these associations and participate fully in the advancement of sound forestry practices and the wise management of forest resources. The agency and many of its employees have been recognized for excellence in their work or programs. DOF employees are members of and participate in the Society of American Foresters, whose mission is to advance the science of forestry and forest management. Employees also serve in leadership positions at the local, state and national levels. Listed below are a few accomplishments and awards received by DOF and its employees:

- The Pulaski fire recognition award for interagency cooperation in 2002.
- The Silver Smokey Bear for wildfire prevention activities in 2003.
- The National Fire Plan award for Division training efforts in 2004. This national award is given only to state agencies who have accomplished significant success for the implementation of national fire plan recognized for firefighter training, safety and preparedness. DOF was the only agency in the United States to receive this award in the last three years.
- The Browning Award given to William Neff
- Governor's award for Teamwork in 2005.
- The 2006 ESRI International Special Achievement Award for GIS.
- The Governor's Award for Excellence in Fire Safety Training in 2007.
- Virginia's forest fire occurrence places the State in the top 10 percent of the nation. DOF's forest suppression record has shown an average size fire of 10.6 acres, or .23 acres burned per thousand acres protected, during the last five years.
- DOF's Integrated Forest Resource Information System was published in ArcNews, which is one of the most widely read publications in the GIS community. DOF was also featured in the ArcNews online version. IFRIS is a successful GIS software tool available to DOF employees for map making and other business enterprise tasks.
- DOF is recognized nationally as having a Type-I qualified "short" Incident Command Team for all-risk management. This is the result of years of practical experience as well as extensive formal training, which culminated in the DOF team passing the Complex Incident Management Course.
- Employees of DOF have been recognized as the Tree Farm Inspector of the Year by the Virginia Forestry Association.
- DOF's Shenandoah Valley Interagency Wildfire Prevention Education Team was presented with the Bronze Smokey Bear award at the Southern Group of State Foresters in 2004. Only three national bronze awards were given out in 2004.
- DOF was recognized by the Governor's office in 2003 and received numerous compliments from citizens for responding with dozers, chainsaw crews, Emergency Operation's Center staff, and initial damage assessment crews after Hurricane Isabel struck Virginia.
- In 2003, Roanoke was selected as the best urban forestry program in the nation at the 2003 National Urban Forestry conference in San Antonio, Texas. DOF has worked closely with Roanoke and played a major role in the accomplishment.
- In 2002, DOF central office received the Energy Star award from the Department Mines, Minerals, and Energy for exceeding all criteria of the EPA Energy Star energy efficiency program.

DOF has performed well with the delivery of its other services and programs. DOF is normally compared to the southeastern states within the US Forest Service since Virginia is within this federal regional boundary. DOF has long been considered a leader in many programs designed to help landowners with forest management. DOF is viewed by its southern state peers as a cutting-edge leader in the development of a system to integrate forest resource and GIS spatial geographical information and data. Below are a few accomplishments reported recently:

DOF has been instrumental in the accomplishment of 42,446 acres of pine hardwood planting in 2004/2005 planting season. Total estimated number of annual acres harvested 218,165 acres.

DOF was important in the completion of 309 Stewardship Plans covering almost 34,000 acres of land in 2004/2005. DOF provided 1,974 forest management plans covering 83,052 acres to assist forest landowners with specific forest objectives in 2004/2005.

DOF has received nearly \$10 million Forest Legacy funding for acquisitions and conservation easements since 2001. Three forest conservation easements have been recorded, which allowed the land to remain with the landowner while

assuring its forest state into perpetuity. DOF has also acquired approximately 2,100 acres of land into its State Forest system as a result of the Forest Legacy program. Virginia has maintained an average funding almost equal to the national average of all states.

Forest fire suppression record is 0.23 acres burned per thousand acres protected. DOF has maintained an average size forest fire at 10.6 acres over the past five years; completed more than 75 projects to mitigate potential wildfire damages, and protected an average of 1,240 homes or other structures annually from forest fires, saving almost \$152 million in property losses.

The DOF water quality program has been touted as the leading water quality program in the South. DOF has been a supporter of voluntary best management practices and a non-regulatory environment. DOF is the leader in the statewide logging inspection audit program in the South and supported a Southeastern Regional project to provide consistent auditing of logging jobs across State boundaries. The agency has inspected 92 percent of the harvests where notification was received within 15 days of harvest activity exceeding the agency standard of 85 percent.

DOF has sought innovation with southern pine bark beetle detection and control through intense efforts to pre-commercially thin loblolly pine stands. The southern pine bark beetle is on a decline as a result and landowners have less risk to their pine stands due to this insect. DOF will maintain high interest in Virginia's pine resource and continue to monitor and seek ways to eradicate/control pine beetles and other harmful pine pests.

DOF has been one of the top participants in the forest inventory program. DOF now provides continuous forest data inventory by assessing 20 percent of the forest cover annually. Data is updated and used by forest landowners, industry, and planners for marketing and utilization and land-use planning. DOF staffers serve in leadership positions on the Regional Management Team under the Southern Forest Research Program. DOF's goal is to provide accurate forest resource information on a timely basis to help forest landowners, planners, legislators, forest products businesses, local governments, and decision makers to make thoughtful land planning and business decisions regarding forest resources. DOF decided to stop its reliance on the US Forest Service forest survey information, previously published each 10 years, and to aggressively deliver its own forest inventory every five years. The agency established its own forest inventory assessment.

DOF provided nearly 20,000 hours of wildfire and incident command training annually to almost 1,200 agency personnel and cooperators. DOF has received the National Wildfire Plan award for its effectiveness in planning, safety and training. This was the only time this award was given to any state in the last three years.

DOF was instrumental in the suppression of more than 1,000 wildfires annually that burned more than 8,100 acres, placing Virginia in the nation's top 10 percent in terms of wildfires. DOF employees have recently been given the Governor's award for excellence in the area of fire training.

DOF succeeded at acquiring nearly \$4 million in grant funds annually to better equip agency personnel for statewide wildfire and other natural disaster emergency response. DOF places a high importance on the safety of personnel, who are placed at severe risk serving the Commonwealth in the suppression of forest fires.

DOF trained 257 volunteer fire departments in forest fire control during FY2006. Trained fire department personnel are an important part of DOF strategy to create an effective forest fire organization. Efforts like this accomplishment helped DOF to earn the only National Wildfire Plan award given to any state in the last three years. This is a national achievement as a result of the agency's wildfire safety, organization and training.

DOF was a leader in the Reforestation of Timberlands program in which the forest industry agreed to a self-imposed tax to reverse the trend towards depletion of Virginia's pine resource. This innovative legislative program was widely viewed by other states as significant leadership to address a future forest resource shortfall.

- *Summary of Customer Trends and Coverage*

Forest conversion – the change in forest land base to non-forest uses – and sub-dividing, the increase in the number of forest landowners, are challenging management paradigms and business practices in all aspects of forestry. These two significant trends are the leading causes of customer base changes. The result is smaller forest land base and more individual ownerships. These important trends challenge DOF, industry and local governments to find new ways of conserving and managing forests.

The number of forest landowners is growing in size. Large forest parcels are offered for sale and sold into smaller size tracts of land. These parcels are often purchased by people who are interested in obtaining multiple benefits from their smaller forest holdings. These landowner objectives include recreational uses, wildlife, environment and economic benefits from forests.

The average size of forest land ownership is decreasing. DOF is actively pursuing new management methods to apply to smaller size tracts. This trend will require DOF and industry to seek new practices applicable to smaller size tracts.

Local government needs for timely forest resource information is expected to increase to help these entities manage active county growth and balance their business, development, natural resources, historical and aesthetic values. DOF will address these demands through accurate, timely forest resource information, GIS tools and an integrated system of forest resource information and GIS spatial and geographical information. DOF must continue to provide forest resource information to help county planners and decision makers understand the value of their forests and plan wisely for their future growth. To date, DOF has provided forest resource information to the following counties and cities for incorporation into their comprehensive land use plans: Albemarle, Nelson, Greene, Madison, Orange, Franklin, Patrick, Henry, Pittsylvania, Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell, Lynchburg, Danville, Martinsville and Chesterfield.

The forest products industry in Virginia will face competition in the markets for resources, challenging environmental laws, and the labor pool. DOF provides forest resource information, which can help the forest products industry. Some companies are merging, while many forest products companies are selling their timberland holdings for development or to management companies. Much of the industry timberland once available for forest products is now in development. Favorable laws and an environment to conduct business will be a critical factor in companies' decisions to locate into Virginia or to remain.

Landowners are expected to experience intense pressure to convert forest land into development as the value of land skyrockets. DOF will work with many cooperators to reverse the trend through land-use solutions at the local level. DOF will offer to hold conservation easements for private landowners. DOF expects more interest in the Forest Legacy grant program for both conservation easements and potential State Forest acquisitions. DOF will work with more Land Trusts and conservation organizations to find solutions and incentives for forest land conservation.

Forest fire suppression and prevention will be more important than ever as more home developments emerge and mature in forested-landscape communities. With more people living in wooded home communities, forest fires will threaten more human lives and more valuable property. A successful public relations program will be key to better community awareness of forest fire dangers and prevention methods. Smaller forest tracts with more homes and improvements will require new equipment, more fire department training, and improved suppression methods for urban communities.

Creating and maintaining highly productive forest sites on tracts held by private, non-industrial forest landowners will be an increasing challenge. Forest product companies are selling their timber-producing lands at increasing rates. Smaller land holdings and an increased number of owners are the result. DOF will address this trend by advancing its tree improvement and nursery program to produce its most genetically improved, highest-quality tree seedling. DOF will advance its silviculture research to address higher production and better forest products quality from the private, non-industrial forest lands.

An aging population may impact the ownership of forest lands, but the effect is not known. Private forest landowners own approximately 77% of the forest land in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Owners of these lands seek advice and guidance to achieve their forestry goals from different sources of information. DOF provides assessments, unbiased forest information, forestry practices information, and cost share assistance to owners. DOF will promote sustainable forestry on private owned land with the anticipation of reaching forest landowners of all ages.

The aging workforce may impact the DOF. Approximately 25% of the DOF workforce is eligible to retire in five years and 12% are eligible now. DOF is aware of a possible significant loss of experienced workers and strives to maintain training opportunities and incentives to maintain the workforce. Age has a negative effect on the first responders in forest fire suppression. DOF has implemented a physical fitness policy requiring testing to maintain the first responder status. DOF is pursuing options to assist its employees in retirement.

### **Future Direction, Expectations, and Priorities**

- *Summary of Future Direction and Expectations*

The forest land base size is likely to decrease in the future due to expanding development and changing land use. Forest land may be owned by more people and smaller average size holding per ownership. Traditional family farms and forests may succumb to development pressures with the lure of significant real estate values. DOF must find solutions that address the need for continued forest land base, landowner's objectives and societal needs.

DOF will face new, increased difficulties with forest fire suppression as more homes are built in forests and the average tract size decreases. New and more effective public information and communications campaigns will be required to address the dangers with the landowners and the public. Increased efforts on training fire departments will be

necessary to assure cooperation on fires. Assessment of the hazards associated with increased forest fuels and quick mitigation solutions will be necessary. Increased funding will be necessary to assure comprehensive programs.

International competition for forest products will place more demand on Virginia's forest products. Businesses will want to expand and capture a market share of the new demands. With decreasing average forest holding size, more homes, and more people without the traditional rural background, DOF will be challenged in public relations, new solutions and effective programs to help Virginia continue a strong, forest-based economy while meeting the overall needs of new landowners.

Efforts will be expanded to conserve more forest land through incentives programs. The Forest Legacy program will be reviewed and aggressively marketed to Virginia landowners who wish to maintain their forests into perpetuity. DOF will continue to partner with Land Trusts, other state agencies, and local governments to help private individuals maintain their working forests.

The water quality program will continue to work towards achievement of full compliance with best management practices to reduce to zero active and potential sedimentation from silvicultural practices. The use of voluntary BMPs and regulations will be reviewed and challenged to achieve results. DOF will work with the forest products industry and other organizations to find better ways to improve compliance with the water quality laws.

The self-funded State Forest system will see increased pressure for more public uses. DOF will be challenged to meet its budget needs within the allowable forest levels from the sale of forest products, while undergoing heavier usage by the public. DOF is committed to assure the public's continued use while managing the State Forests for forest products and income.

The tree seedling nursery program will be reviewed and managed like a business to produce the forest seedling products at the lowest price to landowners. Locating the best seed sources and growing new species to meet new riparian and other reforestation demands will challenge the DOF nursery system. DOF will grow selected forest species for the first time as it works to assure that the right species of trees are available for each type of planting in Virginia. The trees must be capable of growing well in Virginia climate and soil and producing the desired end result.

DOF must address technology needs to assure the technology is available for the anticipated increased delivery of information through the Internet. Information needs are growing at a rapid pace. Employees and external customers are using email, Web sites, and DOF's ForestRIM to communicate and deliver information. High-speed Internet office connections are essential for successful delivery of these information services. Employees will use mapping tools available in IFRIS to create better maps for their customers and to track forest management activities. More importantly, IFRIS will serve as an enterprise information system, managing all business-critical information needs in a geo-spatially aware manner. DOF will work closely with VITA to address its technology needs to meet its business model and challenges unique to forestry information.

Certification of forests, foresters, and forest products will affect private forest landowners and the DOF's State Forest system. A group lead by Utilization and Marketing will assess the certification programs, requirements and costs. Certification is occurring and the only question is when it will occur in Virginia. The forest products market will hold benefits to those whose forests are certified for sustainable yield and best management practices. DOF must determine whether the State Forests will be certified and, if so, which certification program to join.

DOF will work cooperatively with Virginia Tech on Tree Growth and Product Yield studies to benefit all forest landowners to achieve healthy, actively growing forests. The agency will also provide information and some federal grant funding to Virginia Tech to research markets for waste wood products; alternative wood products from waste wood, and alternative management methods of small woodlots (under 20 acres in size) and urban interface forests.

- *Summary of Potential Impediments to Achievement*

DOF will face the need to replace a significant proportion of its workforce in the next five years. Of our current 281 employees, 63, or 24.23 percent, have more than 25 years of service to DOF and the Commonwealth of Virginia. These personnel could retire within the next five years. DOF must recruit employees who are proficient in forestry and bring excellent computer skills. Retention of good employees is also a high priority of DOF. Training must be delivered on a continual basis to keep employees' skills strong and capable in emerging forestry issues, technical information, and computer technology.

DOF must maintain safe and effective forest fire equipment. Tractors should be rotated on a 20-year basis. Funding is necessary to have consistent tractor rotation. Newer tractors provide environmental cabs that filter smoke and particulates from the operator's cab and provide greater safety to the operator. The fleet of first-response trucks and specialized emergency vehicles must be rotated on a 10-year basis or sooner to ensure effective response to forest fires and emergencies. DOF personnel carry many tools with them in their vehicles, which are equipped with

emergency response equipment and radio communications equipment.

DOF must adopt and adapt to the centralized functions of government. These include technology, purchasing, leasing and capital outlay. DOF will clearly identify its business needs and work to make the new centralized functions work at the lowest impact on its employees.

DOF must adapt to the challenge of creating and maintaining a technology infrastructure meeting today's standards as well as the business needs of the agency. In the past, technology funding has often been ad hoc and funding insufficient for support and maintenance. The expectations raised by VITA of well-planned technology investments, shared services, and enterprise solutions will serve DOF well. However, the agency will have to adapt its budgeting and management capabilities to get the most out of the VITA partnership.

The self-funded State Forests will be challenged to create more public uses of all State Forests while continuing to produce forest products from the lands which the public uses for recreation. The agency will prepare for more people using the State Forests and, possibly, new uses compatible with forestry operations and within budgets.

DOF must coordinate the transition to the new Statewide Agency Radio System administered by the State Police (DSP). The plan covers potential problems for the State Police. DOF expects that radio frequency interference will occur with its system in some parts of the state. Plans are underway to reduce the possible conflict of frequency interference. DOF will work closely with DSP and the contractor to reduce interference and other issues as they surface.

The effect on the sustainability of forest land will in large part depends upon the goals and objectives of private landowners, the corporate forest land ownership, and continuation of vibrant markets. DOF understands the need for new financial opportunities and incentives necessary for private owners of large tracts to maintain holdings in tact for future generations. Conservation easements, ecosystem service markets, vibrant markets and favorable regulatory environment may be most important to sustainable future forests.

#### Service Area List

Service Number	Title
411 501 02	Reforestation Incentives to Private Forest Land Owners
411 501 03	Forest Conservation, Wildfire & Watershed Services
411 501 04	Tree Restoration and Improvement, Nurseries & State-Owned Forest Lands
411 501 05	Financial Assistance for Forest Land Management

#### Agency Background Information

##### Statutory Authority

Code of Virginia, Chapter 11, Article 1, Section 10.1-1100 to 10.1-1103 authorizes the State Forester position, general powers of the DOF, the Board of Forestry and the powers of the Board.

Article 2, Section 10.1-1104 to 10.1-1119 authorizes the duties of the State Forester and General Provisions, including the general and additional powers of the State Forester; the care, management and preservation of the forest reserves of the Commonwealth, purchase of lands for State Forests and acceptance of gifts for the same; waste and unappropriated land; State Forest regulations; trespass; establishment of nurseries; sale of trees from State Forests; specialized services or rentals to landowners; accounting of receipts; and evidence related to conserving the forests.

Article 3, Section 10.1-1120 to 10.1-1123 authorized the establishment of the State-Owned Lands Fund, and the State Forester -- in cooperation with Division of Engineering and Buildings -- to develop a forest management plan for state-owned lands, and the sale of timber from state-owned lands.

Article 4, Section 10.1-1124 to 10.1-1130, authorizes the State Forester to provide forest protection to cities and counties; provides that counties and certain cities pay annual sums for protection; authorization for State Forester to enter into agreements with counties, cities and federal agencies; the practice of forestry; authorization for any county or city to adopt a tree conservation ordinance; authorization for county and cities to acquire land for forests, and authorizes the State Forester to furnish seedlings and technical assistance.

Article 5, Section 10.1-1131 to 10.1-1134, authorizes the State Forester to designate, upon request of a landowner, forest trees of private landowners for sale or removal and the administration of fees for this service.

Article 6, Section 10.1-1135 to 10.1-1150.6, authorizes the State Forester to commission individuals to act as forest wardens of the Commonwealth, to enforce forest laws, and to carry out the purposes of Chapter 11, under the State Forester's direction.

Article 7, Section 10.1-1151 to 10.1-1157, requires any person who hunts or traps on State Forest lands to secure appropriate permit(s) and pay appropriate fees for such use.

Article 8, Section 10.1-1158 to 10.1-1161, authorizes the State Forester to assess the dryness of forest conditions and requires the State Forester to make appropriate recommendations to the Governor so that the Governor may proclaim acts, such as the prohibition of all open burning and the closing of hunting and fishing seasons during the period of extraordinary fire hazards.

Article 9, Section 10.1-1162 to 10.1-1169, requires the State Forester to administer and enforce the law requiring landowners leave seed trees of certain tree species on land undergoing a harvest or cutting or alternately adhere to the requirements of this article.

Article 10, Section 10.1-1170 to 10.1-1176, authorizes the State Forester to administer the provisions of the Reforestation of Timberlands Act, including the protection, preservation and perpetuation of forest resources by means of reforestation to allow continuous growth of timber on suitable lands.

Article 11, Section 10.1-1177 to 10.1-1181, authorizes the Department of Forestry and makes it responsible for investigating insect infestations and disease infections that affect stands of forest trees, and devising and demonstrating control measures to interested persons.

Article 12, Section 10.1181.1 to 10.1-1181.7, authorizes the State Forester to inspect logging operations for the purpose of determining whether an operator or owner is conducting or has conducted a silvicultural activity which caused or is likely to cause pollution. The State Forester is authorized to notify the owner or operator that measures are necessary to prevent pollution and may issue special orders to the operator or owner directing the cessation of the silvicultural activity until the corrective measures are implemented.

§ 44-146.24. Cooperation of public agencies: Authorizes the use of state agencies to assist, cooperate and extend services to the Governor and to the State Department of Emergency Management upon request. DOF is a member of the Virginia Emergency Response Team and assists VDEM with staff at the Emergency Operations Center and deployment across the Commonwealth during emergencies.

§ 15.2-4309. Hearing; creation of district; conditions; notice: Provides for local governing body to establish forestry and agricultural land use districts subject to development restrictions. Provides authority for local governing body to receive applications from landowners who wish to place their land into the agricultural or forestry district.

Upon the adoption of an ordinance creating a district or adding land to an existing district, the local governing body shall submit a copy of the ordinance with maps to the local commissioner of the revenue, the State Forester, and the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services for information purposes.

§ 58.1-3239. State Land Evaluation Advisory Committee: The Advisory Council shall be composed of the Tax Commissioner, the Dean of the College of Agriculture of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, the State Forester, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The Advisory Council shall determine and publish a range of suggested values for each of the several soil conservation service land capability classifications for agricultural, horticultural, forest and open space uses in the various areas of the Commonwealth as needed to carry out the provisions of this article.

On or before October 1 of each year, the Advisory Council shall submit recommended ranges of suggested values to be effective the following January 1, or July 1 in the case of localities with fiscal year assessment under the authority of Chapter 30 of this subtitle, within each locality which has adopted an ordinance pursuant to the provisions of this article based on the productive earning power of real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural, forest and open space uses and make such recommended ranges available to the commissioner of the revenue or duly appointed assessor in each such locality.

**Customers**

<b>Customer Group</b>	<b>Customers served annually</b>	<b>Potential customers annually</b>
Fire Departments	712	765
Forest Industry	6,500	15,000

General Public	300,000	7,000,000
Local governments	100	100
Local Planning Districts	10	20
National Non-Governmental Organizations	6	12
Other Federal Agencies	4	4
Other State Agencies	20	20
Private forest landowners	1,400	300,000
State Supported Educational Organizations	19	25
US Forest Service	1	1

*Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base*

The agency customer base is expected to remain steady for the next two years. DOF expects an increase in the number of private landowners requesting forest assessments and assistance on private forest lands. DOF also expects an increase in the requests for forest inventory and resource information.

