

Agency Strategic Plan

Department of Forestry (411)

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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, scientifically based recommendations impact positively upon an informed public and whose efforts result in complete overall customer satisfaction.

Agency Values

- IN DEALING WITH OUR CUSTOMERS WE BELIEVE IN:

Exceeding customer expectations by delivering quality products and services in a responsive, professional manner. Enforcing the forest laws of the Commonwealth in a fair and consistent manner, while providing protection to the forest resources of the Commonwealth for all Virginians. Treating customers courteously, honestly and respectfully. Actively listening, appreciating, understanding and responding to customer needs. Being trustworthy professionals who seek to ensure the integrity of the forest resource. Treating customers courteously, honestly and respectfully. Actively listening, appreciating, understanding and responding to customer needs. Being trustworthy professionals who seek to ensure the integrity of the forest resource.

- IN WORKING TOGETHER, WE BELIEVE IN:

Providing a well-trained, well-equipped, technologically advanced and responsive workforce. Communicating in an open, honest, effective manner. Being helpful and supportive to one another, demonstrating the spirit of cooperation/teamwork and mutual trust and respect for each other. Providing a working environment that fosters quality and creativity, rewards employee performance, is challenging and an enjoyable place to work. Clearly defining, communicating and understanding our vision, strategies, goals, objectives, roles and responsibilities.

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, emerged 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.

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 two (2) million people in 1910 to more than seven (7) million today. Demand is intense for homes in forested communities and property values are near an all-time high. DOF now serves greater numbers of people, more complex forest and community relationships, and some of the highest property values in history.

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. DOF is a leader in emergency response, incident command organization, and multiple large forest fire incident management. DOF is prepared to assist in Virginia's Homeland Security in addition to its forestry mandates.

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.

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 landowner, who control 77% of the commercial forest land, is an important part of each field forester's and technician's job -- a job that must be done through personal interaction on site. DOF delivers unbiased technical advice and help with state and federal cost-sharing program assistance to forest landowners.

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.

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 species, helping save millions of dollars in forest resource value.

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 has demonstrated its commitment to technological innovation with the development of significant applications, such as the Integrated Forest Resource Information System, or IFRIS®, which 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 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 citizen 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 had been in place for three years, offering more than 50 professional development courses, until funding reductions forced the postponement of the program.

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 2009 against a target of 97%) and proportion of purchases made through the state mandatory eVA procurement system (98% versus the 95% target.)

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 only be met 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.

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.

- *Summary of current productivity*

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's programs and services are designed to encourage a stronger forest products economy in Virginia, benefiting landowners, business and the public. Over the years, the marketing and utilization staff participated in forest products trade shows and provided information to many businesses hoping to either expand their businesses or to locate in Virginia. In addition, the utilization and marketing personnel provide specific forest resource information to forest products businesses and receives and responds to daily telephone calls from businesses.

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 127 foresters and technicians assigned throughout the Commonwealth to serve almost every county.

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 impacts the complexity and scale of DOF forest fire suppression capabilities, forest management activities, water quality enforcement and overall forest management strategies.

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, an average of 1,136 wildfires burn approximately 12,100 acres of forest land in Virginia. Forest fire suppression equipment is safer and more effective on the fires than ever before. In addition to its force of 185 full-time responders, DOF has trained a large force of part-time firefighters to assist with battling 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.

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 an all time high, resource protection is even more important today.

VDOF's full-time responders, who number 185, and more than 750 part-time DOF firefighters are trained and certified

on an annual basis to nationally recognized standards. Each year, DOF firefighters protect more than 1,200 homes, valued at more than \$175 million.

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 \$1,576,509 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 more than 10 demonstration areas across Virginia for use in the Forestry Water Quality Education program. Every two years, DOF has developed and staffed two exhibits at the 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 to 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.

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 5 acres for BMP implementation and to educate operators on the uses of BMPs to protect water quality.

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 has 269 FTE (full-time equivalent) positions out of a total employment level of 300. DOF has averaged 284 FTEs during the past five years. DOF's FY 2009 appropriation is approximately \$28 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. Due to budget reductions, however, the agency has had to increase the replacement time of firefighting equipment from 20 years to 25 years. DOF must improve technology to deliver the information requirements of the forest landowners, forest products industry, planners and other organizations.

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 is missing many opportunities to improve the forest resource for the benefit of all Virginians.

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.

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 will place 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 has 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 forest land under permanent conservation. In addition, DOF works with other organizations to find new incentives and better ways to help landowners keep their lands as forest land. 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 now 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. DOF will continually look for more advanced, effective equipment for more effective forest fire control. DOF has developed and put in position a brush-type forest-fire-equipped truck 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 45 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 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 45 projects to mitigate potential wildfire damages, and protected an average of 1,240 homes or other structures annually from forest fires, saving almost \$175 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 is supporting a Southeastern Regional attempt 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 1,100 wildfires annually that burned more than 10,100 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 FY2008. 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 forestland 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 forestland 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 forestlands, but the effect is not known. Private forest landowners own approximately 77% of the forestland 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.

The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) serves landowners and other citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Our services are available equally to all citizens. DOF does not ask citizens to tell us their age at the time they receive our services. In addition, DOF does not track the age of citizens requesting and utilizing our services. We provide all services equally without regard to age or any other protected characteristic. When meeting with individual landowners, DOF employees will accommodate the needs of the landowners and any physical limitations they have. Also, we ensure all agency public meetings are accessible to everyone. We provide certain publications in large-print as needed.