DOF expects increased interest by forest landowners in the Forest Legacy grant program. This program is a federal grant initiative designed to protect environmentally important forests. Based on competing with other national grant applicants, successful candidates can expect federal grants up to 75 percent of fair market value.

More homes and families in wooded communities are highly expected throughout most parts of Virginia. This trend will increase demand for more forest fire prevention information campaigns and continuous improvement in forest fire suppression methods and equipment.

DOF anticipates increased interest and requests from private landowners for DOF to hold conservation easements with forestry management purpose and focus. More landowners are likely to seek out DOF to hold conservation easements for purposes of maintaining their property in managed forests into perpetuity.

**Partners**

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Description</b>
Agricultural Organizations	
Allegheny Energy	
American Forests	
Appalachian Power	
Community Colleges	
Department of Conservation and Recreation	
Department of Game and Inland Fisheries	
DEQ Impaired Streams	
DMME Reclamation Lands	
Dominion Virginia Power	
Fire Services Board	
Forest Products Association	
International Society of Arboriculture	
Local Governments	
Local Land Trust Organizations	
Local Non-Governmental Organizations	
National Arbor Day Foundation	
National Association of State Foresters	

National Resources Conservation Agency  
 National Tree Trust  
 RC & D Councils  
 Regional Planning District Commissions  
 Society of American Foresters  
 Society of Municipal Arborists  
 US Forest Service  
 US National Park Service  
 Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
 Virginia Department of Transportation  
 Virginia Forestry Association  
 Virginia Loggers Association  
 Virginia Tech  
 Virginia Timber Products Association  
 Voluntary and Paid Fire Departments

### Products and Services

- *Description of the Agency's Products and/or Services:*

Provide forest management planning and scientific recommendations for reforestation to ensure appropriate tree species on the different sites and the proper silvicultural management of each.

Provide technical information and assistance to landowners to help landowners initiate reforestation establishment and improvement projects.

Assess forest resources of private landowners and provide specific recommendations to achieve desired reforestation and forest management results.

Coordinate the work of tree planting and tree improvement contractors who perform work for private landowners to ensure the work is completed in accordance within acceptable forestry guidelines.

Develop, administer and implement regional and statewide contracts for forestry services to competitively bid and award contracts for the establishment and improvement of private forest land.

Provide source for tree seedlings and plant materials to accommodate the specific forestry goal on private forest land.

Administer cost-share assistance and guidance through state programs to private forest landowners.

Conduct assessments and checks to assure quality assurance on silvicultural projects of private forest landowners.

Provide follow-up inspections with recommendations to improve silvicultural projects on private forest land.

Provide forestry information and education products and services regarding silvicultural operations to private forest land owners to increase their awareness of available help and resources available to assist them.

Train internal staff and partners on appropriate silvicultural practices for private forest lands.

Track all planting and improvement accomplishments annually on Virginia's private forest lands and complete and share report to show annual accomplishments.

Provide specialized forest establishment equipment for rental and use for reforestation work on private forest lands.

Provide specialized forest firefighting equipment, such as bulldozers equipped for forest conditions and the trucks

capable of transporting the bulldozers, and other equipment.

Provide forest landowners, upon request, inspections, information and recommendations on forestry management for their property. DOF foresters and technicians are available to provide landowner-specific service to the 300,000 potential forest landowners.

Assist forest landowners who request federal and state cost-share assistance for forestry practices on their property. DOF foresters and technicians provide the required inspections and approval of the landowner practices before the final cost-share award is made to the landowner. DOF is often involved in the oversight and coordination of the project to ensure the practice is implemented according to the approved plan. DOF staff makes the final inspection of the completed practice and approves the cost-share payment or assists landowners to correct deficiencies.

DOF coordinates regional tree planting contracts and makes available forest seedlings for sale to forest landowners. This service ensures the forest landowner receives tree planting services from reputable vendors at the lowest price. DOF supplies the tree seedlings from its nurseries ensuring the highest quality, genetically superior seedling available for Virginia sites.

DOF foresters and technicians inspect all harvest operations to ensure consistent enforcement of the Virginia Seed Tree Law. This law applies to certain species of pine and hardwood trees and was created to ensure these valuable Virginia species are maintained in Virginia forests into the future.

DOF's Forest Spatial Analysis Center can produce high-quality GIS products showing current land conditions and species composition. Local government planners and administrators use these products to make informed decisions about the county forest land base and its contribution.

The Forest Inventory Assessment team collects forest resource information from 20 percent of the forest inventory plots across Virginia each year. This rate of information collection enables DOF to complete a full assessment every five years. The information includes estimated tree volume, species composition, age distribution, and size of Virginia's forest land base. The improved technology in satellite imagery enables DOF to document land pattern trends and changes in "real time" for policy and decision makers.

Using the latest GIS tools, ForestRIM© and GPS units, DOF employees make sophisticated maps for their reports and add the latest layers of information available on the tract. The public can access ForestRIM© from DOF's Web site and use the tool to create maps of their property and secure forest information. With the implementation of IFRIS©, the mapping capabilities will be enhanced and management history will be maintained in the agency's enterprise database.

DOF provides comprehensive insect and disease investigation and monitoring across Virginia. DOF is mandated to report infestations and recommend prevention or control measures to protect valuable species of forest trees. In the past, DOF has monitored species such as gypsy moth, pine bark beetle, oak wilt, chestnut blight and many other insects and diseases.

DOF conducts applied forest research to provide the best recommendations for forest practices in Virginia. The results are used by DOF staff in their recommendations to landowners, forest industry, and the general public to improve their forest land.

Offer specialized training to firefighters across the Commonwealth to maintain firefighters' knowledge and skills at the highest level and to ensure that firefighters operate safely to protect themselves and other people.

Provide experienced, all-risk incident management teams for the Commonwealth to provide assistance to Virginia Department of Emergency Management when disasters or emergencies occur.

Provide prevention information/advertisement campaigns through radio, television, newspaper and multi-lingual media sources to make the public aware of forest fire open air fire law, dangerous forest conditions and safe use of the forest.

DOF provides cost-share assistance to private forest landowners for management practices to reduce the risks of southern pine beetle infestation, including pre-commercial thinning and restoration of longleaf pine on acceptable sites.

Provide woodland home community wildfire hazard assessment and mitigation recommendations.

Provide oversight of Virginia Dry Hydrant program, which installs 65 dry hydrants annually for local/community fire suppression needs.

Acquire and provide federal excess personal property for loan to volunteer fire departments across the Commonwealth to increase the fire suppression capabilities.

Provide trained forest engineers with specialized knowledge of forest hydrology, watersheds, civil engineering, and best management practices.

Offer prescribed burning training and certification to burning managers.

Produce and sell forest tree seedlings from DOF nurseries to forest landowners, forest industry and the general public. Seedlings are used in reforestation, conservation, soil erosion, wildlife habitat, and riparian buffer plantings. All seedlings are sold for the price of production. Many seedlings are the result of genetic improvement work. All seedlings are from Virginia or appropriate seed sources to Virginia soils and growing conditions.

Manage the State Forest system, which generates all revenues for its operations through the sale of timber and forest products. The largest component of the State Forest budget is made up from timber sales conducted on the State Forests. Timber is offered by competitive sealed bids to the highest bidder and sold periodically from stands of trees mature or ready for thinning. These products also help the local economy and provide some revenue to the local governments.

DOF provides forest management plans and technical assistance to other state agencies to help them manage their forest land in accordance with the Code of Virginia. DOF must work in cooperation with the Division of Engineering & Buildings to accomplish plans and conduct timber sales.

DOF allows many forest recreation uses, such as hiking, hunting, fishing, bird watching, horseback riding, and camping, on the State Forests. These uses are available on an annual basis. Permits are available to hunters for a fee during hunting seasons. DOF does not charge the user, except the hunter, for these services and benefits. As a group, these non-revenue producing benefits represent approximately 20 percent of the State Forest budget.

Provide research opportunities from the State Forests and nurseries. DOF allows research by higher education programs and participates in research studies with many groups. The information is shared with other researchers, academic institutions, industry, and the public.

Provide technical urban/community forestry information and assistance to local governments and community groups who need this information and help to develop and maintain community forests.

Provide assistance to educational institutions through federal grants. DOF works with schools to determine where grant funds can be used to help further the development and maintenance of community forests.

DOF assesses and conveys federal grants to qualified segments of the customer base to further the development and maintenance of urban and community forests.

DOF provides conferences, seminars and workshops relating to urban and community forestry to interested parties in urban and community forestry.

DOF promotes and administers the Tree City USA Program in Virginia.

DOF develops and funds publications, which provide technical information, contact information and resource assistance.

DOF co-sponsored and helped organize and orchestrate four of the Governor's Conferences on Greenways and Trails in Virginia completed in 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2005.

DOF has funded or supported with staff the following projects: Luray - Hawksbill Greenway (phases 1, 2, 3 & 4); Marion Riverwalk; projects in the Roanoke Valley Greenways system; Blacksburg and Christiansburg connectors to the Huckleberry Trail; Shenandoah River Blueway; Winchester Green Circle; Town of Broadway; Town of Pennington Gap; Wytheville Greenway; Lower Appomattox Greenway/Blueway; Brushy Blue Trail Master Plan; and the Virginia Capitol Trail.

- *Factors Impacting Agency Products and/or Services:*

Funding is the principal factor impacting products and services to the forestry incentives service area (50102). Funding is provided from two sources. First, the forest products industry agreed with the General Assembly of Virginia to the Reforestation of Timberlands Act requiring a self-imposed timber products tax on the forest products operator. The amount collected from the industry is, by law, to be matched by General Fund in a like amount and the total must be used to provide the establishment and improvement of the pine resource. This helps assure a pine resource will be available in the future. The collection of the forest products tax and the subsequent matching from the General Fund

can impact this service area.

Many factors could impact all service areas of DOF. The Forest Conservation, Wildfire and Watershed service area has the greatest number of DOF employees engaged in its success. Employees properly trained and motivated to the delivery of the products and services are essential to its success. Resignations and retirements can impact products and services.

Funding for cost-share programs is an important factor that impacts the outcomes of our service areas. Private landowners count on cost-share reimbursement for forestry practices. Funding for the cost-share programs should be consistent with the level of need and inflation adjusted to advance products and services in this service area.

Training employees to communicate forest resource assessment and recommendations in an effective and efficient manner, which conveys the importance of forest resources and their value to Virginia, can impact products and services. Continuous training to employees is essential to success.

Partners' and cooperating organizations' interest and capabilities to assist DOF with the message of the value and benefits of the forest resources can impact products and services. DOF must continue to build and expand partnerships.

Demand for nursery forest seedlings impacts the nursery program. Demand is usually correlated with land base, timber harvests and special tree-planting incentive programs, such as the riparian buffer planting efforts in the Chesapeake Bay watershed area.

People and contractors to carry out the work in the self-funding nursery is an important factor impacting products. One nursery operation was closed and two remaining nurseries now carry the entire 35-million-unit seedling production for Virginia.

The State Forests are impacted by weather, severe storms, insects, diseases, markets, and recreational demands by the public. Another factor impacting the State Forest is the amount of allowable acreage or tree volume the State Forest is permitted to remove annually to meet the State Forest Plan and its budget.

Funding is the primary factor impacting the service area entitled "Financial Assistance for Forest Land Management." The service area represents the act of primarily offering federal grants to communities interested in the development and improvement of their community forests.

- *Anticipated Changes in Products or Services:*

When the Reforestation of Timberlands funds are decreased, the program will serve less private forest landowners with reforestation and forest improvement. Landowners may delay forestry projects or cancel the projects until funding is available.

Increases in the Reforestation of Timberlands Act fund have a positive effect on forestry and private forest landowner willingness to invest money into forestry long-term practices. The incentive from cost reimbursement helps reduce the initial costs and increase the yield to the landowner, who must wait approximately 20 years before the first thinning, and consequently, the first revenue from the investment.

DOF expects to see increases for its services in all aspects of this service area. More forest land is being sold by forest products companies to private individuals. This means more forest landowners and smaller parcels of land. DOF anticipates more requests for forestry plans, especially on smaller tracts.

DOF expects more demand for forest information from its increasingly technologically savvy customer base. These customers will want resource information needed for tract-level management, water quality protection and forest land conservation. Innovations in the management of geo-spatially enabled information will result in an increase in the amount and quality of products and services delivered, which is anticipated to increase the demand for other technical services.

As logging continues, DOF anticipates more logging harvest inspections and greater number of inspections on logging sites.

DOF expects increasing interest in riparian buffer plantings and applications for the riparian buffer tax credit as the public gains better understanding of the water quality issues.

The agency expects more conservation easements for working forests through the Forest Legacy program and from interested landowners who select DOF as the responsible holder for conservation easements.

DOF has noted a changing forest land base. Large forest tracts are sold in smaller parcel size to numerous landowners. The shift from large corporate ownership to smaller private individual ownership may affect the amount of forestry in Virginia. The effect could result in more or less forestry activity depending upon the landowners' objectives.

DOF anticipates increased requests for tree species better adapted to riparian planting and special need sites. The agency must locate appropriate seed sources and develop seeding and growing techniques suitable for each type of tree seedling. In some cases, the harvest and shipping procedures must also be adjusted to accommodate these new trees.

The agency expects the public to use the State Forest more often and in larger numbers. DOF will have to create plans that allow both the continuation of forestry operations and greater use of the State Forests. Large size State Forests will serve as the primary source of timber harvests and income production. Hiking trails and similar recreational access will be maintained in the larger forests.

DOF recognizes a strong interest from communities in the service area. Historically, DOF receives more requests for federal grant funding than appropriated funds. If funds are increased, DOF anticipates greater interest and more applications from communities for the federal funding.

Invasive plant and animal species is an area that continues to grow as a threat to Virginia's forest resources -- continued monitoring, education, research, and mitigation work will be needed in this area.

## Finance

- *Financial Overview:*

The DOF receives funding from General Fund Appropriations (64 percent), special revenue funds (28 percent), and federal grants (8 percent). Special revenue funds consist of revenue generated through nursery and timber sales, aerial release services, fire suppression services, and forest products taxes. Forestry expenses consist primarily of personnel, contractual services, and financial assistance and incentives.

All references to percentages in the financial overview sections refer only to the base budget and not to the changes to the base.

- *Financial Breakdown:*

	FY 2009		FY 2010	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$18,604,326	\$10,270,122	\$18,604,326	\$10,270,122
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	-\$2,292,692	\$2,341,370
Agency Total	\$18,604,326	\$10,270,122	\$16,311,634	\$12,611,492

*This financial summary is computed from information entered in the service area plans.*

## Human Resources

- *Overview*

DOF had 269 employees at the end of Fiscal Year 2009. This is a significant drop from the 280 employees the agency had at the end of Fiscal Year 2008. This change is predominately due to the agency's inability to fill positions due to the state's budget situation. In addition, a total of 21 vacant positions were abolished due to budget cuts.

In the past, the agency had a tradition of long-serving employees. This means that the agency now has a large number of employees eligible to retire. Since July 1, 2003, an average of 9 employees retire each year from the agency. Over the past 6 fiscal years, the number of employees with 25 or more years of service has decreased from 24.2% to 20.82%. This has subsequently led to an increase in the number of employees with 5 years or less of service. Between Fiscal Year 2004 and Fiscal Year 2008, the number of employees with 5 years or less years of state service increased from 23.4% to 37.1%. At the end of Fiscal Year 2009, the number of employees with 5 years or less of service decreased to 31.97%. The decrease is predominately due to the number of employees in this service range who left employment and the agency's inability to backfill positions.

The average years of service for DOF employees is 14.5 years as of June 30, 2009. This is a drop from the 15.9 average years of service as of June 30, 2004. However, the agency's average years of service remain above the state's average of 11.9 years. DOF anticipates its current rate of retirements to continue. Therefore, its average years of service will continue to get lower.

The median age of employees in the agency has remained consistent over the past 6 years. It was 47 as of June 30, 2004 and has been 46 for the past 5 fiscal years. Of the agency's workforce, 9.6 percent were age 30 or younger as of June 30, 2004, and 14.1 percent are this age as of June 30, 2009. However, 17.5 percent of the agency's workforce were age 30 or younger as of June 30, 2008. As with the years of service, this drop is predominately due to the number of younger employees who left employment during the fiscal year and the agency's inability to backfill positions.

As of June 30, 2004, 35.8 percent of the workforce were age 50 or older and as of June 30, 2009 40.9 percent are this age. This is also a significant increase from June 30, 2008 when 37.9 percent were in that age range. The increase is due in part to the aging workforce and the resignations of younger employees.

The majority of agency employees are in the Natural Resource Specialist II and III roles. There are 66 employees, or 24.5 percent of the agency, in the Natural Resource Specialist II role as of June 30, 2009. This is a decrease from June 30, 2008 when 71, or 25.4 percent of the agency, were in these roles. As of June 30, 2004, 81 employees, or 30.8 percent of the agency, were in this role. This is a significant loss in the number of employees in this role over the past 6 fiscal years. Part of the loss is due to retirements and resignations. There are currently 6 vacant positions in this role that the agency is not able to backfill due to the budget situation and 5 vacant positions were included in budget cuts made in December 2008.

There are 80 employees, or 29.7 percent of the agency, in the Natural Resource Specialist III role. This is an increase from June 30, 2004 when 69 employees, or 28.6 percent of the agency, were in this role. The last 2 fiscal years this number has stayed consist. This is predominately due to the retention of the people in these roles. In addition, over the past 6 years a few Natural Resource Specialist II positions were reclassified to Natural Resource Specialist III positions. There are currently 4 vacant positions in this role that the agency is not able to backfill due to the budget situation and 5 vacant positions were included in budget cuts made in December 2008.

The two other roles with a significant number of employees are the Natural Resource Manager II and the Administrative and Office Specialist III. There are 32 and 20 employees, respectively, in those roles as of June 30, 2009. As of June 30, 2004, there were 29 and 24 employees, respectively, in those roles. In Fiscal Year 2009, 4 of the Natural Resource Manager II and 2 of the Administrative and Office Specialist III positions were lost due to budget cuts.

Looking further at specific role codes, the agency's Forest Technicians, which are in the Natural Resource Specialist II, role are an average of 43 years old and have an average of 14.8 years of service as of June 30, 2009. This is a decrease from June 30, 2004, when the average age was 46 and the average years of service was 17.9. Retirements and new hires account for the change.

The agency's Foresters, which are in the Natural Resource Specialist III, role are an average of 40 years old and have an average of 11.9 years of service as of June 30, 2009. The average age and years of service have been consistent since June 30, 2004. At that time, the average age was 40 and average years of service was 12.2. The agency has hired new Foresters in this period; however, there have been fewer retirements and turnover than with the Forest Technician classification.

As of June 30, 2009, there are 62 Area Foresters and 65 Forest Technicians in the agency. This equals 129 field personnel assigned to counties throughout the state. These individuals account for the majority of the 134 filled field positions within the agency as of June 30, 2009. As of June 30, 2003, the agency had 137 filled field positions. Looking back further, there were 153 filled field positions as of June 30, 2000, and 182 as of June 30, 1994. This equates to a loss of 53 field positions in a 15 year period. The positions were lost due to budget cuts, state reductions in staff, hiring freezes, retirements, etc. Over the same period of time that these positions were lost, the workload for field staff has risen substantially.

Of the agency's 269 employees, 15, 5.6 percent, are Veterans as of June 30, 2009. This is lower than the 22 employees, 8.5 percent, who were Veterans as of June 30, 2004. The major reason for the decline is retirements. The majority of our Veterans were, and are, Vietnam era Veterans. In Fiscal Year 2009, the agency hired 1 Veteran. With the increase in Veterans due to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, the agency anticipates hiring additional Veterans once it is able to fill positions.

DOF employees are predominately male. As of June 30, 2009, a total of 219 employees, 81.4 percent, are male and a total of 50, 18.6 percent, are female. In the past 6 years, the percent of our workforce that is female has stayed basically the same. The Commonwealth of Virginia overall has 54.4 percent of its employees who are female and 45.6 percent who are male.

Looking more closely at the distribution of females in the agency, the largest concentration of females is in the Administrative and Office Specialist roles. Of the agencies 50 females, 20, 40.0 percent, are in this role as of June 30,

2009. The percentage of females in the agency serving in this role has decreased from June 30, 2004, when 51.1 percent were in this role.

The agency has a total of 153 employees in Natural Resources Specialist roles. Of these employees, 11, 7.2 percent, are females and the remaining 142, 92.8 percent, are males as of June 30, 2009. There has been a slight increase in females in this role from June 30, 2004, when females held 6.8 percent of the positions.

The agency has a total of 34 employees in Natural Resource Manager positions. Of these employees, 2, 5.9 percent, are females and the remaining 32, 94.1 percent, are males as of June 30, 2009. There has been an increase in the number of these positions since June 30, 2004; however, the number of females in the positions has remained the same.

The major reason for the high percentage of males in DOF is that the Natural Resources fields, in particular Forestry, are male-dominated. Forestry is not a field that women traditionally enter. The women who do enter the field are highly recruited by both the Federal government and private industry. The Commonwealth of Virginia lags the market in salaries. Therefore, DOF is generally unable to compete with either the Federal government or private industry in attracting female candidates.

In terms of race, 261, 97.0 percent, of our employees are white. The remaining 8 employees, 3.0 percent, are black. The percentage of minority employees in the agency is slightly lower than in June 2004. Overall, the state's employees are 66.0 percent white and 34.0 percent minority.