Future Direction, Expectations, and Priorities

- *Summary of Future Direction and Expectations*

The forestland base size is likely to decrease in the future due to expanding development and changing land use. Forestland 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 believes we must find solutions that address the need for continued forest land base, landowner's objectives and societal needs.

Efforts will be expanded to conserve more forestland through incentives programs. The Forest Legacy program is being 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.

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 and the safety of Virginia's citizens.

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 forestland 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.

With an annual planting, growing and selling season of 25 million tree seedlings, 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 IFRISForestRIM to communicate and deliver information. High-speed Internet office

connections have helped ensure essential for successful delivery of these information services. Employees are using 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 has assessed 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 269 employees, 56, or 20.8 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 and communication skills. Retention of good employees is also a high priority of DOF, and competitive salaries are one important way to ensure the Commonwealth keeps its best workers. Training must be delivered on a continual basis to keep employees' skills strong and capable in emerging forestry issues, technical information, and computer technology. Much of the agency's training efforts have been put on hold due to budget restrictions.

DOF must maintain safe and effective forest fire equipment. Tractors should be rotated on a 20-year basis, but this has been extended to 25 years due to funding cuts.. 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 and, in some parts of the state, coverage will be non-existent. 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 forestland will in large part depends upon the goals and objectives of private landowners, the corporate forestland 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 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.

10.1-1700 to 10.1-1, authority of public bodies to acquire or designate property for use as open-space land and authority to acquire easements for timbering uses which are compatible with the purposes of this chapter.

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 10.1-1181.1 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.

§ 10.1-1701. Authority of public bodies to acquire or designate property for use as open-space land.

To carry out the purposes of this chapter, any public body may (i) acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest, grant or otherwise title to or any interests or rights of not less than five years' duration in real property that will provide a means for the preservation or provision of open-space land and (ii) designate any real property in which it has an interest of not less than five years' duration to be retained and used for the preservation and provision of open-space land. Any such interest may also be perpetual.

§ 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

Customer Group	Customers served annually	Potential customers annually
Federal Agencies	8	10
Fire Departments	712	765
Forest Industry & Associated Businesses	2,500	15,000
General Public	500,000	7,000,000
Local Governments	115	146
Local Planning Districts	10	23
Non-Governmental Organizations	26	60
Other State Agencies	20	30
Private Forest Landowners	8,000	350,000
State Universities	26	60
State-Supported Educational Organizations	19	25

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

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

DOF will see increase use of Web site and other information services due to changes in technology, changing

demographics and forest-related demands.

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.

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 increase in new and specialty forest product market development and evolving of the forest products industry. Landowners will benefit from the new and increasing markets and prompt more interest in forest management and 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

Partner	Description
Community Colleges	Cooperative educational programs, workshops and networking opportunities.
Federal Agencies (USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Environmental Protection Agency, etc.)	Cooperative agreements, cost-share funding and consolidated grants for fire, forest health monitoring, Chesapeake Bay and other watersheds, forest management and other programs. Cooperative agreements and joint projects to enhance state and federal programs. Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting rural and community forests. Project development and implementation to improve forest markets and benefits to landowners and industry.
Local Governments and Planning Districts	Interested in maintaining forest resources as a viable component of the local government planning process and needing accurate and timely forest resource information. County receives up to 25% of the income from timber sales conducted on the state forest within the county. Joint efforts on green infrastructure projects, land-use and other policy.
Local Land Trust Organizations	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests and promoting forest easements.
Local Non-Governmental Organizations	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting rural and community forests, improving water quality, promoting ecosystem services and other forest-related markets and benefits. Project development and implementation.
Non-Governmental Organizations	Joint efforts in land conservation, urban and community forestry, and forest management and markets. Cooperative efforts to improve high-value forests, diminished species, forest health, sustainable forests and forest benefits. Assist with education and outreach to public and program information for legislators at state and federal level.
	Joint efforts to manage trees along utility right of ways. Assist with educational and implementation

Power Companies	efforts form renewable energy and ecosystem services.
Private Business	Provide promotion and support of sustainable forest management and markets, educational programs, community forestry, green infrastructure, renewable energy and other forest-related projects.
Professional Societies	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting rural and community forests. Assist with consultation, joint educational efforts, professional certification and policy.
Public School System	DOF makes presentations to students about the importance of the forest and its protection. Schools provide time for DOF staff to attend the schools for the program presentations. Natural resource education opportunities provided to teachers and students through field trips, Forestry Camp and other programs.
State Agencies	Implement initiatives, participate in research and demonstration areas on state lands for the benefit of researchers and landowners. State lands planting and forest management. Collaboration and cooperation on trails and greenway projects and green infrastructure education. Work on taxation, land-use and other issues related to forestland and industry.
Universities	Cooperative / collaborative research and extension efforts in all areas of forestry and natural resources. Cooperative educational workshops, community outreach and networking opportunities. Project development and implementation. Cooperative projects of state and university forests. Assist with market development and training for forest industry.
Virginia Forest Industry	Provide revenues through the forest products tax for pine reforestation and management. Assist and sponsor numerous educational programs, workshops and demonstrations promoting sustainable forestry, water quality and forest products. Work to provide markets and other benefits to forest landowners.
Voluntary Departments	Voluntary fire departments assist DOF with suppression of wildfires. DOF provides training, equipment and grant funds to assist 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.

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

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.

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 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.

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 forestland.

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 forestlands.

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 more than 300,000 private forest landowners.

Provide specialized forest firefighting equipment, such as bulldozers equipped for forest conditions and the trucks capable of transporting the bulldozers, and other equipment.

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 forestland 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 and GPS units, DOF employees make sophisticated maps for their reports and add the latest layers of information available on the tract. With the full 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 forestland.

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.

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.

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

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

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 forestland 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 required for hunting, fishing, trapping, mountain biking and horseback riding. DOF does not charge users to hike, walk or canoe in the State Forests.

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 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.

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.

- *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.

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.

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.

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. Two nurseries carry the entire 25-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 the Forest Conservation, Wildfire and Watershed service area. More forestland 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 forestland 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 forestland 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.

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.

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 and multi-use trails and similar recreational access will be maintained in many of the 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.

Finance

- *Financial Overview:*

Forestry receives funding from general fund appropriations (56 percent), special revenue funds (26 percent), trust funds (less than 1%) and federal grants (17 percent). Special revenue funds consist of revenue generated through seedling sales, timber sales, fire suppression services, professional forestry services, and forest products taxes.

Over the years, our general funds and special funds have not kept up with inflation yet we have realized a sharp increase in federal funding but more than 60% of our federal funding is for special projects. Many of these special projects are passed through to localities, non-profits and individuals as transfer payments while our federal funding that can be used for operational expenditures has been on a steady decline.

Forestry expenses consist primarily of personnel (65%), contractual services (10%), and transfer payments (9%). The balance is needed for fixed operating costs and equipment. Personnel and fixed costs are primarily paid with general funds and the transfer payments are paid entirely with non-general funds.

The DOF has made some important strategic changes during the past biennium to meet a 23% reduction in general funds. This equates to the loss of 23 full-time positions and 3.4 million dollars. First and foremost, DOF has moved from six (6) regional office complexes to three (3) regional offices: Eastern, Central and Western. In addition, many county offices have either been eliminated or moved to other existing offices. Consolidation of offices will continue throughout this biennium. In addition, we listed the Staunton Office for sale starting July 1, 2009. DOF has increased the prices for about all revenue generation activities including: rent on office and warehouse space, seedling and seed sales, county protection charges, and forestry services. DOF is also reducing costs wherever possible by deferring maintenance and

discretionary purchases, delaying hiring and in some cases eliminating positions as well as relying more on prison inmate crews for landscape maintenance and work around the vehicle maintenance shop, etc. Funding our equipment is our biggest challenge because of the budget reductions we sustained in this area and the capital investment required for the size of our fleet.

DOF has approximately 1000 pieces of equipment including 452 licensed vehicles and 168 licensed trailers. Of the 452 licensed vehicles;

- ~ 13 are 2 wheel drive pickups (1/2- to 1-ton)
- ~ 22 are 4 wheel drive ½-ton pickups
- ~ 197 are 4 wheel drive ¾-ton pickups
- ~ 157 are 1st responders,
- ~ 1 is a 2 wheel drive SUV
- ~ 41 are 4 wheel drive SUVs

The remaining 178 vehicles are all other types classified as one- (1) ton or more and include medium & heavy duty trucks: dump trucks, stake bodies, utility & service bodies, transports, road tractors, knuckle boom, box trucks, mobile command vans, passenger vans, bucket trucks, brush trucks etc.

In addition, DOF has 105 fire bulldozers, of which 102 are various series of John Deere 450's. Of these:

- ~ 3 are 450D series tractors
- ~ 11 are 450E series tractors
- ~ 48 are 450G series tractors
- ~ 22 are 450H series tractors
- ~ 18 are 450J series tractors

Of the 102 fire response dozers:

- ~ 62 are open cab, with ROPS and brush protection
- ~ 40 are environmental cab with heat and A/C.

DOF has recently completed an analysis of its rotation of fire emergency equipment projected for the next 31 years (2040) using the recommended rotation for our first responder pick-up vehicles of 10 years or 125,000 miles, and 25 years for transports and fire bulldozers. For this equipment alone, DOF has found that for the next biennium DOF will need \$3.5 million to begin and maintain the rotation schedule.

In order to perform DOF's mission dependably and consistently, DOF requires a dependable and consistent level of funding to maintain an adequate fire-ready fleet of emergency vehicles. DOF tries to follow a rotation schedule to replace emergency vehicles and equipment that wears out, becomes obsolete or needs to be replaced per recommendation for the useful life of the vehicle/equipment. Meeting the replacement schedule for firefighting equipment is the best way to minimize costs and better protect employees and the public. Meeting the replacement schedule reduces the frequency and degree of maintenance on older equipment, allows our mechanics to better plan for known work loads annually (avoids contractor expenses), and eliminates questionable equipment from use in emergency situations.

DOF would like to reduce the risk to state employees and the public, allow DOF mechanics to plan for a steady, known level of work, and provide the best wildfire capabilities at the lowest price. All this can be achieved with the establishment of a generally funded, non-reverting, interest bearing, emergency equipment rotation fund which provides for the annual replacement of emergency equipment that is worn-out, obsolete, or approaching its recommended useful life.