As with gender, the major reason for the high percentage of whites in DOF is that the field of Forestry is not one that minorities traditionally enter. Again, the minorities who do enter the field are highly recruited by both the Federal government and private industry. As stated above, the Commonwealth of Virginia lags the market in salaries. Therefore, we generally are unable to compete with either the Federal government or private industry in attracting minority candidates.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the agency lost 16 employees which equates to a turnover rate of 5.9 percent. This is significantly lower than our turnover rate of 9.3 percent for Fiscal Year 2008. Statewide, the turnover rate is 9.8 percent. DOF's turnover rate remains below state average.

Looking closer at turnover, 10 of the 16 employees retired. The remaining 6 employees resigned predominately to accept a position which paid more money. The agency's turnover rate decreased this year mainly due to the economy. Jobs are not available for employees to move into. There are several employees currently in the agency who are actively seeking other employment mainly due to their salary. Once the economy improves and the job market stabilizes, the agency anticipates losing employees unless it is able to provide employees with appropriate salary levels.

Since July 1, 2003, a total of 153 people have left DOF. A total of 58 of these individuals left for a position which paid more money. A total of 56 people retired. As stated previously, the agency has averaged 9 retirements per year. This equates to an average loss of 281 years of knowledge and experience each fiscal year.

A major concern with the turnover rate is an increase in the number of employees leaving within 5 years of employment. Since July 1, 2003, a total of 45 employees with 5 years or less of service have resigned. Looking at that figure closer, 10 of those employees left in their first year; 12 left with 1 to 2 years of service, and 5 left with 2 to 3 years of service.

To better understand the turnover rate by years of service, the agency reviewed the number of employees in each years of service range. Based on this review, several problem areas were determined. First, 45 percent of the employees with 5 to 10 years of service left DOF in Fiscal Year 2004. This equates to 9 of the 20 employees with those years of service leaving. Five of those individuals left for higher paying positions and 2 were part of the layoffs mentioned above. Next, a high percentage of employees with 30 or more years of service leaving each year; however, that is due to retirements and is expected.

In 2009, 37, 13.8 percent, of DOF employees are eligible for full retirement. Over the last five years, the agency has had a similar percentage of employees eligible for full retirement. The actual number of retirements for the majority of the fiscal years is significantly below the eligible number. The one exception is Fiscal Year 2004. The additional retirements that fiscal year were due to the nursery center closing which was discussed previously. Within the next five years, 68 of the agency's employees, 25.3 percent, will be eligible for full retirement.

Between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2009, the agency hired a total of 141 employees. Of those employees, 100 are still with the agency. This is a retention rate of 70.9 percent and a turnover rate of 29.1 percent.

Fiscal Year 2008 was the first fiscal year in which the state kept time-to-fill reports for open positions. DOF's average

time-to-fill positions for Fiscal Year 2008 was 69 days while the state average was 107 days. For Fiscal Year 2009, DOF’s average time-to-fill positions dropped significantly to 46 days and the state average dropped to 99 days.

DOF’s employees are assigned to geographical locations throughout the state. The highest concentration of personnel is those assigned to Charlottesville where 70 employees, 26.0 percent, are assigned. The Charlottesville figure includes staff assigned both to our Central Regional Office and our Headquarters. This number is deceptive, though. It includes our Building and Grounds staff, which in actuality travel throughout the state to work and are rarely in Charlottesville. It also includes members of our Resource Protection and Resource Information Divisions who generally work the majority of time out of our regional or county offices. Having staff spread throughout the state makes covering for vacancies caused by retirements, resignations, extended absences, etc. difficult.

DOF implemented teleworking and alternative work schedules on a trial basis in October 2005. A formal policy regarding teleworking and alternative work schedules was implemented in June 2006. As of June 30, 2009, 104 positions within the agency are eligible for teleworking. This is 38.7 percent of the agency’s total positions. A total of 54 employees telework 1 or more days per week. This is 51.9 percent of the eligible employees and 20.1 percent of the overall work force. The percentages of positions eligible for teleworking and employees actually teleworking have remained consistent over the past 2 fiscal years.

Currently, 180 positions within the agency are eligible for alternative work schedules. This is 66.9 percent of the agency’s total positions. A total of 63 employees work alternative schedules. This is 35.0 percent of the eligible employees and 23.4 percent of the overall work force. The percentage of positions eligible for alternative work schedules has remained consistent while the percentage of employees actually working alternative schedules has increased over the past 2 fiscal years.

The number of worker’s compensation claims for Fiscal Year 2009 was 141. This is higher than the 101 claims for Fiscal Year 2008. A major reason for the rise in claims was an increase in the number of tick and other insect bites. This spring the number of ticks in Virginia increased which is due in part to a milder winter. In addition, the agency has made an effort to have employees report all accidents even those which seem minor and do not require medical attention. This has led to an increase in claims; however, these claims have not resulted in additional cost to the agency. Approximately 45.0 percent of the claims for Fiscal Years 2004 through 2008 are related to tick bites. In Fiscal Year 2009, 55.0 percent of the claims were due to them. Tick bites are a hazard of the work performed by department personnel and the agency anticipates the number of these claims to remain steady.

The increase in claims does not always correspond with an increase in worker’s compensation costs, though. In Fiscal Year 2008, 1 employee was severely burned and the cost for his treatment was \$446,540.32. In addition, another employee broke his knee in 3 places and the cost for his treatment was \$77,824.86. These 2 injuries led to a significant spike in worker’s compensation costs for the fiscal year. In Fiscal Year 2009, the total amount for the agency’s worker’s compensation claims was \$192,520.45. Of this amount, 1 employee accounted for \$116,870 of the cost. The large amount of his medical bills was due predominately to his negative reaction to the treatment given him. This resulted in his being placed in intensive care which significantly increased the cost for his care. As indicated above, a significant number of the claims received by the agency are related to tick bites. However, for all 6 fiscal years combined, the total amount paid for treatment of these claims was \$1,503.02. Therefore, even though it is a hazard of the workplace, it does not result in significant cost to the agency.

The majority of the agency’s budget, 69.6 percent, is allocated for personnel expenses. This is a significant increase from Fiscal Year 2008 when 61.0% of the agency’s budget was allocated for personnel expenses. The state average is 21% of the budget allocated for personnel expenses. A major reason for the increase in percentage for DOF is the budget cuts over the last 2 fiscal years. The agency had a minimal amount of discretionary funding to begin with and the cuts have exacerbated the situation.

● *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2008
Total Authorized Position level	323
Vacant Positions	-42
<b>Current Employment Level</b>	<b>281.0</b>
Non-Classified (Filled)	1
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	280
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0

*breakout of Current Employment Level*

Faculty (Filled)	0
Wage	180
Contract Employees	4
<b>Total Human Resource Level</b>	<b>465.0</b>

= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees

- *Factors Impacting HR*

As of June 30, 2007, the agency was actively recruiting to fill 19 of our vacant positions. However, the agency still has and addition 23 authorized positions which are vacant. We are unable to fill them due to a lack of fiscal resources. These positions are predominately county Forest Technicians and Foresters. This has an impact on the workload for our current county staff. The increased workload does lead to job satisfaction challenges and morale issues. Restoring the agency's budget would allow us to fill our authorized positions.

Also, as stated earlier, DOF's county Forest Technicians and Foresters are the primary responders for wildfires and disaster relief. Having a large number of vacancies in these positions leaves gaps in coverage and, ultimately, leads to slower response time to emergencies. The slower response time in turn could lead to more acres burned by wildfires and, due to the large urban interface in the state, more homes lost, damaged, or seriously threatened. Also, state citizens could be left without assistance in disaster situations. Restoring the agency's budget would allow us to fill the majority of our county Forest Technician and Forester positions. This in turn would lead to a greater amount of safety for state citizens and a higher level of protection for the state's forests.

State employees have received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 to date. In addition, in Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This has assisted with salary compression issues and enabled us to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. However, the state still has not funded its pay-for-performance system. In addition, even with the increases, the state still lags the market for many salaries. This has contributed to both turnover and recruiting challenges. In particular, the agency has a difficult time attracting qualified, experienced candidates for open Forest Technician and Forester positions. The agency has also had difficulty filling its technical positions. In order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time to fill, the agency has recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Forest Technician and Forester positions. In order to implement this change, the agency will need additional funding.

A low number of DOF employees are interested in promotional opportunities. Some employees either do not want to move geographically to accept a promotion or do not want supervisory and/or higher level responsibility. In addition, salary compression issues also make promotions less attractive. Many employees believe that the difference in salary for a supervisory or management position is not adequate. This has made recruiting for supervisory and management positions in the agency more difficult and challenging.

In particular, the agency has severe compression of its upper management positions in relation to middle level management positions. This has led to making upper level positions less attractive for internal applicants. It also causes challenges with recruiting qualified external applicants. To correct this, the agency has recommended reclassification of and salary upgrades to upper management positions. This in turn will provide more salary flexibility at lower levels. In order to implement these changes, the agency will need additional funding.

The agency's training coordinator was assigned the additional task of serving as the agency's safety officer. The agency has traditionally focused its occupational health and safety program primarily on wildland fire fighting. In the past 2 years, the program has been expanded and we are currently in the process of ensuring full compliances with all Federal and state laws and policies related to workplace safety. However, having one staff member responsible for both agency-wide training and safety is not efficient or effective. The agency has a need for a qualified safety professional to fully implement the program.

Approximately 17 years ago, legislation was approved to mandate water quality standards at logging sites. DOF was given oversight of enforcing this law; however, funding was not included with the mandate. This has necessitated DOF to enforce the law at the cost of providing forest management, forest health, etc. service to citizens. In order to effectively enforce the water quality law and meet the agency's strategic objectives, 15 Water Quality Specialist positions were requested as part of the Fiscal Year 2007 budget decision packages. Having these positions would free current county staff to provide services to citizens, which are outlined in DOF's strategic plan. The agency was given 8 Water Quality Specialist positions instead of the 15 requested. Therefore, the agency will continue to advocate for additional positions in the future. In addition, as Technician and Forester positions become open, we will review the positions to determine if they should be reclassified to Water Quality Specialist positions.

DOF completed a final report on the 2005 Senate Joint Resolution 75 regarding incentives for landowners to preserve their forest property. The report included the recommendation to hire 5 Forest Conservation Specialists for major population areas in Virginia. These are Northern Virginia, Norfolk/Hampton Roads, Richmond, Charlottesville, and Roanoke. These Foresters would be charged with assisting local governments, agencies, and landowners to decrease the fragmentation of forested land and increase the amount of forested areas in urban areas. The agency has reclassified 3 existing positions to Forest Conservation Specialists for Norfolk/Hampton Roads, Richmond, and Charlottesville areas. Additional funding is needed to fill the 2 remaining positions.

During budget cuts in the mid-1990's, DOF lost its Silviculture specialist position. This individual provided valuable specialized input and information to county staff in the areas of Silviculture and hardwood tree management. This position needs to be reinstated in order for DOF to fully meet its strategic objectives and effectively serve the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The state legislature implemented a timber theft law in Fiscal Year 2005. Right now, enforcement of this law is the responsibility of the police and sheriff departments throughout the state. We anticipate in the future, however, that enforcement will shift to DOF. This would require both additional staff and training.

In 1988, the agency implemented a bloodhound program to assist with tracking arson suspects for wild fires. The program was extremely beneficial and we had a high of 3 bloodhounds tracking teams in the agency. The teams consist of a bloodhound and his/her handler. The dog lives with its handler. The agency pays for the dog's food and medical bills; and the handler is responsible for caring for the dog. In 2004, 1 of the handlers retired and another resigned. The handler who retired owned his dog and the other handler's dog was at retirement age – we had been looking into replacing him. This meant we lost both the handlers and the dogs. The agency was left with 1 bloodhound tracking team. The remaining team has been successful in limiting arson fires in their area. The agency has recently acquired 1 additional bloodhound. However, DOF would benefit from having additional teams in other areas of the state.

In 2007, 36, or 12.81 percent, of our employees are eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, 67 of our employees, or 23.84 percent, will be eligible for full retirement. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in needs, especially in field positions. As stated above, the agency is experiencing a high rate of turnover of employees with 5 years or less of service. In order to effectively fill the upcoming vacancies due to retirement, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees.

One other area of concern is the on-call status of our primary responders for wildfires and natural disasters. These employees are on-call during the Spring and Fall seasons, which are a total of approximately 20 weeks each year. Currently, staff members are not given any additional compensation for being on-call. Payment for on-call time is not required under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and the non-payment is supported by recent Federal circuit court decisions. This has not been a significant issue with our long-serving staff. However, newer employees are questioning this practice and pushing for on-call compensation. We anticipate this to become a greater issue in the future. However, in order for us to address the issue, the DOF budget will have to be increased. Our budget is currently inadequate to fill all approved vacancies. Attempting to provide on-call compensation within our current budget is impractical and not sustainable.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

DOF is instituting a competency based career development program which offers opportunities for lateral advancement. The program was implemented in part to help address some of the salary issues. Each position within the agency will have a career path consisting of 4 levels – Probationary, Level I, Level II, and Level III. Each level of the career path has a task book which outlines the required competencies the employee must demonstrate. All new employees will be required to complete both the Probationary Level and Level I of their career paths. Promotions, with salary increases or cash bonuses, are available for employees who have completed their task books for Level I, Level II, and Level III of their career paths. Promotion decisions are based in part on employee performance. The first phases of this program have been implemented. However, the agency is behind schedule with getting it fully implemented agency-wide. Originally, we planned to have the program fully implemented by October 1, 2006. However, we are now looking at full implementation taking place by October 1, 2009. As stated above, the agency's training coordinator was given the additional responsibility of being the agency's safety officer. This is the major reason for the delay in fully implementing the career development program. Staff time, unfortunately, is no longer available to fully devote a person to the career development program.

The agency has fully implemented its recognition and training programs. Both of these programs have become integrated into the agency's culture. Employees accept and utilize both programs. We continue to ensure consistency particularly in the instant recognition program agency-wide.

The agency has implemented an annual Forest Management Academy. The academy is geared predominately towards Foresters and Technicians, but it is open to all agency staff. It provides specialized training in forest management,

forest health, water quality, communications, computer skills, and other areas. It enables the agency to offer its employees high-quality training in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

In addition, the agency is implementing an all-agency meeting/training event every 3 years. The training offered during this event is geared towards soft skills such as customer service, public speaking, writing, interviewing, etc. It also will be an efficient and cost-effective method to reach all-staff. It has the added benefit of enabling staff from various parts of the state to meet each other and discuss issues in their individual areas. This provides more exchange of ideas throughout the state and encourages team work.

DOF has expanded its internship program. In the Summer of 2007, we hired a total of 8 Summer interns which is up from the 4 hired in the Summer of 2004. We had 1 minority and 1 female intern. The agency visited several universities that traditionally have a high number of minorities in order to actively recruit for internship applicants. DOF faced major competition from Federal forestry agencies for minority intern applicants. We will continue our diversity recruiting efforts for future Summer internships. Having a higher level of diversity among our interns should lead to a more diverse pool of applicants for regular positions.

Detailed information of the agency's human resources statistics, issues, and plans is available in the agency's Workforce Plan.

### Information Technology

- *Current Operational IT Investments:*

DOF is in the process of converting most of its business processes from either paper systems or obsolete information technology applications to a common solution called the Integrated Forest Resources Information System, or IFRIS®. A three phase (three-project) development program has been initiated to replace and expand upon the legacy IMS, NIMS and RBTC applications.

IFRIS is being developed in accordance with the enterprise architecture (EA) model adopted by the Commonwealth. By following this model DOF seeks to achieve an agency-wide coordination of business process, information architecture, applications and technical architecture.

The user interface to solutions is via web-browsers and to the extent possible the application is being developed, delivered and supported using a Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) based on open and industry standard solutions. DOF is also pioneering the use of online mapping tools and GPS-enabled mobile computing devices.

? The first development phase of the IFRIS (APT Agency Performance Tracking) was deployed April 1, 2006 and now tracks employee time/leave, supervisor approvals and accomplishments.

? Forestry field accomplishments that have a geospatial dimension are being captured in IFRIS-APT with its online geospatial mapping component.

? Three critical business processes are being addressed in the second development phase of IFRIS (FPMC Forest Protection and Mobile Computing):

- o Suppression and prevention of forest fires, and enforcement of forest fire laws
- o Protection water quality by promoting harvesting best management practices
- o Protection of forest health

? By hosting IFRIS at VITA and using web services from the Commonwealth's Geospatial Enterprise Platform (GEP), DOF is leveraging investments made by VGIN.

? The agency has encountered significant customer service delivery issues with the hosting of the IFRIS application at VITA, These issues have increased agency database management costs, increased application downtime, and have resulted in project delays for the agency's FPMC project.

? Other business practices remain to be addressed in the third development phase of IFRIS (FMIP Forest Management Incentives Programs).

- o Cost-share assistance tracking and billing for incentive programs
- o Riparian buffer tax credit online application and mapping

? The tracking of tree seedling inventory, orders and deliveries needs to be reengineered and migrated out of the legacy NIMS application.

? Management information for the State Forest system is currently managed with a desktop GIS application and needs to move to the IFIRS application.

? Certain deficiencies exist in the operational IFRIS application; specifically:

- o unmet reporting needs for time, leave and accomplishments
- o a lack of a mechanism for leave balance checking and leave pre-approval
- o insufficient provisions for geospatial data management
- o insufficient quality assurance and quality control processes

? A few business processes remain in legacy systems that are not yet planned to be addressed in the IFRIS application development program. Most prominent is the inventory control function currently performed in IMS. The current system is plagued with inaccuracies and inefficiencies. Some other limited fiscal procedures should also be addressed in IFRIS.  
 ? Agency managers have identified a need for a fleet management information system to provide more efficient management of vehicle and equipments resources.  
 ? The Forest Resource Information Mapper, or ForestRIM©, which provides the public with access to aerial photography, resource data layers and the ability to produce maps needs upgrading and integration with the IFRIS application

● **Factors Impacting the Current IT:**

? All state agencies are required to "...establish, document, implement, and maintain its IT security program appropriate to its business and technology environment ..." in compliance with VITA ITRM Standard SEC501-01. DOF does not have the staff resources to develop and implement an adequate security plan.  
 ? All state agencies are required under VITA ITRM Standard GOV103-00 to "ensure that the products comply with the Section 508 requirements of the Standard, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the Agency." To date, none of DOF's applications have been formally analyzed or modified to meet this requirement. In fact, resources have not been available to contribute to the agency's accessibility plan or assess the financial impacts. However, all such endeavors will increase agency new system development and existing system re-engineering costs.  
 ? Federal grantor agencies, such as the US Forest Service, set standards for forest stewardship and protection program and associated information management. DOF must upgrade and modify its systems to ensure compliance with the federal programs and maintain accountability.  
 ? DOF's customers and stakeholders are expecting to transact more of their programmatic and financial business with DOF across the internet. Consultant foresters, loggers, and forest landowners are major customer groups where the potential exists to conduct more business across the intranet.  
 ? The demand exists to expose some of the mapping and information management functions of the IFRIS application to external customers in a limited and secure manner.  
 ? The general public is expecting to be able to obtain relevant information concerning the Commonwealth's forest resources over the internet. Demand exists for interactive mapping and decision support systems by which the general public can obtain information and recommendations about forest resources as state, regional, local and tract-level scales.  
 ? Changes driven by VITA transformation activities may change DOF's ability to serve internal and external information technology customers. This will increase the agency's overhead costs to meet the transformation mandates.

Agency/Enterprise Applications: DOF has identified the need for a vehicle fleet management and equipment inventory application. Currently a comprehensive fleet management system is non-existent while maintenance records for vehicles are manually filed and maintained by the fleet manager. A comprehensive, web based application for easy access by our seven major vehicle maintenance facilities statewide is desired.

Hardware: The internal networks supporting our users are slow and network engineers have identified existing hubs and switches no longer are meeting our growing demands. Partnership on-site contractors and the SLD are aware of the situation and promise to make accommodations when needed however, the Partnership will need to reassess the networks and design a solution.

● **Proposed IT Solutions:**

? Three development phases of the IFRIS application fully implemented and operational.  
 ? Modification and enhancement of the operational IFRIS-APT application to fully meet business needs related to reporting, leave management, geospatial data management, and quality control.  
 ? An upgraded and enhanced ForestRIM© and RBTC applications (public-facing).  
 ? Solutions for business processes currently out-of-scope for IFRIS: asset inventory management, fleet management, seedlings inventory and sales, and state forest information management.  
 ? An appropriate level of information security for all its information technology assets and applications.  
 ? DOF will meet accessibility standards whenever it can do so without undue burden.  
 ? DOF will receive high quality and timely service from the Partnership responsive to our locations throughout the state.  
 ? Deficiencies in the networks supporting DOF will be identified and resolved by the Partnership and brought up to the desired level of service.

● **Current IT Services:**

Estimated Ongoing Operations and Maintenance Costs for Existing IT Investments

Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund

Projected Service Fees	\$1,003,691	\$124,359	\$1,018,747	\$126,224
Changes (+/-) to VITA Infrastructure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Estimated VITA Infrastructure</b>	\$1,003,691	\$124,359	\$1,018,747	\$126,224
Specialized Infrastructure	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Application Costs	\$737,850	\$0	\$720,850	\$0
<b>Agency IT Current Services</b>	\$1,741,541	\$124,359	\$1,739,597	\$126,224

*Comments:*

[Nothing entered]

- Proposed IT Investments

Estimated Costs for Projects and New IT Investments

	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Major IT Projects	\$52,696	\$209,798	\$0	\$0
Non-major IT Projects	\$28,700	\$287,280	\$46,800	\$428,332
Agency-level IT Projects	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Major Stand Alone IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-major Stand Alone IT Procurements	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Proposed IT Investments</b>	\$81,396	\$497,078	\$46,800	\$428,332

- Projected Total IT Budget

	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Current IT Services	\$1,741,541	\$124,359	\$1,739,597	\$126,224
Proposed IT Investments	\$81,396	\$497,078	\$46,800	\$428,332
<b>Total</b>	\$1,822,937	\$621,437	\$1,786,397	\$554,556

[Appendix A](#) - Agency's information technology investment detail maintained in VITA's ProSight system.