- **Financial Breakdown:**

	FY 2011		FY 2012	
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$16,311,634	\$12,611,492	\$16,311,634	\$12,611,492
Change To Base	-\$279,416	\$700,000	-\$279,416	\$700,000
Agency Total	\$16,032,218	\$13,311,492	\$16,032,218	\$13,311,492

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. The following chart outlines the agency's net employee gains and losses over the last 5 fiscal years.

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. Below is a chart with the percentage of employees by years of service with DOF and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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. Following is a chart showing the age ranges of DOF 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 other two 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. Following is a chart showing the distribution of employees by role. The roles with 1 or 2 employees in them are listed under other. These include positions in Executive Management, Fiscal, General Services, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Public Information.

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 position 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. This is an overall 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. Following is a chart outlining the turnover rate by years of service. In Fiscal Year 2004, the agency closed a nursery center which resulted in a large number of layoffs. Therefore, the turnover is high for that Fiscal Year.

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. Following is a chart which outlines the percentage of turnover in each years of service range.

The chart indicates that 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. The chart also indicates 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. As illustrated on the chart below, 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 its 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. Following is a chart of the 5-year retention rate of employees. The significant drop in employees hired in Fiscal Year 2009 is due to budget cuts and the overall budget situation.

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 Forest Protection, Forest Health, and Forest Management teams 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 telecommuting and alternative work schedules on a trial basis in October 2005. A formal policy regarding telecommuting and alternative work schedules was implemented in June 2006. As of June 30, 2009, 104 positions within the agency are eligible for telecommuting. This is 38.7 percent of the agency's total positions. A total of 54 employees telecommute 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 telecommuting and employees actually telecommuting 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 increase 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. Following is a chart of the worker's compensation claims for the past 6 fiscal years. Approximately 45 percent of the claims the first 5 fiscal year 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. Following is a chart outlining the worker's compensation costs for the past 5 fiscal years. 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 has a minimal amount of discretionary funding.

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2009	
Total Authorized Position level	300	
Vacant Positions	-31	
Current Employment Level	269.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)	1	<i>breakout of Current Employment Level</i>
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	268	
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0	
Faculty (Filled)	0	
Wage	180	
Contract Employees	3	
Total Human Resource Level	452.0	<i>= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees</i>

- *Factors Impacting HR*

The agency's Area Foresters and Forest Technicians perform a variety of functions. The Forest Technicians predominately are responsible for responding to wildland fires; training of volunteer firefighters within their assigned counties; monitoring logging sites for water quality issues; enforcing the Water Quality and Fire laws; performing forest management activities; conducting school programs; and performing building and grounds maintenance functions at their assigned offices. Area Foresters are predominately responsible for writing forest management plans; coordinating cost share programs within their assigned work areas; monitoring reforestation activities; performing forest management; responding to wildland fires; enforcing the Water Quality and Fire laws; monitoring logging sites for water quality issues; conducting school programs; and performing building and grounds maintenance activities. The variety and number of functions these positions perform equates to heavy workloads for these positions. The individuals in the positions are often pulled in a variety of directions and sometimes have challenges completing all assigned work, especially when attempting to cover bigger work areas due to the resignation or retirement of personnel in adjacent counties.

In the past, the agency divided the counties in the state into 6 regions for management purposes. The regional headquarters were in Waverly, Tappahannock, Charlottesville, Farmville, Salem, and Abingdon. Partially as a cost savings measure, the agency consolidated its regions down to 3. This consolidation was started in Fiscal Year 2008 and completed in Fiscal Year 2009. The major cost savings came from the elimination of 3 Regional Forester positions. The 3 regions are basically divided by the different forest types in the state – coastal plain, piedmont, and mountain. Initially, the regional headquarters will be Tappahannock for the Eastern Region, Charlottesville for the Central Region and Salem for the Western Region. Over time, the Eastern Region headquarters will be moved to New Kent and the Western Region headquarters will be moved to the Christiansburg/Blacksburg area. Prior to the consolidation, each region had approximately 25 to 35 staff members. The consolidated regions have approximately 60 to 70 staff members. Each region had a unique culture and the small size allowed for a high level of camaraderie. A challenge of the consolidation was merging the culture of each of the former 2 regions into one while still maintaining a level of

camaraderie.

To emphasize the importance of forestland conservation, the agency created the Forest Land Conservation Division in June 2008. This division encompasses conserving the forest land base, monitoring forest product markets, and leading efforts for new incentives such as ecosystem services. To enable our field staff to assist with conservation efforts additional training is needed. Training is also needed on new incentives such as ecosystem services. Due to the current restrictions on training from the Governor's Office, the agency has been unable to provide this training. When the state's budget situation improves, training will be conducted in this area.

A recent addition to the agency's emergency response capabilities is the establishment of urban forest strike teams within the agency. Individuals associated with these teams receive specialized training to conduct post-storm evaluation of residual trees in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Agency standards. Individuals on the teams are sent to areas throughout the United State Forest Services' Southern Region as requested.

In October 2006, the agency implemented a physical fitness policy for its firefighters. As stated previously, this type of work is physically demanding. In order to safely and effectively fight fires and respond to other emergencies, staff members need to be in the appropriate physical shape. Maintaining a specific level of fitness is a requirement for individuals hired into responder positions after October 2006. The testing used to determine physical fitness is the Federal pack test for wildland firefighters. This test has been validated. As of October 2007, all responders must pass this test in order to work on an active fire line. Employees who have not passed it may serve in support functions, but cannot work on the active fire line.

Prior to January 2009, personnel in responder positions were authorized to commute in state vehicles due to their fire response responsibilities. Effective January 1, 2009, this authorization was abolished as a cost savings measure. Individuals in responder positions are still authorized to commute during the spring and fall fire seasons. Outside of fire seasons, though, responders are required to pay if they wished to commute in the state vehicle. This change was met with resistance and resentment by some of the affected personnel. The change has led to challenges with morale. It was seen by some people as a reduction of salary.

State employees received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 through Fiscal Year 2008. In Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This enabled the agency to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. However, DOF still lagged the market for several positions most notably its Area Foresters and Forest Technicians. In Fiscal Year 2009, raises were not given to state employees due to the state's budget situation. Raises are not being granted in Fiscal Year 2010 either. This results in the agency further lagging the market for its salaries.

In addition, the state has not funded its pay-for-performance system. This has contributed to both turnover and recruiting challenges in the past. The agency had a difficult time attracting qualified, experienced candidates for open Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. Due to the economic situation nationwide, more people are out of work. This has resulted in large pools of applicants for positions the agency is able to fill. These pools have included highly skilled and experienced applicants. These individuals are predominately available due to layoffs at their former places of employment. Once the nation's economy improves, we anticipate the agency's applicant pools to return to the pre-economic crisis levels. In addition, we anticipate that some of the individuals hired during the crisis will leave for positions more in line with their experience and salary expectations.

Prior to the crisis, in order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time-to-fill, the agency recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. Implementing this change is still vitally needed. Once the state's overall budget situation improves, the agency needs additional funding to provide appropriate, fair, and competitive salaries for its Forest Technicians and Area Foresters.

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 levels 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 within the agency more difficult and challenging.

In particular, the agency has severe issues with the salary levels of its upper management positions. This has led to upper level positions being less attractive for internal applicants. It also causes challenges with recruiting qualified external applicants. Since November 2004, DOF has recruited 12 times for upper management positions. Of those positions, 4 were filled internally. One Regional Forester position had to be posted 3 times before an appropriate candidate was found. The General Services Director position was open 4 times between May 2006 and August 2008. It was filled 3 times and the incumbents generally stayed 4 months. All 3 left for higher paying positions – 1 for a lower level position in state government; 1 for a county government position; and 1 for a Federal government position. The

Resource Information Director position could not be filled externally. Instead, the agency re-organized to cover the position with current staff members. The predominant reason cited for the lack of interest in senior management positions and the difficulty filling them is their salary levels. To correct this, the agency recommended salary upgrades to upper management positions to make them more competitive and in-line with other agencies. This recommendation was made prior to the current economic crisis. Once the state's overall budget situation improves, the agency needs additional funding in order to implement these changes.

Also, as stated earlier, DOF's Forest Technicians and Area Foresters are 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 Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. This in turn would lead to greater safety for state citizens and a higher level of protection for the state's forested land.

As additional elements of the agency's safety program are implemented, there is a corresponding increase in training needs for employees relating to safety. We anticipate these training needs to continue to increase in the future. Once the training program is fully implemented, there will be training requirements for staff members to stay current in such areas as CPR, first aid, ATV operation, forklift operation, etc.

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.

During those same budget cuts, DOF lost its Forest Pathologist position. This individual was responsible for studying, researching, monitoring, and working to resolve tree illnesses and diseases within the state. When the position was lost, the agency's Entomologist took over these duties. The Entomologist is responsible for studying, researching, monitoring, and working to eliminate bugs and other pests that invade and destroy trees. The education for a Pathologist and an Entomologist are significantly different. Having 1 person cover both positions is not effective. As more insects and diseases attack Virginia's trees, having the appropriate people in place to diagnose and help eradicate these problems will be vital.

In 1988, the agency implemented a bloodhound program to track wildfire arson suspects. The program has been extremely beneficial and at its high point the agency had 3 bloodhounds tracking teams. 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. This meant we lost both the handlers and the dogs. The agency was left with 1 bloodhound tracking team. The agency has acquired 1 new bloodhound team. These teams have been successful in limiting arson fires in their areas and have also provided assistance to local law enforcement. However, DOF would benefit from having additional teams in other areas of the state. To attract additional employees to perform this important work, the agency needs to offer a financial incentive. Additional funding is required to do this.

Another 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 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. The agency anticipates this to become a greater issue in the future. In order to address the issue, the DOF budget will have to be increased. The budget is currently inadequate to fill all approved vacancies. Attempting to provide on-call compensation within the current budget is impractical and not sustainable.

DOF has instituted 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. 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. In addition, the recent budget cuts have impacted this program. Funding needs to be restored before the program can be fully implemented.

The agency fully implemented its recognition program. This program has become integrated into the agency's culture. Employees accept and utilize it. DOF continues to ensure consistency, particularly in the instant recognition program, agency-wide. The program has an overall cost of approximately \$15,000 per year which is less than \$56 per employee. With the recent budget reductions, parts of the program have been scaled back. However, the agency is maintaining its full instant recognition program. Recognizing and thanking employees for outstanding work is especially important in light of the state's budget situation.