**Capital**

- Current State of Capital Investments:

DOF owns 60 office buildings, 200 total buildings, and approximately 50,000 acres of land. The agency is responsible for the maintenance, repairs and improvements on these buildings. Repairs generally are made through the buildings and grounds crew. Some buildings are considered general funded facilities and receive maintenance reserve funding.

The agency depends upon an adequate maintenance reserve funding to meet minimum standards for its buildings. DOF buildings range in age from the late 1800s to 2006. Most of the office buildings were constructed during the 1950s -1960s. The cost of maintaining older facilities has escalated and the rate of cost of maintenance increases is expected to continue over the next two years. Additional maintenance reserve funding is necessary to maintain all buildings in

adequate to good condition. Maintenance reserve funding has never covered the amount requested.

DOF has several modular office buildings approved by the Division of Engineering & Buildings for a temporary building permit and issued to DOF for two years (many of these are 20 years old now). DOF recognizes its obligation to replace the temporary office structures with permanent structures once capital funding is made available.

Facilities located on the nurseries and state forests are considered special revenue operations and receive no general funds and no maintenance reserve funding.

For the biennium 2008-2010, DOF has submitted 10 capital outlay projects.

**BIG WOODS:** As the first state forest in Southeast Virginia, Big Woods will enable the DOF to demonstrate sustainable forest practices for private forest landowners while maintaining the environmental benefits the public demands. This acquisition of 4,900 acres will finalize a commitment by DOF, Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, Governor Kaine and The Nature Conservancy to protect valuable working lands and help reach the governor's goal of preserving 400,000 acres of land by 2010.

**REGION 3 OFFICE:** The Region 3 office complex is dilapidated due to age, and is inappropriate for its current use. DOF is interested in meeting the Commonwealth's goal of leading society in the conservation of energy and natural resources. DOF's goal here is to redevelop a dilapidated state property to showcase state-of-the-art, affordable technology that promotes the use of ecologically friendly construction using locally produced material. In addition, DOF is interested in co-locating regionally important agencies to provide the public with one-stop shopping for natural resources considerations. The facility design would give the staff the ability to host quality conferences and meetings; attract and educate the public, and enable DOF to create the sustainable forestry and forest conservation learning experiences needed for the Commonwealth.

**ABINGDON REGIONAL OFFICE:** The existing office has serious structural deterioration, sagging truss members in the roofing system, serious settling of foundations causing severe cracks in cinderblock walls and floor separations. The original structure was built in the early 1950s and has inadequate 1) office space, 2) ADA bathroom facilities (and ADA access issues), 3) parking, and finally 4) asbestos abatement needs. The building is in need of electrical upgrade and complete rewiring. This office in its current condition is a poor representation of the agency and has safety issues for both employees and the public.

**LANCASTER COUNTY OFFICE:** Located in Kilmarnock, the office is approximately 480 square feet situated on a lot owned by DOF. This modular office has been in place 18 years longer than the two years it was supposed to exist. DOF recommends replacing this facility with a 5,064-square-foot office and equipment building. The new facility would provide the personnel space, storage, and security for the firefighting equipment and bulldozer.

**ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY OFFICE:** This is currently a rented office space. DOF has no office facilities between Staunton and Salem. The fire equipment is located at a VDOT facility a considerable distance from the DOF office. DOF owns a site off Route 39 near the Lexington Horse Center on which to build a combination office/equipment storage building and co-locate with other agencies.

**GREENSVILLE COUNTY OFFICE:** The Greenville office is co-located with the Brunswick office in Lawrenceville, which is overcrowded. DOF owns an excellent lot available to build in Greenville.

**AMELIA COUNTY OFFICE:** Another mobile unit past its safe use and inadequate for the growing staff needed to maintain the services to the forest landowners of Virginia who contribute wood products and ecosystems services that add \$30 billion to the Commonwealth's economy annually.

**HENRY COUNTY OFFICE:** Another mobile unit past its safe use and inadequate for the growing staff needed to maintain the services to the forest landowners of Virginia who contribute wood products and ecosystems services that add \$30 billion to the Commonwealth's economy annually.

**SCOTT COUNTY OFFICE:** Another mobile unit past its safe use and inadequate for the growing staff needed to maintain the services to the forest landowners of Virginia who contribute wood products and ecosystems services that add \$30 billion to the Commonwealth's economy annually.

**CONWAY ROBINSON STATE FOREST:** DOF has preliminary drawings for a Conway Robinson State Forest Stewardship Educational Center. DOF requests additional funds to complete the drawings and construct this project located in Prince William County. The project will be located on 400 acres of DOF land near I-66 and Route 29.

- *Factors Impacting Capital Investments:*

DOF is collaborating with the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, The Nature Conservancy, the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (VLCF) and others to purchase Big Woods in Southeastern Virginia. VLCF granted DOF \$300,000 to initiate the purchase of Big Woods. DGIF, DOF and TNC are working on purchasing sections of the property to reduce the cost to each agency. TNC may maintain a tract to add to TNC's Piney Grove Preserve. Big Woods' price tag – in excess of \$8 million – can be successful only if numerous methods of purchase are considered and utilized.

The Region 3 office complex will be constructed on land already owned by DOF. In addition, much of the lumber needs for the project can be harvested from the State Forests. Other energy saving construction practices will be used to demonstrate to the public means to conserve our natural resources and build environmentally friendly buildings.

- *Capital Investments Alignment:*

The proposed capital projects are directly aligned with the DOF mission to protect and develop healthy sustainable forest resources for Virginians. DOF provides forest protection and forest services in almost every county of the Commonwealth. The Code of Virginia authorizes DOF to provide forest fire protection, silviculture and water quality protection, and forestry management services to private landowners. DOF mission and goals directly align with the long-term initiatives of Virginia, specifically: 1) to protect, conserve, and wisely develop our natural, historical, and cultural resources, 2) to protect the public's safety and security while ensuring a fair and effective system of justice, and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds, 3) be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy, and 4) engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests. DOF can meet its mission, mandates, and Virginia's long-term objectives only by placing personnel in most counties where commercial forest land is available.

## Agency Goals

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### Goal 1

Protect the citizens, their property, and the forest resource from wildfire.

#### Goal Summary and Alignment

By ensuring the DOF has adequate radio communications, sufficient trained personnel, appropriate fire prevention program, trained staff in arson and law enforcement prepared for the changing needs in wildfire protection and wild land/urban interface, the Commonwealth's forest lands will be protected from damages resulting from wild fires and Virginia will be a national leader in the effort. This goal aligns directly with the Agency's mission to protect the forest resources.

#### Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.
- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

### Goal 2

Protect, promote, and enhance forested watersheds.

#### Goal Summary and Alignment

Provide technical services, best management practices information, and silvicultural activity enforcement on the Commonwealth's forested watersheds, non-tidal wetlands, and riparian areas to ensure the quality of drinking and recreational waters from these areas for future generations.

#### Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

### Goal 3

Conserve the forest land base.

#### Goal Summary and Alignment

Provide technical services, information, and conservation easements designed to inform private landowners and

organizations representing private forest landowners about the shrinking forest land base in the Commonwealth to assure a higher likelihood of reversing the trend towards the smaller forest land base while maintaining more land in working forests.

#### **Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals**

- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

#### **Goal 4**

Improve the stewardship, health, and diversity of the forest resource.

#### **Goal Summary and Alignment**

Provide information, advice, and scientific-based recommendations to help landowners make informed decisions about their forest resources, which result in healthy, vigorous trees and forests on private land.

#### **Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals**

- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

#### **Goal 5**

Promote the development of ecosystem service markets for forest landowners.

#### **Goal Summary and Alignment**

Department of Forestry will exercise the leadership to establish a statewide program that facilitates forest landowners' knowledge of ecosystem services and their ability to participate in existing and emerging ecosystem service markets. Ecosystem services include a variety of environmental benefits (water quality, air quality, carbon sequestration) derived from private landowners maintaining forest land, which improves the quality of life for society, but at no cost to society. Markets for ecosystem services provide an additional financial opportunity and incentive for private landowners to maintain their forest land in forests. The development of this financial tool could serve as an important incentive to reduce the loss of Virginia's forestland. With this goal in place, DOF hopes to establish the basis for market-based incentives for forest landowners.

#### **Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals**

- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

#### **Goal 6**

Collect, maintain, and disseminate forest resource information.

#### **Goal Summary and Alignment**

DOF will deliver spatial and statistical forest resource data, coordinated with accurate, timely field-based forest resource information, dedicated to remote sensing, and Web-based information and marketing outreach to assure the public's awareness of the value and importance of Virginia's forests and to improve the health and quality of life for Virginia citizens. This goal aligns directly with the agency mission to protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians.

#### **Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals**

- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

#### **Goal 7**

Manage agency resources to effectively and efficiently accomplish the strategic initiatives.

#### **Goal Summary and Alignment**

Ensure DOF has sufficient employees with the right skills and knowledge to be a world-class forestry organization capable of meeting the challenges and needs in Virginia; who are equipped with technology and tools, and possess excellent communication skills to provide the highest quality forest management assessments and recommendations and ensure a better informed private landowner. Provide for the most effective and efficient management of DOF State Forest and nursery production resources.

**Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals**

- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.
- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.

**Goal 8**

Strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.

**Goal Summary and Alignment**

This goal ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, policies and procedures for Commonwealth preparedness, as well as guidelines promulgated by the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet, the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group, the Department of Planning and Budget and the Council on Virginia's Future. The goal supports achievement of the Commonwealth's statewide goal of protecting the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

**Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals**

- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

**Goal Objectives**

- We will be prepared to act in the interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth and its infrastructure during emergency situations by actively planning and training both as an agency and as individuals.

*Objective Strategies*

- The agency Emergency Coordination Officer will stay in continuous communication with the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.

*Link to State Strategy*

- nothing linked

*Objective Measures*

- Agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Assessment Score.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Minimum of 74% or, if at 75%, increase the average by 5% each year.

Data Source and Calculation: The COOP Assessment Review is a 24 component assessment tool that helps measure the viability of a COOP Plan.

- We will test the DOF COOP Plan sufficiently enough to encompass central office, regions, state forests, and nurseries and determine its effectiveness in a true emergency.

*Link to State Strategy*

- nothing linked
-

## Service Area Strategic Plan

## Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:32 pm

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

## Service Area 1 of 4

**Reforestation Incentives to Private Forest Land Owners (411 501 02)****Description**

This service area consists of administering the Reforestation of Timberlands Act (RT) and implementation of the cost-share program pursuant to 10.1-1170 through 10.1-1176. This service area is available as a result of a self-imposed forest products tax by the forest products industry. The agreement is between the General Assembly and the forest products industry in Virginia designed to meet the projected shortfall of pine resource forecasted by forestry leaders. At the time of the RT Act enabling legislation, it was widely recognized that more pine timber resources were being harvested than being reforested. It is the RT Act which caused the reverse in the decline of the pine resource by providing financial incentives to the private landowners to invest in pine reforestation across Virginia.

The DOF, upon request of a landowner, examines timberland and makes recommendations concerning reforestation. DOF may make available to landowners, with or without charge, use of specialized state-owned equipment and tree seedlings, materials, and services of professional personnel for the purpose of preparing land for reforestation and reforesting land devoted to growing timber, in accordance with administrative regulations.

Upon the completion of each separate reforestation project in accordance with the recommendations and approval of the State Forester, the DOF determines the total cost of the project including money paid or payable to a contractor for services performed on the project, for labor, and for other costs incurred by the landowner, including a standard rental rate value for use of state-owned equipment and the cost of tree seedlings, materials, and specialized state personnel used on the project. The State Forester, from funds appropriated for the purposes of this article, may pay to the landowner an amount not to exceed 75 percent of the total cost of the project.

**Background Information****Mission Alignment and Authority**

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*

This service area aligns directly with the DOF's mission to protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. DOF encourages greater reforestation in the Commonwealth through the authority to offer financial incentives to forest landowners to invest in trees for the long term. In addition, this area aligns directly with the long-term objectives for Virginia to protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical, and cultural resources.

- *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*

§ 10.1-1170. Administration of article.

The State Forester shall administer the provisions of this article, including the protection, preservation and perpetuation of forest resources by means of reforestation to allow continuous growth of timber on lands suitable therefore, and is authorized to employ personnel; purchase equipment, materials, and supplies; maintain and transport equipment; and make other expenditures and payments authorized by law, and as directed by the regulations adopted for the administration of this article. In any one fiscal year, the expenditures for salaries of administrative supervisory personnel shall not exceed ten percent of the general fund appropriation and forest products taxes collected and deposited in the Reforestation of Timberlands Fund as provided in § 10.1-1174 for that particular year.

§ 10.1-1171. Exceptions.

A. This article shall not apply to any tract of land in excess of 500 acres under the sole ownership of an individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or any other business unit, device, or arrangement.

B. This article shall not apply to any acre or part of an acre on which the landowner is receiving federal financial assistance for growing timber.

§ 10.1-1172. Reforestation Board; regulations.

The Reforestation Board shall be appointed by the Governor and consist of the following members: three representatives of the pine pulpwood industry, three representatives of the pine lumber industry, one of whom shall be the owner of a sawmill annually producing not more than five million board feet, and three small forest landowners. The State Forester shall be a nonvoting member of the Reforestation Board and shall serve as secretary of the Board. All members shall be appointed for three-year terms and appointed members may not serve for more than two consecutive terms.

The Reforestation Board shall annually elect a chairman and shall formulate regulations for its organization and

procedure.

The Reforestation Board shall meet not less than twice each year, at such location as it may designate, to formulate recommendations to the State Forester concerning regulations and other matters applicable to this article including, but not limited to, types of equipment to be purchased, rental rates for equipment, and reforestation practices.

§ 10.1-1173. Authority of State Forester; reforestation options; lien.

The State Forester is authorized, upon the request of a landowner, to examine timberland and make recommendations concerning reforestation. He may make available to landowners, with or without charge, use of specialized state-owned equipment and tree seedlings, tree seed, materials, and services of specialized state personnel for the purpose of preparing land for reforestation and reforesting land devoted to growing timber, in accordance with administrative regulations.

Upon the completion of each separate reforestation project in accordance with the recommendations and approval of the State Forester, the State Forester shall determine the total cost of the project including money paid or payable to a contractor for services performed on the project, for labor, and for other costs incurred by the landowner, including a standard rental rate value for use of state-owned equipment and the cost of tree seedlings, tree seed, materials, and specialized state personnel used on the project.

The following incentive to reforesting land may be utilized by the State Forester: whenever a landowner completes a reforestation project in accordance with the recommendations and approval of the State Forester, through the use of his own equipment, material and personnel, or through the employment of a contractor where no state equipment, materials or personnel are used, or are used only in part, the State Forester shall determine the total cost of the project based on current commercial rental rate for machines similar to types used, cost of material, and cost of personnel where the landowner does his own work on the project, or based on the contractor's statement of cost or paid receipts furnished by the landowner where work is done by a contractor together with and at the standard rental value for use of any state-owned specialized equipment, tree seedlings, tree seed, materials, and specialized state personnel used on the project. The State Forester, from funds appropriated for the purposes of this article, may pay to the landowner an amount not to exceed seventy-five percent of the total cost of the project, as above determined, or ninety dollars per acre, whichever is the lesser.

§ 10.1-1174. Reforestation of Timberlands Fund.

All moneys paid to or collected by the State Forester for rental equipment, tree seedlings, seed and material furnished, and specialized personnel services rendered to a landowner and all moneys collected or received from settlement of liens, including principal, interest and fines, authorized under this article shall be paid into the state treasury. All such moneys shall be credited by the State Comptroller as special revenues to the Reforestation of Timberlands Fund of the Department of Forestry to be expended solely for reforesting privately owned timberlands of the Commonwealth as provided in this article.

§ 10.1-1175. Certain rights of landowner not limited.

This article shall not limit the right of any landowner to contract with individuals, organizations, and public bodies to provide for the utilization of the land for recreational purposes, or to grant open space easements over the land to public bodies.

§ 10.1-1176. When provisions of article effective.

This article shall not be effective during any biennium for which the General Assembly fails to appropriate from the state general fund a sum which equals or exceeds the total revenues collected from the forest products tax for the immediately preceding two years; a report of such sum shall be submitted by the State Forester to the Governor on or before November 1 of the last year of the preceding biennium.

**Customers**

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
	Private forest landowners	1,500	10,000

*Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base*

DOF will probably experience an increase in the number of private forest land owners requesting assistance and service due to parcelization of forested tracts as forest products companies divest themselves of land and family owned forest lands are passed on to the next generation.

**Partners**

Partner	Description
	The forest products industry whose revenues are taxed, collected and set aside for the RT Act Fund is the primary partner. The forest industry recommended and accepted the self-imposed forest products tax to

Virginia Forest Industry ensure future forest products in the Commonwealth. Because of the industry support, the Commonwealth only has to match the revenues used in reforestation efforts. This appropriation shall be deemed sufficient to meet the provisions of the Titles 10.1 and 58.1 of the Code of Virginia in the Appropriations Act.

### Products and Services

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

Funding is the principal factor impacting products and services in this service area. Funding is provided from two sources. First, the forest products industry agreed with the General Assembly of Virginia to provide a law requiring a self-imposed timber products tax. The amount collected from the industry is by law to be matched by the General Fund in a like amount and the total must be used to provide the establishment and improvement of the pine resource. This helps assure a pine resource will be available in the future. The collection of the forest products tax and the subsequent matching from the General Fund can impact this service area.

The RT program is administered by employees of the DOF. Full staffing is an important factor which can impact this service area.

- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

When funds are decreased, the program will serve less private forest landowners with reforestation and forest improvement. Landowners will delay forestry projects or cancel the projects until funding is available.

Increases in funds have a positive effect on forestry and private forest landowner willingness to invest money into forestry long-term practices. The incentive from cost-share reimbursement helps reduce the initial costs and increase the financial return to the landowner, who must wait up to 20 years before the possibility of the first thinning and, coincidentally, the first potential revenue from the investment.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- Provide forest management planning and scientific recommendations for reforestation to ensure appropriate tree species on the different sites and the proper silvicultural management of each.
- Provide technical information and assistance to landowners to help landowners initiate reforestation establishment and improvement projects.
- Assess forest resources of private landowners and provide specific recommendations to achieve desired reforestation and forest management results.
- Facilitate the work of tree planting and tree improvement contractors who perform work for private landowners to ensure the work is completed in accordance within acceptable forestry guidelines.
- Provide source for tree seedlings and plant materials to accommodate the specific forestry goal on private forest land.
- Administer cost-share assistance and guidance through state programs to private forest landowners.
- Conduct assessments and checks to assure quality assurance on silvicultural projects of private forest landowners.
- Follow-up with recommendations to improve silvicultural projects on private forest land.
- Provide forestry information and education products and services regarding silvicultural operations to private forest landowners to increase their awareness of available help and resources available to assist them.
- Train internal staff and partners on appropriate silvicultural practices for private forest lands.
- Track RT planting and improvement accomplishments annually on Virginia's private forest lands and complete and share report to show annual accomplishments.
- Provide specialized forest establishment equipment for rental and use for reforestation work on private forest lands.
- Support tree improvement work by providing monetary support to the Tree Improvement program to assure forest landowners of the highest quality genetically superior forest seedlings for the future.
- Support state nurseries by requiring all seedlings planted through the RT Program be from VDOF nurseries.

### Finance

- *Financial Overview*

DOF is responsible and charged by the Code of Virginia to administer the Reforestation of Timberlands Act and funds.

The RT program was designed by agreement between state government and forest industry to create a self-imposed forest products tax on raw forest products as they are harvested and matched by a like amount of funding from the Commonwealth of Virginia through the General Fund. The purpose of the funds collected from the RT program is to assist forest landowners with financial incentives to establish and maintain pine resources on their land. The RT program provides for partial reimbursement of the landowner's expenses, and DOF is the lead state agency in implementing procedures, program oversight and accounting of the funds.

Reforestation Incentives to Private Forest Landowners receives funding from General Fund Appropriations (45%), and special revenue funds (55%). The Special revenues in this service area are primarily from forest products taxes and expenses are primarily for incentive payments to small timber owners for reforestation. The reference to percentage of funding refers only to the base budget and not the changes to the base budget.

• *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY	FY	FY	FY	FY
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009
Base Budget	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0					
Service Area Total	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Base Budget	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0					
Service Area Total	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Base Budget	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0					
Service Area Total	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Base Budget	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0					
Service Area Total	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686	\$1,145,140	\$1,498,686					

**Human Resources**

• *Human Resources Overview*

DOF had 269 employees at the end of Fiscal Year 2009. Of these employees, 13 are attached to this service area. That is 4.8 percent of the agency.

The average years of service for employees in this service area is 20.3 as of June 30, 2009. The overall average years of service for DOF employees is 14.5 years as of June 30, 2009. The majority of employees in this service area are

long-serving.

The median age of employees in this service area as of June 30, 2009 is 48.8. This is a little higher than the agency's overall median age of 46 years as of June 30, 2009.

The majority of employees in this service area are in the Natural Resource Specialist II role. There are 11 employees, or 84.6 percent of the service area, in this role as of June 30, 2009. For the agency overall, there are 66 employees, or 24.5 percent of the agency, in the Natural Resource Specialist II role as of June 30, 2009.

Of the agency's 269 employees, 15, 5.6 percent, are Veterans as of June 30, 2009. There is 1 Veteran in this service area.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the agency lost 16 employees which equates to a turnover rate of 5.9 percent. There was no turnover in this service area.