In Fiscal Year 2004, the agency fully implemented its training program. The program was fully utilized by staff throughout the agency and was integrated into the agency's culture. All agency personnel were required to obtain a certain number of training credit hours during each performance year. The agency had achieved a rate of at minimum of 99.0 percent of its personnel attending training each fiscal year. However, in February 2008, the Governor's Office instituted restrictions on training due to the state's budget situation. This meant that the agency was able to provide only mission critical training for agency personnel. As a result, the number of agency personnel provided with training in Fiscal Year 2009 dropped to 69.1 percent. The agency needs to be authorized to resume its full training activities as soon as possible.

The agency implemented a Forest Management Academy in September 2005. The academy was geared predominately towards Foresters and Technicians, but was open to all agency staff. It provided specialized training in forest management, forest health, water quality, communications, computer skills, and other areas. It enabled the agency to offer its employees high-quality training in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The academy was very successful and well received. Due to the state's budget situation, it has been placed on hold the last 2 years and is expected to continue to be on hold through at least next year. Restoring this academy as soon as possible is vital to the continued and effective training of the agency's field staff.

Personal data assistants (PDAs) were recently implemented as part of the agency's enterprise system called the Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS). The PDAs are used by field staff to record information gathered during sites visits for forest management plans, inspections of logging sites, etc. Personnel received specialized training on the use of the PDAs and will need on-going support. However, the implementation of PDA's resulted in a true administrative cost reduction to DOF.

In the future, the agency anticipates several training needs in addition to the ones related to safety and technology. Forest health will continue to be a major training need. The need also exists for more supervisory/management and train-the-trainer courses. In addition, the agency needs to ensure our staff members remain up-to-date on forest management issues.

The agency's 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 or when sales of seedlings do not meet seedling production. Seedlings cannot be carried over to the next year.

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*

The regional consolidations are shifting the functions and work load of supervisory and administrative staff members. The changes are enabling supervisory staff members to spend additional time in the field with their subordinates. This provides them the opportunity to provide more effective and in-depth training and mentoring of new staff members. In addition, supervisory staff members are better able to support and manage all their subordinates. As the consolidations are fully implemented, the agency anticipates additional functional changes for its regional staff members.

One of Governor Kaine's priorities for the Commonwealth of Virginia is the conservation of forested land. Relating to this, in Fiscal Year 2007 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 individuals would be charged with assisting local governments, agencies, and landowners to decrease the fragmentation of forested land and increase the amount of forested lands in urban areas. The agency reclassified 2 existing positions to Forest Conservation Specialists for the Richmond and Charlottesville areas. These positions were filled. A third position was reclassified; however, funding is not available to fill it. Additional funding is needed to fill that position and create the 2 remaining positions.

Forest Technicians and Foresters have been the agency's first responders for wildland fires. In particular, the Forest Technician typically was the primary person in a county responsible for wildfires. With the turnover especially among Forest Technicians and the agency's inability to fill positions due to the state's budget situation, the agency did not have enough Forest Technicians and Foresters to effectively cover wildland fires in all counties. Therefore, Water Quality Specialists, Water Quality Engineers, Assistant Regional Foresters, and several other positions have been relied upon to provide fire coverage. These individuals were originally second responders. Since the line between first and second responders no longer substantially exists, the agency recently changed its Forest Fire Mobilization and Readiness Plan to designate all these individuals as responders. The agency no longer has first and second responder designations.

Individuals in fire responder roles also respond to hurricanes and other disasters throughout the state. (This function is coordinated by the state's Department of Emergency Management.) The arduous nature of wildland fire suppression and the stress of complex incident management results in the need for an early retirement option for individuals serving in these positions. The traditional retirement plan for state employees is not able to provide a suitable retirement program for this highly specialized work force. Therefore, the agency has been actively pursuing an enhanced retirement option for its employees in these positions.

The agency is actively recruiting to fill 2 vacant positions. Recruiting for other positions has been suspended pending additional budget cut decisions expected from the Governor's Office. As of June 30, 2009, the agency had 31 authorized positions which were vacant. These positions are predominately Forest Technicians and Area Foresters. This has an impact on the workload for our current county staff. The increased workload leads to job satisfaction challenges and morale issues. Fully restoring the agency's budget once the economic crisis subsides will enable the agency to fill its authorized positions.

The agency's training coordinator was assigned the additional task of serving as the agency's safety officer 4 years ago. The agency has traditionally focused its occupational health and safety program primarily on wildland fire fighting. In the past 4 years, the program has been expanded and the agency is 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; ensure the agency is in full compliance with state and Federal occupational health and safety laws; and enable the agency to reduce its Worker's Compensation costs.

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. services 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 as outlined in DOF's strategic plan. The agency was given 8 Water Quality Specialist positions instead of the 15 requested. Currently, 7 of these positions are filled and 1 was lost under the budget reductions in December 2008. Once the state's overall budget improves, the agency will continue to advocate for additional positions in the future.

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

As stated earlier, the agency has a large number of employees eligible for retirement in the next 5 years. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in work load coverage, 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 retirements, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees. A major factor in retention is having competitive salary levels.