In 2009, 37, 13.8 percent, of DOF employees are eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, 68 of the agency's employees, 25.3 percent, will be eligible for full retirement. Within this service area, 3 employees, 23.1 percent, are currently eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, a total of 5 employees, 38.5 percent, in this service area will be eligible for retirement.

● *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2008
Total Authorized Position level	13
Vacant Positions	0
<b>Current Employment Level</b>	<b>13.0</b>
Non-Classified (Filled)	0
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	13
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0
Faculty (Filled)	0
Wage	0
Contract Employees	0
<b>Total Human Resource Level</b>	<b>13.0</b>

*breakout of Current Employment Level*

*= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees*

● *Factors Impacting HR*

The program supports a Program Manager and a Fiscal Technician as well as several field personnel.

● *Anticipated HR Changes*

[Nothing entered]

**Service Area Objectives**

- Promote cost-share funding to plant pine trees and improve existing pine forests.

**Objective Description**

The purpose of this objective is to ensure that all of the available Reforestation of Timberlands incentive funding are received by private forest landowners for approved tree planting and improvement practices.

**Objective Strategies**

- We will seek to maintain the number of new acres planted to pine trees using the RT program.
- We will use the logging inspection process to identify eligible tracts and promote the replanting of sites using RT cost share.
- DOF regions will review and revise RT Act budgeting and allocation methods.
- We will identify acres to be improved under the RT Act.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Percentage of eligible Reforestation of Timberlands incentive received by landowners.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: Tree planting occurs in the last two quarters and data is available in the first quarter of the subsequent fiscal year.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 90% of available RT incentive funding reported as the average percentage from DOF IFRIS report dating 1998 to 2007.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 92% by July 1, 2010

Data Source and Calculation: Divide the amount of RT incentives funding received by private landowners by the total RT incentive funding available. See FISC2200 Report in DOF IMS.

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## Service Area Strategic Plan

## Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:32 pm

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

## Service Area 2 of 4

## Forest Conservation, Wildfire &amp; Watershed Services (411 501 03)

## Description

This service area truly provides for managing, conserving, and protecting Virginia's forest resources. This is DOF's largest service area and consists of the Divisions of Forestland Conservation, Forest Management, Resource Protection, and Resource Information. These Divisions provide a vast array of services and benefits to many stakeholders including landowners, industry, all levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the general public. The DOF covers the entire Commonwealth with its employees, resources, and equipment placement.

Summary and Important Products and services include:

1. Provide equipment and personnel to suppress and prevent wildfire and to respond to other State declared emergencies.
2. Enforcement of wildfire, silvicultural water quality, and forest seed tree laws
3. Promoting best management silvicultural practices and preharvest planning to loggers and landowners to protect water quality.
4. Provide forest management advice and services to forest landowners for improvement of forest stands ensuring the sustainability of the forest resource
5. Collect, summarize, analyze, and report forest inventory data on the status and condition of forest land in Virginia.
6. Provide resource information, maps, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
7. Monitor and report findings on the forest health of forest stands across Virginia to prevent or control insect and disease harmful to forests.
8. Provide certified burning manager training to individuals involved in the controlled application of fire to reduce forest fuels, site prepare cutover lands for reforestation, and to improve wildlife habitat. Support the continued expansion of Virginia's Prescribed Burning Council.
9. Provide timely and accurate forest resource information to help forest industry maintain vibrant forest-related businesses in Virginia.
10. Promote market opportunities for landowners in existing and emerging markets for wood products and ecosystem services.
11. Provide financial incentives through administering a variety of State and Federal cost-share programs and the riparian buffer tax credit to encourage implementation of forestry practices.
12. Develop, monitor, and enforce conservation easements on working forestlands.
13. Administer the Forest Legacy Program to fund land acquisition and easements
14. Interact with local government to promote conserving the forest land base and the ecosystem service benefits that forests provide.
15. Provide outreach on forest benefits, programs, management, and protection
16. Conduct applied forest research to develop and implement new techniques that enhance the value, health, and sustainability of Virginia's forests, and communicate results in reports, presentations, and field demonstrations.

## Background Information

## Mission Alignment and Authority

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*

This service area directly aligns with the DOF's mission to protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. This service area directly supports six strategic goals of DOF:

1. Protect the citizens, their property and the forest resource from wildfire.
2. Protect, promote, and enhance forested watersheds, non-tidal wetlands and riparian areas.
3. Conserve the forest land base.
4. Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of the forest resources.
5. Promote the development of ecosystem service markets for forest landowners.
6. Collect, maintain and disseminate forest resource information.

This service area directly supports the following long-term objectives for Virginia:

1. Protect, conserve, and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.
2. Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.
3. Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.

4. Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.

- *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*

Chapter 11, Article 4. § 10.1-1124 through §10.1 -1130 provides that DOF may enter agreements with counties and certain cities providing forest fire prevention and suppression to local governments and receive compensation.

Chapter 11, Article 5, §10.1 -1131 through § 10.1 – 1134 provides that DOF may offer forestry services, including technical advice, tree marking, management advice and general forestry advice, to landowners for fee or no charge.

Chapter 11, Article 6, §10.1 -135 -10.1 through §10.1 - 1150 provides authority for DOF to appoint and compensate forest wardens to assist with enforcement of forest laws, fire suppression and prevention.

Chapter 11, Article 6.1, §10.1 -1150.1 through 10.1 – 1150.6 authorizes the DOF to offer training and certification to individuals who use the application of fire to control forest fuels and wish to become certified burn managers.

Chapter 11, Article 9, §10.1 – 1162 through §10.1 – 1169 authorizes the DOF to enforce the seed tree laws in Virginia requiring reforestation or alternate plans following the harvests of specific types of trees.

Chapter 11, Article 11, §10.1 -1177 through §10.1 – 1181 makes the DOF responsible for investigating insect and disease infestations which affect stands of forest trees and to devise and demonstrate control measures to interested persons.

Chapter 11, Article 12, §10.1 -1181.1 through §10.1 – 1181.7 authorizes the DOF to inspect logging sites.

Chapter 43, §15.2-4301 through §15.2 – 4314 provides a means for a mutual undertaking by landowners and localities to protect and enhance agricultural and forestall land as a viable segment of the Commonwealth's economy and as an economic and environmental resource of major importance. DOF is responsible for providing review of proposed property sites to the local government.

4.210 & 4.3B Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

Federal law Title IV of Public Law 92-419 provides for state forestry organizations to organize, train and equip local forest fire work forces.

Federal law 40 U.S.C. 483, 16 U.S.C. 2101 assigns responsibility to state forestry organizations to provide Federal Excess Personal Property to Fire Departments.

**Customers**

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
	Federal Land Management Agencies	4	4
	Fire Departments	712	765
	Forest Industry & Associated Businesses	6,500	15,000
	General Public	200,000	7,000,000
	Local Governments	100	100
	Loggers	1,200	3,000
	Other State Agencies	12	12
	Private landowners	6,000	300,000

*Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base*

[Nothing entered]

**Partners**

Partner	Description
Local governments	Planning commissions interested in maintaining forest resources as a viable component of the local government planning process and needing accurate and timely forest resource information.
Public School system	DOF makes presentations to young students about the importance of the forest and its protection. Schools provide time for DOF staff to attend

	the schools for the program presentations.
US Forest Service	Cooperative agreements and consolidated grants for fire, forest health monitoring, Chesapeake Bay and other watersheds, and forest management.
Voluntary Fire Departments	Voluntary fire departments assist DOF with suppression of forest fires. DOF provides training, equipment and grant funds to assist fire departments.

### Products and Services

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

Many factors impact the largest service area for DOF. This service area has the greatest number of DOF employees engaged in its success. Employees properly trained and motivated to the delivery of the products and services are essential to its success. Resignations and retirements can impact products and services.

Forest land lost to other non-forest uses also continues at a rapid pace (approximately 22,000 acres per year). This trend could result in a decrease for forestry services.

Funding for cost-share programs is an important factor which impacts the outcomes of this service area. Private landowners count on cost-share reimbursement for forestry practices. Funding for the cost-share programs should be consistent with the level of need and inflation adjusted to advance products and services in this service area.

Training employees to communicate appropriate forest resource assessment and recommendations in an effective and efficient manner, which conveys the importance of forest resources and their value to Virginia, can impact products and services.

Partners and cooperating organizations interest and capabilities to assist DOF with the message of the value and benefits of the forest resources can impact products and services.

- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

DOF expects to see increases for its services in all aspects of this service area. More forest land is being sold by forest products companies to private individuals. This means more forest landowners and smaller parcels of land. DOF anticipates more requests for Forest Stewardship plans.

As logging continues, DOF anticipates more logging harvest inspections and assists with the water quality laws and procedures.

DOF expects increasing interest in riparian buffer plantings and applications for riparian buffer tax credit as interest in water quality grows.

The agency expects more conservation easements for working forests through the Forest Legacy program and from interested landowners who select DOF as the responsible holder for conservation easements.

DOF expects increased interest and demands for non-native species control or eradication.

DOF expects increased demand for more native species tree establishment.

DOF expects strong increased demand for timely forest resource information for planning and land-use decision making.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- Provide specialized forest firefighting equipment, such as bulldozers equipped for forest conditions and the trucks capable of transporting the bulldozers and other equipment.
- Forest landowners request and receive inspections, information and recommendations on forestry management for their property. DOF foresters and technicians are available to provide these inspections, reports and assistance to the more than 300,000 private forest landowners in Virginia.
- Forest landowners request federal and state cost-share assistance for forestry practices on their property. DOF foresters and technicians provide the required inspections and approval of the landowner practices before the final cost-share award is made to the landowner. DOF is often involved in the oversight and coordination of the project to ensure the practice is implemented according to the approved plan. DOF staff makes the final inspection of the completed practice and approves the cost-share payment or assist landowners to correct deficiencies.

- DOF coordinates regional tree planting contract and makes available forest seedlings for sale to forest landowners. This service ensures the forest landowner receives tree planting service from reputable vendors at the lowest price. DOF supplies the tree seedlings from its nurseries ensuring the highest quality, genetically superior seedling available for Virginia sites.
- DOF foresters and technicians inspect all harvest operations to ensure consistent enforcement of the Virginia Seed Tree Law. This law applies to certain species of pine and hardwood trees and was created to ensure these valuable Virginia species are maintained in Virginia forests into the future.
- DOF Spatial Center can produce high-quality GIS products showing current land conditions and species composition. Local government planners and administrators can use these products to make informed decisions about the county forest land base and its contribution. Employees of the DOF and other agencies use the GIS information to create higher quality maps and photographs of forest landowner customer tracts when making recommendations for forestry practices in reports and cost-share assistance.
- The Forest Inventory Assessment team collects forest resource information from 20% of the forest inventory plots across Virginia each year. This rate of information collection enables DOF to complete an assessment every five years. The information includes estimated tree volume, species composition, age distribution and size of Virginia's forest land base. The improved technology in satellite imagery allows DOF to document land pattern trends and changes in "real time" for policy and decision makers.
- Using the latest GIS tools and GPS units, DOF employees make sophisticated maps for their reports and add the latest layers of information available on the tract.
- DOF provides comprehensive insect and disease investigation and monitoring across Virginia. DOF is mandated to report infestations and recommend prevention or control measures to protect valuable species of forest trees. In the past, DOF has monitored species, such as gypsy moth, pine bark beetle, oak wilt, chestnut blight and many other insects and diseases.
- DOF conducts applied forest research to provide the best recommendations for forest practices in Virginia. The results are used by DOF staff in their recommendations to landowners, forest industry and the general public to improve their forest land.
- Offer specialized training to firefighters across the Commonwealth to maintain firefighters' knowledge and skills at the highest level and to ensure that firefighters operate safely to protect themselves and other people.
- Provide experienced all-risk incident management teams for the Commonwealth to provide assistance to Virginia Department of Emergency Management when disasters or emergencies occur.
- Prevention information/advertisement campaigns through radio, television, newspaper and multi-lingual media sources to make the public aware of forest fire open air fire law, dangerous forest conditions and safe use of the forest.
- DOF provides cost-share assistance to private forest landowners for management practices to reduce the risks of southern pine beetle infestation including pre-commercial thinning and restoration of longleaf on acceptable sites.
- Increase the establishment of riparian forest buffer plantings in the Commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay and southern river watersheds.
- Provide woodland home community wildfire hazard assessment and mitigation recommendations.
- Provide oversight of Virginia Dry Hydrant program, which installs 65 dry hydrants annually for local/community fire suppression needs.
- Acquire and provide federal excess personal property for loan to fire departments across the Commonwealth to increase suppression capabilities.
- Provide trained forest engineers with specialized knowledge of forest hydrology, watersheds, civil engineering and best management practices.
- Offer prescribed burning training and certification to burning managers.
- Participation in the development of ecosystem service markets.
- Provide incentives to conserve forest land and maintain working forests.

## Finance

- *Financial Overview*

Forestry Conservation, Wildfire and Watershed Services receives funding from General Fund Appropriations (77%), Special revenue funds (15%), and Federal grants (8%). The Special revenues in this service area are primarily from aerial release in which forestry incurs an offsetting expenditure for the practice. The majority of the funding in this

service area is needed to fund salaries, which continue to increase; thus reducing our discretionary spending. The reference to percentage of funding refers only to the base budget and not the changes to the base budget.

● *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2009	FY 2010
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund				
Base Budget	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	-\$2,292,692	\$1,966,370				
Service Area Total	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268				
Base Budget	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	-\$2,292,692	\$1,966,370				
Service Area Total	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268				
Base Budget	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898				
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	-\$2,292,692	\$1,966,370				
Service Area Total	\$17,459,186	\$4,712,898	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268				

**Human Resources**

● *Human Resources Overview*

DOF had 269 employees at the end of Fiscal Year 2009. Of these employees, 230 are attached to this service area. That is 85.5 percent of the agency.

The average years of service for employees in this service area is 14.4 as of June 30, 2009. This is almost identical to the agency's overall average years of service of 14.5 years as of June 30, 2009.

The average age of employees in this service area as of June 30, 2009 is 43.4. This is lower than the agency's overall average age of 46 years as of June 30, 2009.

Of the agency's 269 employees, 15, 5.6 percent, are Veterans as of June 30, 2009. There are 11 Veterans in this service area.

DOF employees are predominately male. As of June 30, 2009, a total of 219 employees, 81.4 percent, are male and a total of 50, 18.6 percent, are female. In this service area, 187 employees, 81.3 percent, are male and 43 employees, 18.7 percent, are female as of June 30, 2009.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the agency lost 16 employees which equates to a turnover rate of 5.9 percent. Fourteen of the employees who left were from this service area. Of those employees, 8 retired and the remaining 6 left for higher paying positions.

In 2009, 37, 13.8 percent, of DOF employees are eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, 68 of the agency's employees, 25.3 percent, will be eligible for full retirement. Within this service area, 32 employees, 13.9 percent, are currently eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, a total of 57 employees, 24.8 percent, in this service area will be eligible for retirement.

● *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2008
Total Authorized Position level	274

Vacant Positions	27	
<b>Current Employment Level</b>	<b>247.0</b>	
Non-Classified (Filled)	1	<i>breakout of Current Employment Level</i>
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	246	
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0	
Faculty (Filled)	0	
Wage	170	
Contract Employees	1	
<b>Total Human Resource Level</b>	<b>418.0</b>	= <i>Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees</i>

- *Factors Impacting HR*

As of June 30, 2007, the agency was actively recruiting to fill 19 of our vacant positions. However, the agency still has and addition 5 authorized positions which are vacant. In addition, there are currently 16 vacant positions in the Tree Restoration & Improvement, Nurseries & State-Owned Forest Lands (50104) service area which need to be transferred to this service area. The positions are predominately county Forest Technicians and Foresters. However, funding is not currently available to fill these vacancies. This has an impact on the workload for our current county staff. The increased workload does lead to job satisfaction challenges and morale issues. Restoring the agency's budget would allow us to fill our authorized positions.

Also, as stated earlier, DOF's county Forest Technicians and Foresters are the primary responders for wildfires and disaster relief. Having a large number of vacancies in these positions leaves gaps in coverage and, ultimately, leads to slower response time to emergencies. The slower response time in turn could lead to more acres burned by wildfires and, due to the large urban interface in the state, more homes lost, damaged, or seriously threatened. Also, state citizens could be left without assistance in disaster situations. Restoring the agency's budget would allow us to fill the majority of our county Forest Technician and Forester positions. This in turn would lead to a greater amount of safety for state citizens and a higher level of protection for the state's forests.

State employees have received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 to date. In addition, in Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This has assisted with salary compression issues and enabled us to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. However, the state still has not funded its pay-for-performance system. In addition, even with the increases, the state still lags the market for many salaries. This has contributed to both turnover and recruiting challenges. In particular, the agency has a difficult time attracting qualified, experienced candidates for open Forest Technician and Forester positions. The agency has also had difficulty filling its technical positions. In order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time to fill, the agency has recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Forest Technician and Forester positions. In order to implement this change, the agency will need additional funding.

A low number of DOF employees are interested in promotional opportunities. Some employees either do not want to move geographically to accept a promotion or do not want supervisory and/or higher level responsibility. In addition, salary compression issues also make promotions less attractive. Many employees believe that the difference in salary for a supervisory or management position is not adequate. This has made recruiting for supervisory and management positions in the agency more difficult and challenging.

In particular, the agency has severe compression of its upper management positions in relation to middle level management positions. This has led to making upper level positions less attractive for internal applicants. It also causes challenges with recruiting qualified external applicants. To correct this, the agency has recommended reclassification of and salary upgrades to upper management positions. This in turn will provide more salary flexibility at lower levels. In order to implement these changes, the agency will need additional funding.

The agency's training coordinator was assigned the additional task of serving as the agency's safety officer. The agency has traditionally focused its occupational health and safety program primarily on wildland fire fighting. In the past 2 years, the program has been expanded and we are currently in the process of ensuring full compliances with all Federal and state laws and policies related to workplace safety. However, having one staff member responsible for both agency-wide training and safety is not efficient or effective. The agency has a need for a qualified safety professional to fully implement the program.

Approximately 17 years ago, legislation was approved to mandate water quality standards at logging sites. DOF was

given oversight of enforcing this law; however, funding was not included with the mandate. This has necessitated DOF to enforce the law at the cost of providing forest management, forest health, etc. service to citizens. In order to effectively enforce the water quality law and meet the agency's strategic objectives, 15 Water Quality Specialist positions were requested as part of the Fiscal Year 2007 budget decision packages. Having these positions would free current county staff to provide services to citizens, which are outlined in DOF's strategic plan. The agency was given 8 Water Quality Specialist positions instead of the 15 requested. Therefore, the agency will continue to advocate for additional positions in the future. In addition, as Technician and Forester positions become open, we will review the positions to determine if they should be reclassified to Water Quality Specialist positions.

DOF completed a final report on the 2005 Senate Joint Resolution 75 regarding incentives for landowners to preserve their forest property. The report included the recommendation to hire 5 Forest Conservation Specialists for major population areas in Virginia. These are Northern Virginia, Norfolk/Hampton Roads, Richmond, Charlottesville, and Roanoke. These Foresters would be charged with assisting local governments, agencies, and landowners to decrease the fragmentation of forested land and increase the amount of forested areas in urban areas. The agency has reclassified 3 existing positions to Forest Conservation Specialists for Norfolk/Hampton Roads, Richmond, and Charlottesville areas. Additional funding is needed to fill the 2 remaining positions.

During budget cuts in the mid-1990's, DOF lost its Silviculture specialist position. This individual provided valuable specialized input and information to county staff in the areas of Silviculture and hardwood tree management. This position needs to be reinstated in order for DOF to fully meet its strategic objectives and effectively serve the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The state legislature implemented a timber theft law in Fiscal Year 2005. Right now, enforcement of this law is the responsibility of the police and sheriff departments throughout the state. We anticipate in the future, however, that enforcement will shift to DOF. This would require both additional staff and training.

In 1988, the agency implemented a bloodhound program to assist with tracking arson suspects for wild fires. The program was extremely beneficial and we had a high of 3 bloodhounds tracking teams in the agency. The teams consist of a bloodhound and his/her handler. The dog lives with its handler. The agency pays for the dog's food and medical bills; and the handler is responsible for caring for the dog. In 2004, 1 of the handlers retired and another resigned. The handler who retired owned his dog and the other handler's dog was at retirement age – we had been looking into replacing him. This meant we lost both the handlers and the dogs. The agency was left with 1 bloodhound tracking team. The remaining team has been successful in limiting arson fires in their area. The agency has recently acquired 1 additional bloodhound. However, DOF would benefit from having additional teams in other areas of the state.

In 2007, 36, or 12.81 percent, of our employees are eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, 67 of our employees, or 23.84 percent, will be eligible for full retirement. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in needs, especially in field positions. As stated above, the agency is experiencing a high rate of turnover of employees with 5 years or less of service. In order to effectively fill the upcoming vacancies due to retirement, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees.

One other area of concern is the on-call status of our primary responders for wildfires and natural disasters. These employees are on-call during the Spring and Fall seasons, which are a total of approximately 20 weeks each year. Currently, staff members are not given any additional compensation for being on-call. Payment for on-call time is not required under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and the non-payment is supported by recent Federal circuit court decisions. This has not been a significant issue with our long-serving staff. However, newer employees are questioning this practice and pushing for on-call compensation. We anticipate this to become a greater issue in the future. However, in order for us to address the issue, the DOF budget will have to be increased. Our budget is currently inadequate to fill all approved vacancies. Attempting to provide on-call compensation within our current budget is impractical and not sustainable.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

DOF is instituting a competency based career development program which offers opportunities for lateral advancement. The program was implemented in part to help address some of the salary issues. Each position within the agency will have a career path consisting of 4 levels – Probationary, Level I, Level II, and Level III. Each level of the career path has a task book which outlines the required competencies the employee must demonstrate. All new employees will be required to complete both the Probationary Level and Level I of their career paths. Promotions, with salary increases or cash bonuses, are available for employees who have completed their task books for Level I, Level II, and Level III of their career paths. Promotion decisions are based in part on employee performance. The first phases of this program have been implemented. However, the agency is behind schedule with getting it fully implemented agency-wide. Originally, we planned to have the program fully implemented by October 1, 2006. However, we are now looking at full implementation taking place by October 1, 2009. As stated above, the agency's training coordinator was

given the additional responsibility of being the agency's safety officer. This is the major reason for the delay in fully implementing the career development program. Staff time, unfortunately, is no longer available to fully devote a person to the career development program.

The agency has fully implemented its recognition and training programs. Both of these programs have become integrated into the agency's culture. Employees accept and utilize both programs. We continue to ensure consistency particularly in the instant recognition program agency-wide.

The agency has implemented an annual Forest Management Academy. The academy is geared predominately towards Foresters and Technicians, but it is open to all agency staff. It provides specialized training in forest management, forest health, water quality, communications, computer skills, and other areas. It enables the agency to offer its employees high-quality training in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

In addition, the agency is implementing an all-agency meeting/training event every 3 years. The training offered during this event is geared towards soft skills such as customer service, public speaking, writing, interviewing, etc. It also will be an efficient and cost-effective method to reach all-staff. It has the added benefit of enabling staff from various parts of the state to meet each other and discuss issues in their individual areas. This provides more exchange of ideas throughout the state and encourages team work.

DOF has expanded its internship program. In the Summer of 2007, we hired a total of 8 Summer interns which is up from the 4 hired in the Summer of 2004. We had one minority intern. The agency visited several universities that traditionally have a high number of minorities in order to actively recruit for internship applicants. DOF faced major competition from Federal forestry agencies for minority intern applicants. We will continue our diversity recruiting efforts for future Summer internships. Having a higher level of diversity among our interns should lead to a more diverse pool of applicants for regular positions.

#### Service Area Objectives

- We will reduce the forest land burned by wildfires.

##### Objective Description

Reduce the number of human caused forest fires. Provide ample incentives and information available to the public to wisely manage fire use and to eliminate its use when conditions are favorable for the spread of forest fires. Use prevention messages and tools effectively to educate the public about dangers of fire usage.

##### Objective Strategies

- Complete 12 new Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) and carry out 12 wildfire hazard mitigation projects in high wildfire risk communities.
- Develop a regional response plan for in-state emergency and compact assignment incorporating both experienced and newer personnel. This plan will be followed and coordinated by the Regions.

##### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

##### Objective Measures

- Percentage of human caused fires.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: Fire data is collected at the time of fire occurrence and can be retrieved quarterly.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Ten year average 1998 -2007 was 95.7%.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 94.7% by July 1, 2010

Data Source and Calculation: DOF information system (IMS) will provide the data. The ten year average forest fire history of human caused forest fires will be calculated for the baseline. Each year the oldest year of data will be dropped and the most recent year added and a new ten year average will be calculated and compared to the previous ten year average.

- We will improve water quality by increasing compliance with best management practices (BMPs) on forest harvest sites.

#### Objective Description

Improve water quality by increasing compliance with best management practices on forest harvest sites.

#### Objective Strategies

- Engage water quality specialists to provide more consistency to regional staff for implementation and enforcement of the water quality law.
- Develop comprehensive information system support to the water quality law enforcement program that allows for harvest operation tracking from point of notification to inspections close-out.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of harvest sites with sediment not reaching streams.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: 240 field sites were audited to calculate the result

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 93% of audited sites showing 0% potential for sedimentation

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 97% by June 30, 2010

Data Source and Calculation: The agency uses a team of professional forestry staff to annually evaluate tract information following tree harvests. Samples of total annual logging harvests are selected for the auditing team to measure. DOF applies the sample data to overall performance in Virginia. The annual reportable result is the linear trend data at the date of audit, based on all previous data inclusion since 1993. The audit sample size is 60 harvested tracts.

- We will increase the number of forest management projects implemented on private land.

#### Objective Description

Increase the amount of forestry management and conservation work implemented on private forest land to provide healthy forests in the future. Forestry practices include tree planting, thinnings, forest stand management, forest stand establishment, wildlife habitat practices, community and urban tree planting, erosion and water quality control, cultural practices and protection to improve the health, vigor, and performance of trees, and provide economic and environmental benefits.

#### Objective Strategies

- Develop educational materials and programs and use these to raise landowner awareness of the need for and methods available for forestland conversion. Include information on DOF easement program.
- Identify areas of low forest production and employ practices to increase the productivity.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of forestry management practices implemented on private land.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: We will capture data quarterly from the DOF IMS/IFRIS reports.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline data for quarterly acres will be determined after 7/1/2008.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 2500 (625 acres/quarter average) annual conservation projects by July 1, 2010.

Data Source and Calculation: A forestry management and/or conservation project is a project implemented on private land as a result of a recommendation made for that land. Qualified projects include forest stand management, forest stand establishment (including natural stand establishment), wildlife habitat practices, community & urban tree planting, erosion & water quality control.

- Increase the amount of forest land conserved, protected and or established in Virginia watersheds.

#### Objective Description

Protect water quality through the establishment of riparian buffers, implementation of erosion and water control measures, afforestation and protection measures, urban tree canopy establishment projects, urban stormwater improvements using trees and forests, and maintaining riparian forest buffers along streamside management zones.

#### Objective Strategies

- Work collaboratively with partners, agencies and groups to establish new buffers as outlined in the Riparian Forest Buffer Implementation Plan.
- Provide educational opportunities for landowners through meetings, published literature, and articles.
- DOF Foresters will work with local SWCDs to increase the number of riparian plantings.
- Utilize the water quality improvement act funding to increase accomplishments of buffers in rural and urban areas.
- Reinspect 2006 riparian forest buffer plantings and follow up with landowner contact and recommendations.
- Report the miles of conserved riparian areas from conservation partners and other agencies.
- Review Bay Directive goals in September and incorporate strategies in regional watershed and land conservation plans.
- Execute the logger BMP program and regional grant program.
- Prepare professional management plans for landowners.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of acres of forest land conserved, established and/or protected in Virginia watersheds.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline will be established after 7/1/2008

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Acres forest land conserved, protected and/or established in Virginia watersheds

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IFRIS information system and reports from the Department of Conservation & Recreation.

- Increase the number of acres of forest land, with focus on high-conservation value forests, under protection from conversion.

#### Objective Description

Use voluntary conservation measures such as donated conservation easements, state acquisition, or other long-term use restrictions to protect high conservation value forests from being converted to development. These forests will be identified using GIS analysis to rank all forest lands in the state based on their contribution to water quality protection providing terrestrial and aquatic habitat, and forest productivity as well as their relative threat from conversion.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Proportion of protected properties that contain high conservation value forests.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline data for previous year will be determined after 10/1/2009.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 75% of protected properties each year will contain forests of high conservation value.

Data Source and Calculation: Protected properties will include DOF-held easements, DOF acquisitions, and properties protected through easement or acquisition by others utilizing funding obtained by DOF. Forests of high conservation value will be those forests that rank four or five in the DOF GIS analysis.

- We will be prepared to act in the interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth and its infrastructure during emergency situations by actively planning and training both as an agency and as individuals.

#### Objective Description

This goal ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, policies and procedures for Commonwealth preparedness, as well as guidelines promulgated by the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet, the Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group, the Department of Planning and Budget and the Council on Virginia's Future.

#### Objective Strategies

- We will stay in continuous communication with the Office of the Commonwealth Preparedness and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management via our Emergency Coordination Officer.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Assessment Score

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 2007 COOP Assessment Results (0% out of 100).

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Increase the average by 5% each year.

Data Source and Calculation: The COOP Assessment Review is a 24 component assessment tool that helps measure the viability of a COOP plan.

- Increase the amount of forest management assistance on private lands in the Commonwealth.

#### Objective Description

Forest land is a critical solution to the economy of rural Virginia and environmental benefits for the Commonwealth. The majority of the forest land in Virginia is owned by private landowners (77%). DOF will strive to bring forest resource management planning to all landowners to ensure maximum benefits are achieved.

#### Objective Strategies

- Develop regional plans of action for forest resource management implementation.
- Prepare professional management plans for landowners.
- Develop local needs characterization process using GIS information.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of acres of all forest management plan types achieved on private and public forest land.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - quarterly baseline data will be established after 7/1/2009.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 130,000 acres/year by July 1, 2010 (32,500 acres/quarter average).

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IMS and IFRIS reports. Data will include stewardship plans, forest stand plans, cost share plans, Alternate Management Plans, community forest management plans, Tree Farm plans, and mitigation plans.

- Provide research information on forest resources in Virginia to all stakeholders.

#### Objective Description

Provide practical information on forest resources in Virginia to all stakeholders.

#### Objective Strategies

- Develop and implement reserach projects that apply to a wide landowner base, address practical forest management problems, and achieve appropriate data results in time to address emerging issues and problems.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of research reports issued annually.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: DOF counts the number of reports issued each year.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: DOF research has averaged 2.7 reports per year since 1955.

Measure Target Value:  Date:  Measure Target Description: 6 research reports published per year.

Data Source and Calculation: Formal published reports of new or updated results or recommendations from individual studies originating from the DOF Forest Resource Information Division.

- Provide an inventory of forest natural resources in Virginia on a continual basis.

#### Objective Description

DOF will provide a continual assessment inventory of the forest resources in Virginia. Forest inventory information is essential to the economic and environmental interests in Virginia. Current information on the forest natural resources is vital to understand changes and prepare strategies for their health and continuation.

#### Objective Strategies

- Organize and equip the FIA inventory team to collect and enter the forest data for each panel timely for USFS analysis.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of forest inventory count panels measured annually.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 1 panel per year (20% of the Commonwealth forest land cover)

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 1 panel per year

Data Source and Calculation: Trained foresters annually measure and record specific tree growth data and deliver information to U. S. Forest Service Southern Research Station for independent quality assessment and quality control audits. DOF strives to complete 20% of the Commonwealth forest land area annually (one panel).

- Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.

#### Objective Description

Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of the Governor's Management Scorecard categories DOF meets expectations.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: We capture the management scorecard information quarterly.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description:

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description:

Data Source and Calculation: The number of cases DOF is scored "meets expectation" divided by six.

- Increase awareness of ecosystem services provided by forest land to foster market development and incorporation into land-use planning.

#### Objective Description

The agency will lead the effort to increase awareness of ecosystem services provided by forestland and to participate in developing market-based conservation initiatives. Emerging markets for ecosystem services such as water quality and carbon sequestration offer promise in providing financial opportunities for forest landowners. In addition to markets, consideration of these environmental services in county planning, land conversion activities, and voluntary mitigation is critical.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of efforts made to promote market opportunities for landowners. This will include the number committees served on, conferences, presentations, roundtables, etc. where promotion of ecosystem service initiatives presents itself.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from the IFRIS information system.

- Promote diversification of forest markets and a healthy forest industry to keep forest land in forests.

#### Objective Description

Forest industry and related businesses are critical to the economy of Virginia and maintaining healthy sustainable forests. Private landowners own the majority of forestland in Virginia. Benefits derived from forests impact the amount of land that will be forested. DOF will promote and support the development of diverse forest markets and a prosperous forest industry.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of presentations/workshops/events promoting forest industry and markets.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - annual baseline data will be established after 7/1/2009.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description:

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IMS and IFRIS reports.

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## Service Area Strategic Plan

## Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:32 pm

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

## Service Area 3 of 4

**Tree Restoration and Improvement, Nurseries & State-Owned Forest Lands (411 501 04)****Description**

This service area consists of DOF tree seedling production nurseries, tree improvement center, State Forests, and State Lands forest management program.

DOF produces tree seedlings in its own nurseries to provide a source of forest trees to plant future forest crops. DOF operates two nurseries producing approximately 24 million loblolly pine seedlings, other pine species, and a variety of hardwood seedlings for reforestation in Virginia. These seedlings are purchased primarily by the private forest landowner, but forest industry also purchases DOF seedlings for their needs. The seedlings are selected for Virginia's climate and sites for maximum growth. Species, such as loblolly pine, are a result of genetic improvement work and provide the seed source of current loblolly plantings. Additionally, DOF has made genetic gains in white and shortleaf pine. The nurseries support their operations through the generation of revenues from seedling sales. No tax-supported general revenues support the nursery program. The sale of forest tree seedlings must support the operational and capital expenses for the nursery program.

The tree improvement center places its emphasis on genetic improvement of forest nursery seedlings. By locating and improving the better seed sources, DOF continues to provide superior seedlings from the nurseries for private forest landowner reforestation needs. The improvement center also manages seed orchards, a collection of the better tree seed sources, for loblolly, white pine, shortleaf and longleaf pine nursery production. The conservative estimated gain in wood volume and value to the forest landowner is 20% above the best of trees not selected for genetic growth. This means many advantages to the landowner who receives better quality trees, which grow more wood in a faster time period. The advances in genetic tree improvement will greatly help meet the challenges of the smaller Virginia land base available to grow forest crops on economic rotations and tract sizes. DOF has established 150 acres of third generation loblolly pine seed orchards. It will take at least 10 years before all 150 acres of seed orchard will produce seed for nursery production. DOF is establishing improved generation white and shortleaf seed orchards and a native Virginia longleaf pine seed orchard. In addition, the agency is establishing a resistant American Chestnut seed production area on the Matthews State Forest. This will complement the ongoing breeding work at Lesesne State Forest.

DOF manages 19 State Forests within the Commonwealth. The purpose of the State Forest system is to provide a working forest based on the core principles of a well-managed forest. DOF's Virginia State Forest System uses the following six core principles of a well-managed forest:

1. Contributes to the conservation of biological diversity of the forest and the landscape in which it resides.
2. Maintains or improves the productive capacity of the Forest.
3. Maintains the health and vigor of the forest and its landscape/watershed.
4. Contributes to carbon cycles by implementing management that enhances carbon budgets and cycles.
5. Considers socio-economic benefits.
6. Protects soil productivity and water quality.

The State Forest consists of approximately 55,000 acres of land owned and managed by the DOF. State forests are used by DOF to grow trees in a productive manner and a variety of forest products, recreational opportunities, water quality protection, wildlife habitat, non-forest products, and educational opportunities for landowners and students. DOF manages all state forest lands and facilities on the state forests from revenues generated primarily from forest timber products and permit revenues. These revenues pay salaries, purchase equipment, pay for maintenance and repairs, and all operating expenses. The public uses the State Forests for hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, bird watching, and general outdoor passive uses. The State Forest system is a completely self-generating, non-general funded operation. All forest management activities are carried out only after a complete resource inventory and scientific recommendations have been conducted. While DOF must secure all funding for operations from timber sales, the agency must also open the State Forests to the public who use the forests for many reasons. This creates a delicate balancing act between the needs of the forests and people. The public, academia, forest industry, landowners and others benefit from the State Forest system. These include forest research, demonstration models, stream and riparian demonstration, wildlife research and habitat development, and natural areas. The Cumberland State Forest is the site of the State Forest headquarters.

The State Lands Program also falls into this service plan. DOF is required by the Code of Virginia to assist other state agencies, with the exception of the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, with the management of their forest lands. DOF staff assess the condition and quality of the State's forest resources on lands of other state agencies and recommend management practices that fit the agency needs and benefit the forest. Expenses incurred in the State Lands Program are funded via timber sales from the state agency land.

**Background Information** | **Mission Alignment and Authority**

- Describe how this service supports the agency mission

This service area directly supports the agency mission of providing a sustained forest resource for Virginians. The nursery and tree improvement program provide better quality seedlings in the quantities estimated as needed annually by the private forest landowners, industry and organizations for artificial forest regeneration.

The State Forests serve as role models for landowners, students of forestry, and other organizations for the proper way to manage a forest. The self-supporting state forests provide opportunity to demonstrate the values of Virginia's forests. Most of these forests were destroyed by clearing and abandoned farming operations in late 1800s and early 1900s. Now, the state forests attest to sustainable nature of managed forests. The State Forest system provides 52 miles of trails on the larger State Forest holdings devoted to recreational use by the public. Given current budgets, the State Forest could not increase the number of trails. The smaller size State Forest will need timber harvesting schedules developed and corresponding budgets developed for each based on the revenue potential through the timber sales. Several State Forests do not have the size or potential to support themselves and management will provide for these holdings through revenues from other State Forests.

DOF also practices sound management on other state agency forest land to help the agency meet its objectives and provide for healthy forests.

- Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service

Chapter 11, Article 2, Duties and Powers of the State Forester and General Provisions authorize the State Forester to supervise and direct all forest interests and all matters pertaining to forestry within the Commonwealth.

§ 10.1-1105 applies to additional duties of the State Forester, including nurseries and state forests among other duties.

§ 10.1-1107 authorizes the State Forester to purchase lands and accept gifts of land for forestry purposes suitable for state forests.

§ 10.1-1114. Establishment of nurseries; distribution of seeds and seedlings: The State Forester may establish and maintain a nursery or nurseries, for the propagation of forest tree seedlings, either upon one or more of the forest reservations of the Commonwealth, or upon such other land as he may and which he is empowered to acquire for that purpose. Seedlings from this nursery may be furnished to the Commonwealth without expense for use upon its state forests or other public grounds or parks. Seeds and seedlings may also be distributed to landowners and citizens of the Commonwealth pursuant to Department regulations.

§ 10.1-1115. Sale of trees: For the purpose of maintaining in perpetuity the production of forest products on state forests, the State Forester may designate and appraise the trees, which should be cut under the principles of scientific forest management, and may sell these trees for not less than the appraised value. When the appraised value of the trees to be sold is more than \$50,000, the State Forester, before making such sale, shall receive bids therefore, after notice by publication once a week for two weeks in two newspapers of general circulation. The State Forester shall have the right to reject any and all bids and to readvertise for bids. The proceeds arising from the sale of the timber and trees so sold, except as provided in subsection E of § 10.1-1107, shall be paid into the state treasury as provided in § 10.1-1116, and shall be held in the Reforestation Operations Fund for the improvement or protection of state forests or for the purchase of additional lands.

§ 10.1-1116. Reforestation Operations Fund: All money obtained from the state forests, except as provided in subsection E of § 10.1-1107, shall be paid into the state treasury, to the credit of the Reforestation Operations Fund. The moneys in such fund are to be utilized for state forest protection, management, replacement, and extension, under the direction of the State Forester.

Chapter 11, Article 3, § 10.1-1120 through 10.1-1123 establishes the Forest Management of State - Owned Lands Fund authorizes the State Forester to manage state-owned lands, and in cooperation with the Division of Engineering & Buildings develop a forest management plan for state-owned lands with assistance of affected state agencies.

**Customers**

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
	Forest Industry	3	5
	General Public	4,000	300,000

Local governments	100	100
Other State Agencies	20	20
Private forest landowners	4,000	300,000

#### *Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base*

More private landowners own smaller-sized forest land tracts. Nurseries could experience some decrease in pine production and some increases in hardwood seedling demand. Exact demands on the pine and hardwood species will depend on customer needs, economic markets, and land-use incentives/regulations.

DOF will see an increase in riparian buffer plantings as the program is encouraged and marketed over the next two years. In addition, grant funding increases could cause greater interest for landowners to plant their riparian areas.

Specialty forest product markets could emerge from DOF promotion and marketing by the forest products industry. Landowners could benefit from the marketing campaign and prompt more interest in reforestation.

State Forest use is expected to increase in a controlled but significant manner over the next two years. DOF will develop individual State Forest plans to identify potential new uses for the public, while maintaining traditional uses. A campaign to market the new and traditional uses will take place in the next two years and the public is expected to respond.

The State Lands Program is expected to remain the same over the next two years. No significant increases are projected to occur in the State Lands Program.

#### **Partners**

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Description</b>
American Chestnut Foundation	DOF cooperates with the American Chestnut Foundation in the breeding and testing work to reestablish a resistant American Chestnut into the forest profile.
Department of Game & Inland Fisheries	DGIF and DOF participate in research and demonstration areas on the state forests for the benefit of researchers and landowners.
Forest Industry	DOF cooperates with Mead Westvaco on tree improvement research.
Local Government	DOF pays the local government up to 25% of the timber sale to the county in which a timber sale is conducted on the state forest.
North Carolina State University	DOF participates in the tree improvement cooperative work lead by N. C. State University.
Virginia Tech	DOF works with Virginia Tech in the nursery and State Forest programs to benefit research, students and landowners.

#### **Products and Services**

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

Demand for nursery forest seedlings impact the nursery program. Demand is usually correlated with timber harvests, particularly pine, and special tree-planting incentive programs, such as the riparian buffer planting efforts in the Chesapeake Bay watershed area.

People and contractors to carry out the work in the nursery is an important factor impacting products. One nursery operation was closed and two remaining nurseries now carry the entire seedling production for Virginia.

The State Forests are impacted by weather, severe storms, insects, diseases, markets and recreational demands by the public. Another factor impacting the State Forest is the amount of allowable acreage or tree volume the State Forest is permitted to remove annually to meet the State Forest Plan and its budget.

- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

DOF anticipates increased requests for tree species better adapted to riparian planting and special need sites. The agency must locate appropriate seed sources and develop seeding and growing techniques suitable for each type of tree seedling. In some cases, the harvest and shipping procedures must also be adjusted to accommodate these new trees.

The agency expects the public will use the State Forest more often and in larger numbers. DOF will have to create plans that allow the continuation of forestry operations and greater use of the State Forests. Large size State Forests will serve as the primary source of timber harvests and income production. Hiking trails and similar recreational access will be maintained in the larger forests.