The state is in the process of implementing an inter-agency radio communication system called STARS. DOF uses its radio communication system for emergency dispatch and regular communications. As the radios are installed in agency vehicles and offices, training of personnel on their use will be needed.

Information Technology

- *Current Operational IT Investments:*

Communications:

DOF provides Constituent Services by protecting Virginia's forests from wildfire and in conserving the forestland base. The agency's Strategic Plan further outlines that all emergency vehicles and personnel will be ready for immediate response along with radio equipment, which shall be available on all incidents. DOF accomplishes this through using vehicle-mounted and portable very high frequency (VHF), land mobile radios operating in a wideband configuration, formerly the Public Safety standard. These devices are programmed to operate on two disparate systems, the DOF and a locality system. The DOF radio should ultimately provide immediate contact between DOF regional offices and both full- and part-time personnel while the locality systems are used daily to provide interoperability and immediate communications directly with county or federal resources depending on the circumstances. If DOF fails to equip vehicles and personnel with new narrowband devices as mandated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) by January 1, 2013, the wideband radios MUST be removed from service leaving the firefighters with inadequate communications to perform their services for the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Currently, Forestry equips each first responder vehicle with two mobile radios and firefighters with two handheld units. The first mobile radio provides the vehicle operator direct communications with their associated DOF regional office and firefighters within their region. Simultaneously, the second mobile provides seamless communications with local 9-1-1 dispatcher centers, locality first responders and law enforcement.

The handheld radios are programmed with frequencies authorized by the FCC for Forestry use along with tactical channels similarly authorized to localities used by county personnel for on scene communications. These low-powered, two to five watt units are used by firefighters to receive directives from Incident Command and to communicate with one another on scene. The second unit, programmed similarly, is kept by a DOF county technician to temporarily issue the device to a part-time firefighter arriving on scene to assist in fire suppression efforts.

Forestry is in the process of transitioning from its 1970's era Very High Frequency (VHF) radio system to the newest opportunity, the Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS), a project being administered by the Virginia State Police for the Commonwealth. The new system does provide increased mobile coverage where available. However, no system comes without limitations. First and foremost, the regional offices are unable monitor all critical radio communications within their geographic area of responsibility. As a result, regional foresters and support personnel are unable to listen to certain radio transmissions, the same problem that afflicts the legacy system today for different reasons. In the near future, DOF is slated to receive equipment that will partially minimize this system shortfall but with it, several consequences will emerge. Continuing cooperation between Forestry, the STARS Project team and in the future, the VSP; STARS System Administration for the Commonwealth, can further reduce potential adverse effects on Forestry's operations.

In addition, the STARS units are somewhat expensive, sensitive, and physical communications security measures may one day be instituted. It's not reasonable to expect that all firefighters will have a \$3,000 STARS radio, however it is imperative they have effective radio communications to their counterparts and supervisors. DOF intends the supervisor and/or Incident Commanders (IC) will have a STARS mobile unit at their disposal that has 20 times the power of a handheld to communicate back to headquarters. When STARS is unavailable for any reason, DOF has several portable VHF repeaters that will be set up on scene to provide temporary radio communications.

To provide the safest operating environment in austere tactical conditions, DOF provides medium tier; Public Safety quality devices in the \$800 range programmed with FCC authorized frequencies to all firefighters for "fire line" communications.

In December 2004, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ruled that all private land mobile radio users, such as the DOF, must move to 12.5 kHz narrowband voice channels by the end of 2012. Beginning three years ago, the DOF has replaced 117 mobiles and 232 portables augmented by 210 STARS handhelds fielded to date, leaving 350 radio yet to be replaced.

Information Systems:

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

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.

The second development phase of IFRIS (FPMC - Forest Protection and Mobile Computing) was deployed in phases during 2008/2009. This system uses a mobile application on a GPS device used by all field personnel to manage workflow in the field. Major workflows covered include the forest harvest inspection process (Water Quality Best Management Practices), wildfire reporting, forest management feature mapping, forest health observations and timesheets. The mobile application is integrated with a supporting Web application and data is transferred via automated database synchronization. Logger notification of harvests is accomplished with an external facing Web site that also provides harvest mapping functions. Wildfire reporting includes field tracking of suppression costs and employee time spent on fire incidents.

The IFRIS application, created in the two projects to date and working as an integrated whole, with mobile and Web applications, now serves DOF by:

- managing employee time and leave,
- maintaining forest management information, including cooperating landowner information and field accomplishments,
- managing forest health observations,
- managing the harvest inspection process, including logger notification via the Web,
- providing GPS mapping of forest management and wildfire suppression activities, and
- managing wildfire incident reporting.

The innovative nature of the IFRIS application has been recognized nationally. IFRIS has garnered the following formal awards and honors:

- 2007 Information Communications Technology (ICT) Innovations Award by the National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO)
- Featured during the plenary session of the 2007 ESRI International User Conference
- 2006 Special Achievement in Geographic Information System Award (ESRI)

Adherence to project management standards and best practices has ensured that IFRIS development has largely met user needs and delivered good returns on investments. ROI for Phase 2 is expected to be 55% with a payback period of 2.6 years.