DOF expects to increase the number of state-owned plans.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- Forest tree seedlings are produced in the nurseries and sold to forest landowners, forest industry and the general public. Seedlings are used in reforestation, conservation, soil erosion, wildlife habitat and riparian buffer plantings. All seedlings are sold for the price of production. Many seedlings are the result of genetic improvement work. All seedlings are from Virginia or appropriate seed sources to Virginia soils and growing conditions.
- State Forest must pay for its operations through the sale of timber, forest products and user fees. The largest component of the State Forest budget is made up from timber sales conducted on the State Forest. Timber is offered by competitive sealed bidding to the highest bidder and sold periodically from stands of mature trees or ready for thinning. These products help the local economy and provide some revenue to the local governments, too.
- DOF provides forest management plans and technical assistance to other state agencies to help them manage their forest land in accordance with the Code of Virginia. DOF must work in cooperation with the Division of Engineering & Buildings to accomplish plans and conduct timber sales.
- DOF allows many forest recreation uses of the State Forests, such as hunting, trapping, fishing, mountain bike riding, hiking, horseback riding and bird watching. These uses are available on an annual basis. Permits are available to hunters, trappers, fishermen, mountain bikers and horseback riders for a fee.
- Research and academic pursuits are benefits of the State Forest and nurseries. DOF allows research by higher education and participates in research studies with many groups. The information is shared with other researchers, academic institutions, industry and the public.

**Finance**

- *Financial Overview*

Funds received for the nurseries are derived through the sales of forest tree seedlings produced and sold by the nurseries to private forest landowners and forest industry. All operating expenses and capital expenses must be covered by the seedling sales. No General tax funds are provided for the operation of the nursery.

Funds to operate the State Forests must be derived from the sale of timber and forest products. The majority of the funding is made up from the sale of timber. The user fees currently available to the State Forest system are hunting, trapping, fishing, mountain bike and horseback riding, which amounts to approximately \$75,000 annually. All funds are used to cover operating and capital expenses. In all cases of timber sales, DOF gives 25% of the gross proceeds from the timber sales to the local government.

- *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2009	FY 2010
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund		
Base Budget	\$0	\$3,758,538	\$0	\$3,758,538		
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
<b>Service Area Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,758,538</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,758,538</b>		
Base Budget	\$0	\$3,758,538	\$0	\$3,758,538		
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
<b>Service Area Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,758,538</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3,758,538</b>		

**Human Resources**

- *Human Resources Overview*

DOF had 269 employees at the end of Fiscal Year 2009. Of these employees, 26 are attached to this service area. That is 9.7 percent of the agency.

The average years of service for employees in this service area is 19.6 as of June 30, 2009. The overall average years of service for DOF employees is 14.5 years as of June 30, 2009.

The median age of employees in this service area as of June 30, 2009 is 49. This is higher than the agency's overall median age of 46 years as of June 30, 2009.

Of the agency's 269 employees, 15, 5.6 percent, are Veterans as of June 30, 2009. There are 3 Veterans in this service area.

DOF employees are predominately male. As of June 30, 2009, a total of 219 employees, 81.4 percent, are male and a total of 50, 18.6 percent, are female. In this service area, 20 employees, 76.9 percent, are male and 6 employees, 23.1 percent, are female as of June 30, 2009.

In terms of race, 261, 97.0 percent, of our employees are white. The remaining 8 employees, 3.0 percent, are black. In this service area, 21 employees, 80.8 percent, are white and 5 employees, 19.2 percent, are black as of June 30, 2009.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the agency lost 16 employees which equates to a turnover rate of 5.9 percent. Two of the employees who left were from this service area. Both of those employees retired.

In 2009, 37, 13.8 percent, of DOF employees are eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, 68 of the agency's employees, 25.3 percent, will be eligible for full retirement. Within this service area, 2 employees, 7.8 percent, are currently eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, a total of 6 employees, 30.8 percent, in this service area will be eligible for retirement.

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2008
Total Authorized Position level	41
Vacant Positions	15
<b>Current Employment Level</b>	<b>26.0</b>
Non-Classified (Filled)	0
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	26
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0
Faculty (Filled)	0
Wage	10
Contract Employees	3
<b>Total Human Resource Level</b>	<b>39.0</b>

*breakout of Current Employment Level*

*= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees*

- *Factors Impacting HR*

The nurseries and state forests are required to be self-funded and not use any general funding. For the nurseries, the ability to fill positions is affected by the funds they generate. This can be a challenge in years when severe weather affects the crop.

Both our nurseries and state forests have long serving employees. Our state forests have a high number of people approaching retirement eligibility. Effectively filling positions as they become vacant due to retirements will be very important to the continued effective operation of the state forests.

The nurseries also have long serving employees. The manager of 1 nursery is currently eligible to retire and the overall manager for DOF nurseries is approaching retirement age. The agency needs to hire employees to work with these individuals and be ready to step into their positions when they become vacant due to retirements. The challenge with doing this succession planning is available funding for the positions.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

This service area has a large number of vacant positions. However, these positions are needed in this service as much as in the Forest Conservation, Wildfire & Watershed Services (50103) service area. Therefore, the agency has recommended transfer 16 of the vacant positions to that service area.

DOF is instituting a competency based career development program which offers opportunities for lateral advancement. The program was implemented in part to help address some of the salary issues. Each position within the agency will have a career path consisting of 4 levels – Probationary, Level I, Level II, and Level III. Each level of the career path has a task book which outlines the required competencies the employee must demonstrate. All new employees will be required to complete both the Probationary Level and Level I of their career paths. Promotions, with salary increases or cash bonuses, are available for employees who have completed their task books for Level I, Level II, and Level III of their career paths. Promotion decisions are based in part on employee performance. The first phases of this program have been implemented. However, the agency is behind schedule with getting it fully implemented agency-wide. Originally, we planned to have the program fully implemented by October 1, 2006. However, we are now looking at full implementation taking place by October 1, 2009. As stated above, the agency's training coordinator was given the additional responsibility of being the agency's safety officer. This is the major reason for the delay in fully implementing the career development program. Staff time, unfortunately, is no longer available to fully devote a person to the career development program.

The agency has fully implemented its recognition and training programs. Both of these programs have become integrated into the agency's culture. Employees accept and utilize both programs. We continue to ensure consistency particularly in the instant recognition program agency-wide.

The agency has implemented an annual Forest Management Academy. It provides specialized training in forest management, forest health, water quality, communications, computer skills, and other areas. It enables the agency to offer its employees high-quality training in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

In addition, the agency is implementing an all-agency meeting/training event every 3 years. The training offered during this event is geared towards soft skills such as customer service, public speaking, writing, interviewing, etc. It also will be an efficient and cost-effective method to reach all-staff. It has the added benefit of enabling staff from various parts of the state to meet each other and discuss issues in their individual areas. This provides more exchange of ideas throughout the state and encourages team work.

### Service Area Objectives

- Manage the nurseries to provide the best quality seedling types demanded by the customers.

#### Objective Description

Nurseries will be managed to provide the best quality seedling types demanded by the customers at the lowest cost.

#### Objective Strategies

- Obtain future seedling sale projections and obtain best seed to produce seedlings.
- Implement annual work plan to assure all seed are seeded and managed appropriately and timely.
- Nursery staff shall work closely with research, tree improvement, regions and others to collect, process and store seed.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of customers who rate the quality of DOF's seedlings as satisfactory

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: Landowner's surveys will be sent to customers annually.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: DOF has completed only one survey in 2007 which resulted in 97%.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 90% by June 30, 2012

Data Source and Calculation: Customer satisfaction survey will be sent to each seedling purchaser to determine whether they were satisfied with seedlings and service.

- Improve the efficiency of DOF seedling nursery production.

**Objective Description**

Efficiency in DOF seedling nursery production will be improved.

**Objective Strategies**

- Develop a state nursery business plan.
- Implement the state nursery business plan.
- Enhance the seedlings application, moving towards a complete nursery management information system.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Revenues generated by State nurseries will exceed expenses by 5%.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: The revenues are calculated at end of year and compared to budget.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: DOF achieved 2.3% in 2007.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 5% by June 30, 2012

Data Source and Calculation: Net revenues from nursery operations ending the fiscal year on June 30, 2008 will be compared to net revenues ending on June 30, 2007.

- Update all State Forest Management plans.

**Objective Description**

All State Forest management plans will be updated. State forests are managed using an assessment of all natural resources on the state forests, needs of the public, long term management objectives. Plans provide the assessment and the goals and strategies for management.

**Objective Strategies**

- Define the specific objectives for each forest based on local needs.
- Develop and/or revise the State Forest plan to reflect the specific objectives for each State Forest,

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Percentage of scheduled State Forest Management Plans updated annually

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: All plans will be updated and approved annually.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 100% of plans updated in fiscal year ending June 30, 2005.

Measure Target Description: 100% by June 30, 2010.

Data Source and Calculation: The State Forest team updates forest management plans on each state forest at least once every ten years. DOF schedules all forest management plans to be updated in the annual work plan. DOF counts the number of scheduled forest management plans actually completed annually.

- Manage the State Forest on a sustained basis for research, demonstration, education and multiple use benefits while staying within the allowable forest harvest levels.

#### Objective Description

State Forests will be managed on a sustained basis for research, demonstration, education, and multiple use benefits while staying within the allowable forest harvest levels. DOF harvest only 75% of the available crop each year to ensure a sustainable supply of forest products into the future.

#### Objective Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive annual work plan comprising the major elements of the State Forest Plan and compare annual accomplishments in both.
- Define the best people uses of State Forests and compliment forest management objectives and timber sales. Develop a survey to determine the reasons people visit the State Forest.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of annual allowable harvest actually harvested

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: All methods of harvests will be reported annually.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 74% of allowable harvest completed as of July 1, 2007.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 80% of allowable harvest completed by June 30, 2010.

Data Source and Calculation: DOF will count and report the number of acres of trees harvestable and harvested by all methods annually. The percentage of harvestable acreage will be reported.

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## Service Area Strategic Plan

## Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:32 pm

Biennium: 2008-10 ▼

## Service Area 4 of 4

## Financial Assistance for Forest Land Management (411 501 05)

## Description

This service area truly provides for managing, conserving and protecting Virginia's forest resources. This is DOF's largest service area and consists of the Divisions of Forestland Conservation, Forest Management, Resource Protection, and Resource Information. These Divisions provide a vast array of services and benefits to many stakeholders including landowners, industry, all levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the general public. The DOF covers the entire Commonwealth with its employees, resources and equipment placement. Products and services include:

- Providing equipment and personnel to suppress and prevent wildfire and responding to other State declared emergencies.
- Enforcing wildfire, silvicultural water quality, and forest seed tree laws.
- Promoting best management silvicultural practices and preharvest planning to loggers and landowners to protect water quality.
- Providing forest management advice and services to forest landowners for improvement of forest stands to ensure the sustainability of the forest resource.
- Collecting, summarizing, analyzing and reporting forest inventory data on the status and condition of forest land in Virginia.
- Providing resource information, maps, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS).
- Monitoring and reporting findings on the forest health of forest stands across Virginia to prevent or control insect and disease harmful to forests.
- Providing certified burning manager training to individuals involved in the controlled application of fire to reduce forest fuels, site prepare cutover lands for reforestation, and to improve wildlife habitat. Supporting the continued expansion of Virginia's Prescribed Burning Council.
- Providing timely and accurate forest resource information to help forest industry maintain vibrant forest-related businesses in Virginia.
- Promoting market opportunities for landowners in existing and emerging markets for wood products and ecosystem services.
- Providing financial incentives through the administration of a variety of State and Federal cost-share programs and the riparian buffer tax credit to encourage implementation of forestry practices.
- Developing, monitoring and enforcing conservation easements on working forest lands.
- Administering the Forest Legacy Program to fund land acquisition and easements.
- Interacting with local government to promote conserving the forest land base and the ecosystem service benefits that forests provide.
- Providing outreach on forest benefits, programs, management and protection.
- Conducting applied forest research to develop and implement new techniques that enhance the value, health and sustainability of Virginia's forests, and communicate results in reports, presentations and field demonstrations.

## Background Information

## Mission Alignment and Authority

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*

This service area directly aligns with the DOF's mission to protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for

Virginians. This service area directly supports six strategic goals of DOF.

- Protect the citizens, their property and the forest resource from wildfire.
- Protect, promote and enhance forested watersheds, non-tidal wetlands and riparian areas.
- Conserve the forest land base.
- Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of the forest resources.
- Promote ecosystem services in market-based conservation and land-use planning.
- Collect, maintain and disseminate forest resource information.

This service area directly supports the following long-term objectives for Virginia:

- Protect, conserve and wisely develop our natural, historical and cultural resources.
- Protect the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.
- Engage and inform citizens to ensure we serve their interests.
- Be a national leader in the preservation and enhancement of our economy.
- Promote and develop traditional and emerging markets for forest products, ecosystem services and other societal benefits.

• *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*

Chapter 11, Article 4, §10.1-1124 through §10.1-1130 provides that DOF may enter agreements with counties and certain cities providing forest fire prevention and suppression to local governments and receive compensation.

Chapter 11, Article 5, §10.1-1131 through §10.1-1134 provides that DOF may offer forestry services, including technical advice, tree marking, management advice and general forestry advice, to landowners for fee or no charge.

Chapter 11, Article 6, §10.1-135-10.1 through §10.1 - 1150 provides authority for DOF to appoint and compensate forest wardens to enforce forest laws and to prevent and suppress wildfires.

Chapter 11, Article 6.1 §10.1-1150.1 through 10.1 - 1150.6 authorizes the DOF to offer training and certification to individuals who use the application of fire to control forest fuels and wish to become certified burn managers.

Chapter 11, Article 9, §10.1 - 1162 through §10.1 - 1169 authorizes the DOF to enforce the seed tree laws in Virginia requiring reforestation or alternate plans following the harvests of specific types of trees.

Chapter 11, Article 11, §10.1-1177 through §10.1-1181 makes the DOF responsible for investigating insect and disease infestations which affect stands of forest trees and to devise the demonstrate control measures to interested persons.

Chapter 11, Article 12, §10.1-1181.1 through §10.1-1181.7 authorizes the DOF to inspect logging sites.

Chapter 43, §15.2-4301 through §15.2-4314 provides a means for a mutual undertaking by landowners and localities to protect and enhance agricultural and forestland as a viable segment of the Commonwealth's economy and as an economic and environmental resource of major importance. DOF is responsible for providing review of proposed property sites to the local government.

Chapter 17, §10.1-1701 authorizes any public body to acquire title or any interests in real property for the preservation of provision of open-space land.

4.210 & 4.3B Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

Federal law Title IV of Public Law 92-419 provides for state forestry organizations to organize, train and equip local forest fire work forces.

Federal law 40 U.S.C. 483, 16 U.S.C. 2101 assigns responsibility to state forestry organizations to provide Federal Excess Personal Property to Fire Departments.

**Customers**

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
	Federal Land Management Agencies	4	4
Fire Departments	Fire Departments	712	765

Forest Industry	Forest Industry & Associated Businesses	0	0
General Public	General Public	0	0
Local governments	Local Government	100	100
	Loggers	12	12
National Non-Governmental Organizations	Non-Governmental Organizations	20	50
Private forest landowners	Private Landowners	0	0
State Supported Educational Organizations	State Universities	8	39

#### *Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base*

[Nothing entered]

#### **Partners**

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Description</b>
Federal Agencies (USFS, NPS, USFWS, NRCS)	Cooperative agreements, cost-share funding, and consolidated grants for fire, forest health monitoring, Chesapeake Bay and other watersheds, and forest management.
Local Governments	County Governments and Planning District Commissions interested in maintaining forest resources as a viable component of the local government planning process and needing accurate and timely forest resource information.
Local Land Trust Organizations	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests.
Local non-governmental organizations	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests.
National Arbor Day Foundation	Joint efforts to promote the care and management of community trees.
National Tree Trust	Joint efforts to promote the care and management of community trees.
Non-Governmental Organizations	These groups represent a strong partner base in land conservation, urban and community forestry, and forest management efforts.
Public School System	DOF makes presentations to young students about the importance of the forest and its protection. Schools provide time for DOF staff to attend the schools for the program presentations.
Regional Planning District Commissions	Joint efforts to identify and quantify the value of forest cover in communities.
Society of Municipal Arborists	Joint efforts to promote the care and management of community trees.
State Agencies	Partnerships are critical for implementing initiatives and obtaining funding.
Universities	Cooperative/collaborative research and extension efforts with VPI, VSU, Longwood, ODU, Dabney Lancaster, IALR (Danville), etc.
University of Virginia	Cooperative educational workshops and networking opportunities.
US Forest Service	Cooperative agreements and joint projects to enhance state and federal programs.
US National Park Service	Cooperative agreements and joint projects.
Virginia Department of Transportation	Tree Planting projects.
Virginia Tech	Cooperative educational workshops, research, community outreach and networking opportunities.
Voluntary Fire Departments	Voluntary fire departments assist DOF with suppression of wildfires. DOF provides training, equipment and grant funds to assist fire departments.

#### **Products and Services**

- *Factors Impacting the Products and/or Services:*

Many factors impact the largest service area for DOF. This service area has the greatest number of DOF employees engaged in its success. Employees properly trained and motivated to the delivery of the products and services are essential to its success. Reductions in staff due to resignations, retirements and budget cuts can impact products and services. These factors may necessitate the need for personnel to cover multiple counties.

Finding dedicated funding to consistently replace equipment will be a key in being able to provide a fleet of vehicles and dozers that are ready to meet the emergency response duties of the Agency. This is especially true in budget reduction years.

Forest land lost to other non-forest uses also continues at a rapid pace (approximately 27,000 acres per year are being converted to non-forest use). Parcelization -- the division of forest land into smaller and smaller ownerships -- occurs along with conversion. Both of these trends will likely result in a decrease for traditional forestry services and an increase in demands from small woodlot landowners.

The loss of the forest land base, significantly reduces the flow of ecosystem services and benefits derived from our environmental infrastructure. This creates a two-fold problem. First, we must better manage the remaining acres of forest land in an attempt to partially offset these losses. Second, society will incur greater costs for engineered solutions in our efforts to provide clean air and clean water to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Ecosystem services outreach requests and interest in developing market-based conservation initiatives continues to grow. In the future, market-based conservation will become an important mechanism to finance conservation and financially reward landowners for managing their properties in ways that ecosystem services are enhanced.

Funding for cost-share programs is an important factor which impacts the outcomes of this service area. Private landowners count on cost-share reimbursement for forestry practices. Funding for the cost-share programs should be consistent with the level of need and inflation adjusted to advance products and services in this service area. Funding for land conservation in Virginia consists mainly of tax benefits for landowners who donate land or easements. Continued interest in conservation will be significantly determined by changes in tax policy.

Because land-use decisions are determined primarily by local governments, impacting forest conversion on a large scale will require outreach to and influencing of the local planning process. Quality training is necessary to ensure that a workforce of knowledgeable employees have the latest technical information and are able to effectively communicate appropriate forest resource information and management recommendations. The DOF's ability to transfer information significantly impacts the recognition of the importance of the forest resource and the implementation of forest management practices and the incorporation of forest related considerations in land-use planning.

With only one airplane and one pilot, it is becoming increasingly difficult to perform agency duties for insect and disease monitoring as required under Chapter 11, Article 11, §10.1-1177 - 1181. Also, with increased reporting of insect and disease activities through IFRIS enhancements, it is expected that staff time available to respond to these reported pest issues will be impacted.

- *Anticipated Changes to the Products and/or Services*

DOF expects to see increases for its services in all aspects of this service area. Forest industry is selling off more forest land to Timberland Investment Management Organizations (TIMO's), Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), and private individuals. This shift away from a vertically integrated forest industry will have significant impacts on forest land conversion rates, forest fragmentation and parcelization, and the number of forest landowners. This means more forest landowners owning smaller parcels of land and, therefore, more requests for forest management assistance.

As logging continues to occur across more ownerships, the DOF anticipates an increase in harvest inspections and the demand for assistance with pre-harvest planning and enforcement of the water quality laws and procedures.

Recent changes to the Logging Notification requirements will require more logger training and assistance in adjusting to the new requirements.

Recent developments at the State and Federal level to improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay, will create increasing interest in riparian buffer plantings, afforestation and applications for the riparian buffer tax credit.

Efforts in voluntary mitigation, employing forest conservation specialists, and increased awareness of the DOF's conservation easement program, are resulting in a significantly increased demand on staff resources to develop, monitor and enforce donated easements. The Forest Legacy program also contributes significantly to the easement workload. Demand currently exceeds capacity and there are areas where DOF presence is minimal. Increased outreach by DOF could further increase demand. Continued success in accepting conservation easements will result in increased need for easement monitoring and enforcement.

As forest land becomes increasingly fragmented and IFRIS reporting is enhanced, the DOF expects an increased interest in and demand for information regarding non-native species control or eradication. Efforts are already occurring to create market opportunities for some non-native species, such as ailanthus.

DOF expects increased demand for more native species tree establishment and restoration. Restoration of species, such as shortleaf pine, longleaf pine and American chestnut, continue to be an area of emphasis for the agency.

DOF expects increased demand for timely forest resource information for planning and land-use decision making. The agency continues to be active in partnering with county governments, planning district commissions, river basin commissions, and non-governmental organizations in efforts to keep working forests on the landscape and reduce the rate of forest land conversion.

Participation in climate change discussion and planning efforts has increased significantly. The DOF is being recognized as an important source of information for data on forest carbon sequestration rates, climate change planning, and developing carbon offset protocols.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- Provide specialized forest firefighting equipment, such as bulldozers equipped for forest conditions and the trucks capable of transporting the bulldozers and other equipment.
- Forest landowners request and receive inspections, information and recommendations on forestry management for their property. DOF foresters and technicians are available to provide these inspections, reports and assistance to the more than 300,000 private forest landowners in Virginia.
- Forest landowners request federal and state cost-share assistance for forestry practices on their property. DOF foresters and technicians provide the required inspections and approval of the landowner practices before the final cost-share award is made to the landowner. DOF is often involved in the oversight and coordination of the project to ensure the practice is implemented according to the approved plan. DOF staff makes the final inspection of the completed practice and approves the cost-share payment or assist landowners to correct deficiencies.
- Forest Producers are now eligible for cost-share to protect water quality on timber harvest operations. The DOF water quality personnel are directly responsible for assisting operators on the type and cost of practices to be implemented to protect water quality at stream crossings. The DOF water quality personnel inspect and approval all cost-share projects for water quality protection.
- Coordination of regional tree planting contract and makes available forest seedlings for sale to forest landowners. This service ensures the forest landowner receives tree planting service from reputable vendors at the lowest price. DOF supplies the tree seedlings from its nurseries ensuring the highest quality, genetically superior seedlings available for Virginia sites.
- Foresters and technicians inspect all harvest operations to ensure consistent enforcement of the Virginia Seed Tree Law. This law applies to certain species of pine and hardwood trees and was created to ensure these valuable Virginia species are maintained in Virginia forests into the future.
- The DOF Spatial Center produces high-quality GIS products showing current land conditions and species composition. Local government planners and administrators can use these products to make informed decisions about the county forest land base and its contribution. Employees of the DOF and other agencies use the GIS information to create higher quality maps and photographs of forest landowner customer tracts when making recommendations for forestry practices in reports and cost-share assistance.
- The Forest Inventory Assessment team collects forest resource information from 20% of the forest inventory plots across Virginia each year. This rate of information collection enables DOF to complete an assessment every five years. The information includes estimated tree volume, species composition, age distribution, and size of Virginia's forest land base. The improved technology in satellite imagery allows DOF to document land pattern trends and changes in "real time" for policy and decision makers.
- Using the latest GIS tools, IFRIS and GPS units, DOF employees make sophisticated maps for their reports and add the latest layers of information available on the tract.
- Provide comprehensive insect and disease investigation and monitoring across Virginia. DOF is mandated to report infestations and recommend prevention or control measures to protect valuable species of forest trees. In the past, DOF has monitored species, such as gypsy moth, pine bark beetle, oak wilt, chestnut blight, emerald ash borer, and many other insects and diseases.
- Conduct applied forest research to provide continuously improving recommendations for forest practices in Virginia. The results are communicated to the public in written reports and workshops used by DOF staff in their recommendations to landowners, forest industry and the general public to improve their forest land.

- Offer specialized training to firefighters across the Commonwealth to maintain firefighters' knowledge and skills at the highest level and to ensure that firefighters operate safely to protect themselves and other people.
- Provide experienced all-risk incident management teams for the Commonwealth to provide assistance to Virginia Department of Emergency Management when disasters or emergencies occur.
- Delivery of wildfire prevention information/advertisement campaigns through radio, television, newspaper and multi-lingual media sources to make the public aware of forest fire open air fire law, dangerous forest conditions and safe use of the forest.
- Provides cost-share assistance to private forest landowners for management practices to reduce the risks of southern pine beetle infestation, including pre-commercial thinning and restoration of longleaf pine on acceptable sites.
- Provide landowner assistance necessary to increase the establishment of riparian forest buffer plantings in the Commonwealth's Chesapeake Bay and southern river watersheds.
- Provide woodland home community wildfire hazard assessment and mitigation recommendations.
- Provide oversight of Virginia Dry Hydrant program, which installs 65 dry hydrants annually for local/community fire suppression needs.
- Acquire and provide federal excess personal property for loan to fire departments across the Commonwealth to increase suppression capabilities.
- Provide trained Forest Engineers and Water Quality Specialists with specialized knowledge of forest hydrology, watersheds, civil engineering and best management practices.
- Offer prescribed burning training and certification to burning managers.
- Participate in the development of ecosystem service markets.
- Exploring, developing and providing incentives to conserve forest land and maintain working forests.
- Enhance and develop market opportunities for Virginia's forest products. This includes both traditional forest products and specialty, niche products. Efforts here include participation in Virginia Economic Partnership, etc.
- Provide and develop information related to forest industry, TPO, etc.
- Develop, hold, monitor and enforce conservation easements provided either through donation or partial purchase.
- Administer the USFS Forest Legacy Program in Virginia for land acquisition and conservation easements. This involves ranking submissions, submitting projects and utilizing available Forest Legacy funding.
- Provide outreach through conferences, seminars, presentations, pamphlets, etc., to all stakeholders to increase awareness of ecosystem services. This includes developing and providing the tools to quantify ecosystem services for market and land-use planning efforts.
- Serve in a support and advisory role with various climate change initiatives.
- Provide technical guidance and perform project ranking for the forestry category of the Virginia Land Conservation Fund grant program.
- Provide outreach and guidance to local governments and landowners regarding the threat of forest land conversion and the tools available to slow conversion. Review local Comprehensive Plans and provide guidance regarding forest land conservation.

**Finance**

- *Financial Overview*

This service area provides financial assistance to non-profits. DOF administers federal grant programs, which are funding sources direct to communities and non-profits, to develop and maintain urban and community forests and funding for voluntary fire department training and equipment. DOF provides technical information and advice and oversees the federal grants to ensure funds are used appropriately. Financial assistance for forest land management is funding is entirely from Federal sources.

- *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2009		FY 2010	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$375,000

Service Area Total	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$675,000
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**Human Resources**

- *Human Resources Overview*

There are currently no positions designated under this service area. However, this function is covered by several agency positions.

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2008
Total Authorized Position level	274
Vacant Positions	27
<b>Current Employment Level</b>	<b>247.0</b>
Non-Classified (Filled)	1
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	246
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0
Faculty (Filled)	0
Wage	170
Contract Employees	1
<b>Total Human Resource Level</b>	<b>418.0</b>

*breakout of Current Employment Level*

*= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees*

- *Factors Impacting HR*

As of June 30, 2007, the agency was actively recruiting to fill 19 of our vacant positions. However, the agency still has an additional 5 authorized positions which are vacant. In addition, there are currently 16 vacant positions in the Tree Restoration & Improvement, Nurseries & State-Owned Forest Lands (50104) service area which need to be transferred to this service area. The positions are predominantly county Forest Technicians and Foresters. However, funding is not currently available to fill these vacancies. This has an impact on the workload for our current county staff. The increased workload does lead to job satisfaction challenges and morale issues. Restoring the agency's budget would allow us to fill our authorized positions.

Also, as stated earlier, DOF's county Forest Technicians and Foresters are the primary responders for wildfires and disaster relief. Having a large number of vacancies in these positions leaves gaps in coverage and, ultimately, leads to slower response time to emergencies. The slower response time in turn could lead to more acres burned by wildfires and, due to the large urban interface in the state, more homes lost, damaged, or seriously threatened. Also, state citizens could be left without assistance in disaster situations. Restoring the agency's budget would allow us to fill the majority of our county Forest Technician and Forester positions. This in turn would lead to a greater amount of safety for state citizens and a higher level of protection for the state's forests.

State employees have received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 to date. In addition, in Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This has assisted with salary compression issues and enabled us to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. However, the state still has not funded its pay-for-performance system. In addition, even with the increases, the state still lags the market for many salaries. This has contributed to both turnover and recruiting challenges. In particular, the agency has a difficult time attracting qualified, experienced candidates for open Forest Technician and Forester positions. The agency has also had difficulty filling its technical positions. In order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time to fill, the agency has recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Forest Technician and Forester positions. In order to implement this change, the agency will need additional funding.

A low number of DOF employees are interested in promotional opportunities. Some employees either do not want to move geographically to accept a promotion or do not want supervisory and/or higher level responsibility. In addition, salary compression issues also make promotions less attractive. Many employees believe that the difference in salary for a supervisory or management position is not adequate. This has made recruiting for supervisory and management positions in the agency more difficult and challenging.

In particular, the agency has severe compression of its upper management positions in relation to middle level management positions. This has led to making upper level positions less attractive for internal applicants. It also causes challenges with recruiting qualified external applicants. To correct this, the agency has recommended reclassification of and salary upgrades to upper management positions. This in turn will provide more salary flexibility at lower levels. In order to implement these changes, the agency will need additional funding.

The agency's training coordinator was assigned the additional tax of serving as DOF's safety officer. The agency has traditionally focused its occupational health and safety program primarily on wildland fire fighting. In the past two years, the program has been expanded and we are currently in the process of ensuring full compliance with all Federal and state laws and policies related to workplace safety. However, having one staff member responsible for both agency-wide training and safety is not efficient or effective. The agency has a need for a qualified safety professional to fully implement the program.

Approximately 17 years ago, legislation was approved to mandate water quality standards at logging sites. DOF was given oversight of enforcing this law; however, funding was not included with the mandate. This has necessitated DOF to enforce the law at the cost of providing forest management, forest health, etc. service to citizens. In order to effectively enforce the water quality law and meet the agency's strategic objectives, 15 Water Quality Specialist positions were requested as part of the Fiscal Year 2007 budget decision packages. Having these positions would free current county staff to provide services to citizens, which are outlined in DOF's strategic plan. The agency was given eight (8) Water Quality Specialist positions instead of the 15 requested. Therefore, the agency will continue to advocate for additional positions in the future. In addition, as Technician and Forester positions become open, we will review the positions to determine if they should be reclassified to Water Quality Specialist positions.

DOF completed a final report on the 2005 Senate Joint Resolution 75 regarding incentives for landowners to preserve their forest property. The report included the recommendation to hire five (5) Forest Conservation Specialists for major population areas in Virginia. These are Northern Virginia, Norfolk/Hampton Roads, Richmond, Charlottesville, and Roanoke. These Foresters would be charged with assisting local governments, agencies, and landowners to decrease the fragmentation of forested land and increase the amount of forested areas in urban areas. The agency has reclassified three (3) existing positions to Forest Conservation Specialists for Norfolk/Hampton Roads, Richmond, and Charlottesville areas. Additional funding is needed to fill the two (2) remaining positions.

During budget cuts in the mid-1990's, DOF lost its Silviculture Specialist position. This individual provided valuable specialized input and information to county staff in the areas of Silviculture and hardwood tree management. This position needs to be reinstated in order for DOF to fully meet its strategic objectives and effectively serve the citizens of the Commonwealth. Also in the mid-1990's, DOF lost a Forest Pathologist position. At that time, the role of the pathologist was combined with the role of the entomologist.

The state legislature implemented a timber theft law in Fiscal Year 2005. Right now, enforcement of this law is the responsibility of the police and sheriff departments throughout the state. We anticipate in the future, however, that enforcement will shift to DOF. This would require both additional staff and training.

In 1988, the agency implemented a bloodhound program to assist with tracking arson suspects for wild fires. The program was extremely beneficial and we had a high of three (3) bloodhound tracking teams in the agency. The teams consist of a bloodhound and his/her handler. The dog lives with its handler. The agency pays for the dog's food and medical bills, and the handler is responsible for caring for the dog. In 2004, one (1) of the handlers retired and another resigned. The handler who retired owned his dog and the other handler's dog was at retirement age -- we had been looking into replacing him. This meant we lost both the handlers and the dogs. The agency was left with one (1) bloodhound tracking team. The remaining team has been successful in limiting arson fires in their area. The agency has recently acquired one (1) additional bloodhound. However, DOF would benefit from having additional teams in other areas of the state.

In 2007, 36 (12.81 percent), of our employees are eligible for full retirement. Within the next five years, 67 of our employees (23.84 percent) will be eligible for full retirement. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in needs, especially in field positions. As stated above, the agency is experiencing a high rate of turnover of employees with 5 years or less of service. In order to effectively fill the upcoming vacancies due to retirement, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees.

One other area of concern is the on-call status of our primary responders for wild fires and natural disasters. These employees are on-call during the Spring and Fall seasons, which are a total of approximately 20 weeks each year. Currently, staff members are not given any additional compensation for being on-call. Payment for on-call time is not required under the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and the non-payment is supported by recent Federal circuit court decisions. This has not been a significant issue with our long-serving staff. However, newer employees are questioning this practice and pushing for on-call compensation. We anticipate this to become a greater issue in the future.

However, in order for us to address the issue, the DOF budget will have to be increased. Our budget is currently inadequate to fill all approved vacancies. Attempting to provide on-call compensation within our current budget is impractical and not sustainable.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*  
DOF has no plans to add personnel to this service area in the future.

### Service Area Objectives

- We will reduce the forest land burned by wildfires.

#### Objective Description

Reduce the number of human caused forest fires. Provide ample incentives and information available to the public to wisely manage fire use and to eliminate its use when conditions are favorable for the spread of forest fires. Use prevention messages and tools effectively to educate the public about dangers of fire usage.

#### Objective Strategies

- Complete twelve (12) new Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) and carry out twelve (12) wild fire hazard mitigation projects in high wild fire risk communities.
- Agency Forest Fire Readiness and Mobilization Plan will be in place during the spring and fall fire seasons to maintain a state of high wild fire readiness.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of human caused fires.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: Fire data is collected at the time of fire occurrence and can be retrieved quarterly.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Ten year average

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: We will decrease the percentage of human caused forest fires by 1% by FY 2010

Data Source and Calculation: DOF information system (IMS) will provide the data. The ten (10) year average forest fire history of human caused forest fires will be calculated for the baseline. Each year the oldest year of data will be dropped and the most recent year added and a new ten year average will be calculated and compared to the previous ten year average.

- We will improve water quality by increasing compliance with best management practices (BMPs) on forest harvest sites.

#### Objective Description

Improve water quality by increasing compliance with best management practices on forest harvest sites.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of harvest sites with sediment not reaching streams.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: 240 field sites were audited to calculate the result.

Measure Baseline Value: 93 Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 93% of audited sites showing 0% potential for sedimentation

Measure Target Value: 97 Date: 6/30/2010

Measure Target Description: 97% of audited sites showing 0% potential for sedimentation

Data Source and Calculation: The agency uses a team of professional forestry staff to annually evaluate tract information following tree harvests. Samples of total annual logging harvests are selected for the auditing team to measure. DOF applies the sample data to overall performance in Virginia. The annual reportable result is the linear trend data at the date of audit, based on all previous data inclusion since 1993. The audit sample size is 60 harvested tracts.

- We will increase the number of forest management projects implemented on private land.

#### Objective Description

Increase the amount of forestry management and conservation work implemented on private forest land to provide healthy forests in the future. Forestry practices include tree planting, thinnings, forest stand management, forest stand establishment, wildlife habitat practices, community and urban tree planting, erosion and water quality control, cultural practices, and protection to improve the health, vigor, and performance of trees, and provide economic and environmental benefits.

#### Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health, and diversity of the forest resource.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Number of forestry management practices implemented on private land.

Measure Class: Agency Key Measure Type: Outcome Measure Frequency: Quarterly Preferred Trend: Up

Frequency Comment: We will capture data quarterly from the DOF IMS/IFRIS reports.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline data for quarterly acres will be determined after 7/1/2009.

Measure Target Value: 2500 Date: 7/1/2010

Measure Target Description: 625 acres/quarter average

Data Source and Calculation: A forestry management and/or conservation project is a project implemented on private land as a result of a recommendation made for that land. Qualified projects include forest stand management, forest stand establishment (including natural stand establishment), wildlife habitat practices, community and urban tree planting, erosion and water quality control.

- Increase the amount of forest land conserved, protected and/or established in Virginia watersheds.

#### Objective Description

Protect water quality through the establishment of riparian buffers, implementation of erosion and water control measures, afforestation and protection measures, urban tree canopy establishment projects, urban stormwater improvements using trees and forests, and maintaining riparian forest buffers along streamside management zones.

**Alignment to Agency Goals**

- Agency Goal: Protect, promote, and enhance forested watersheds.
- Agency Goal: Conserve the forest land base.
- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health, and diversity of the forest resource.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of acres of forest land conserved, established and/or protected in Virginia watersheds.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline will be established after 7/1/2009

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Acres forest land conserved, protected and/or established in Virginia watersheds

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IFRIS system, and reports from the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

- Increase the number of acres of forest land, with focus on high-conservation value forests, under protection from conversion.

**Objective Description**

Use voluntary conservation measures such as donated conservation easements, state acquisition, or other long-term use restrictions to protect high conservation value forests from being converted to development. These forests will be identified using GIS analysis to rank all forest lands in the state based on their contribution to water quality protection, providing terrestrial and aquatic-habitat, and forest productivity as well as their relative threat from conversion.

**Alignment to Agency Goals**

- Agency Goal: Conserve the forest land base.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of acres of forest land conserved, established and/or protected in Virginia watersheds.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline will be established after 7/1/2009

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Acres of forest conserved, protected and/or established in Virginia watersheds.

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IFRIS system, and reports from the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

- Proportion of protected properties that contain high conservation value forests.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:  Measure Baseline Description: New measure - baseline data for previous year will be determined after 10/1/2009.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 75% of protected properties each year will contain forests of high conservation value.

Data Source and Calculation: Protected properties will include DOF-held easements, DOF acquisitions, and properties protected through easement or acquisition by others utilizing funding obtained by DOF. Forests of high conservation value will be those forests that rank four or five in the DOF GIS analysis.

- We will be prepared to act in the interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth and its infrastructure during emergency situations by actively planning and training both as an agency and as individuals.

#### Objective Description

This goal ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, policies and procedures for Commonwealth preparedness, as well as guidelines promulgated by the Assistant to the Governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, in collaboration with the Governor's Cabinet, the Commonwealth Preparedness Workign Group, the Department of Planning and Budget and the Council on Virginia's Future.

#### Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Strengthen the culture of preparedness across state agencies, their employees and customers.

Comment: The goal supports achievement of the Commonwealth's statewide goal of protecting the public's safety and security, ensuring a fair and effective system of justice and providing a prepared response to emergencies and disasters of all kinds.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Agency Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Assessment Score

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 2007 COOP Assessment Results (% out of 100)

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: Increase the average by 5% each year.

Data Source and Calculation: The COOP Assessment Review is a 24 component assessment tool that helps measure the viability of a COOP plan.

- Increase the amount of forest management assistance on private lands in the Commonwealth.

#### Objective Description

Forest land is a critical solution to the economy of rural Virginia and environmental benefits for the Commonwealth. The majority of the forest land in Virginia is owned by private landowners (77%). DOF will strive to bring forest resource management planning to all landowners to ensure maximum benefits are achieved.

#### Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Conserve the forest land base.
- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health, and diversity of the forest resource.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of acres of all forest management plan types achieved on private and public forest land.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:   
 Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - quarterly baseline data will be established after 7/1/2009.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 130,000 acres/year (32,500 acres/quarter average).

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IMS and IFRIS reports. Data will include stewardship plans, forest stand plans, cost share plans, Alternate Management Plans, community forest management plans, Tree Farm plans, and mitigation plans.

- Provide research information on forest resources in Virginia to all stakeholders.

**Objective Description**

Provide practical information on forest resources in Virginia to all stakeholders.

**Alignment to Agency Goals**

- Agency Goal: Collect, maintain, and disseminate forest resource information.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of research reports issued annually.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: DOF counts the number of reports issued each year.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: DOF research has averaged 2.7 reports per year since 1955.

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 6 research reports published per year.

Data Source and Calculation: Formal published reports of new or updated results or recommendations from individual studies originating from the DOF Forest Resource Information Division.

- Provide an inventory of forest natural resources in Virginia on a continual basis.

**Objective Description**

DOF will provide a continual assessment inventory of the forest resources in Virginia. Forest inventory information is essential to the economic and environmental interests in Virginia. Current information on the forest natural resources is vital to understand changes and prepare strategies for their health and continuation.

**Alignment to Agency Goals**

- Agency Goal: Collect, maintain, and disseminate forest resource information.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of forest inventory count panels measured annually.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 1 panel per year (20% of the Commonwealth forest land cover)

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description: 1 panel per year

Data Source and Calculation: Trained foresters annually measure and record specific tree growth data and deliver information to U. S. Forest Service Southern Research Station for independent quality assessment and quality control audits. DOF strives to complete 20% of the Commonwealth forest land area annually (one panel).

- Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.

#### Objective Description

Ensure that resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal requirements.

#### Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Manage agency resources to effectively and efficiently accomplish the strategic initiatives.

Comment: The Virginia Performs Management Scorecard program will be used as a common gauge of agency operations.

#### Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

#### Objective Measures

- Percentage of the Governor's Management scorecard categories DOF meets expectations.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: We capture the management scorecard information quarterly.

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description:

Measure Target Value:  Date:

Measure Target Description:

Data Source and Calculation: The number of cases DOF is scored "meet expectation" divided by six.

- Increase awareness of ecosystem services provided by forest land to foster market development and incorporation into land-use planning.

#### Objective Description

The agency will lead the effort increase awareness of ecosystem services provided by forestland and to participate in developing market-based conservation initiatives. Emerging markets for ecosystem services such as water quality and carbon sequestration offer promise in providing financial opportunities for forest landowners. In addition to markets, consideration of these environmental services in county planning, land conversion activities, and voluntary mitigation is critical.

#### Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Conserve the forest land base.
- Agency Goal: Promote the development of ecosystem service markets for forest landowners.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of efforts made to promote market opportunities for landowners. This will include the number committees served on, conferences, presentations, roundtables, etc. where promotion of ecosystem service initiatives presents itself.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from the IFRIS information system.

- Promote diversification of forest markets and a healthy forest industry to keep forest land in forests.

**Objective Description**

Forest industry and related businesses are critical to the economy of Virginia and maintaining healthy sustainable forests. Private landowners own the majority of forestland in Virginia. Benefits derived from forests impact the amount of land that will be forested. DOF will promote and support the development of diverse forest markets and a prosperous forest industry.

**Alignment to Agency Goals**

- Agency Goal: Conserve the forest land base.
- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health, and diversity of the forest resource.

**Link to State Strategy**

- nothing linked

**Objective Measures**

- Number of presentations/workshops/events promoting forest industry and markets.

Measure Class:  Measure Type:  Measure Frequency:  Preferred Trend:

Measure Baseline Value:  Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New measure - annual baseline data will be established after 7/1/2009.

Data Source and Calculation: Data will be collected from DOF IMS and IFRIS information system reports.