While the IFRIS-FPMC project was completed successfully, resource constraints extended the life of the project, reduced scope, and increased costs. Significant concerns exist about the ability of the agency to both support the current enterprise system and continue with development. Current support concerns include:

- user-identified enhancements to the mapping application for forest management activities
- a flawed accomplishment tracking model needing redesign
- unmet reporting needs for time, leave and accomplishments
- insufficient provisions for geospatial data management
- insufficient quality assurance and quality control processes
- insufficient training provision to application users
- insufficient system documentation and user manuals
- insufficient capacity of staff to make minor changes and enhancements

Other business needs and workflows desired to be addressed in the third or subsequent phases of development include:

- enhancements and workflow adjustments to the IFRIS FPMC applications that have become apparent after deployment and user experiences with the new system
- accounts receivable
- asset and fleet management
- public facing (Web-browser) forest information and ecosystem service calculators
- customer management and self-service account management functions, including access to maps of customer land holdings
- mapping and self-service account management for cooperating forest consultants

● *Factors Impacting the Current IT:*

Communications:

External influences are driving several changes to our business environment, such as mandated narrow banding by the FCC, Homeland Security's National Emergency Communications Plan, and the much-needed Statewide Agencies Radio System (STARS). These changes have positively contributed in moving the DOF as well as the entire Commonwealth into a new era where advanced technologies provide better coverage, greater interoperability and additional frequency spectrum from which all private land mobile users are benefiting.

As addressed in the Current IT State and Issues section, the FCC ruled that all private land mobile radio users such as the DOF must move from the former 25 kHz (wideband) standard to the new standard 12.5 kHz (narrowband) voice channels by the end of 2012.

Title XVIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 is the foundation of the National Emergency Communications Plan. Its purpose promotes the ability of emergency response providers and relevant government officials to continue to communicate in the event of natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters and to ensure, accelerate and attain interoperable emergency communications.

The STARS mobile units operate similar to a cell phone. When a unit is turned on it registers to the network and calls can be made. The individual devices do not communicate directly. When a truck is enroute to a fire, the higher powered mobile radios can reach the network, however once firefighters arrive on scene and begin to use their handheld; the STARS system may suddenly become unavailable to the lower powered radio. In this event, or high in the mountains, deep in the woods, DOF firefighters still require radios to communicate directly with each other. The solution is medium-priced radios.

In the regional offices, consoles will be installed facilitate dispatching. Each console will require additional data services. Members of the VSP STARS Project Team suggested a dedicated T1 at each location may be necessary. Specific requirements and necessary funding has not yet been determined.

Information Systems:

Deployment of the IFRIS enterprise application has resulted in significant benefits. The agency performance tracking (APT) functions have been in place since 2006 and the forest protection and mobile computing (FPMC) functions were deployed during the 2008/2009 fiscal year. The agency has not yet adapted to the support and maintenance requirements of this enterprise information system. The agency needs an operations and support plan - outlining policies, procedures, roles, costs and staffing associated with the full application.

The forest management accomplishment model in place with the 2006 deploy of APT has proven to have some deficiencies and room for improvement. Forest stewardship planning tools are mandated by the US Forest Service. Furthermore, the forest management mapping functions of APT are out of date and not up to the quality of the mapping in FPMC. Enhancements to the mapping functions of APT are needed, including the addition of Forest Stewardship Planning and Mapping.

The current management of information about agency fixed assets and vehicle fleet has been deemed inadequate. A need has been identified for integration of assets and fleet information into the IFRIS system.

Strategic planning and employee work performance tracking are currently disconnected. The time and accomplishment tracking in the IFRIS system presents the opportunity to align strategic planning and performance measures with employee work performance. Adoption by DOF of the Commonwealth's approved Business Intelligence tool (Logi) presents an opportunity to align strategic planning with performance measures and employee work performance.

A few fiscal functions remain in the agency's legacy information system (IMS). Development of accounts receivable and other limited fiscal functions with the IFRIS system has been identified as a need, which would increase efficiency and allow the legacy system a long-overdue retirement.

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. The 2008 Farm Bill mandated as state assessment process and a move toward competitive grants, spatial targeting, and performance measures. A need exists to align enterprise information with this new paradigm

DOF 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.

Because of cost and staffing considerations, and the need for upgrades the agency could not provide, DOF discontinued its public-facing ForestRIM© application, which included an online riparian buffer tax credit mapping and application/approval function.

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. At the same time DOF is taking a lead role in the promotion of markets for ecosystem services.

These factors have led the agency to envision additional public-facing GIS web applications:

- IFRIS-plan (for Resource Planners, includes Ecosystem Services Calculators)
- IFRIS-tsp (for Technical Service Providers), and
- IFRIS-pfl (for Private Forest Landowners, includes RBTC, cost-share)

Resources have not been identified to full fund development of these three public facing applications. Each provide some technical and security challenges as well.

The Incident Qualification System (IQS), which manages information on persons qualified as emergency responders, is deployed as an MS Access application. A SQL Server application is being developed by federal partners and the IQS will be ported to this in 2010. The impact and costs of this change are not entirely clear at this point.

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. Problems with service delivery by VITA have been among the several factors resulting in project delays and costs increases. Demands upon agency staff for VITA transformation activities and service management have exacerbated the agency's staff resource shortages.

- *Proposed IT Solutions:*

Communications:

DOF will continue to migrate onto the STARS as it becomes operational throughout the Commonwealth enhancing our public safety readiness and increasing interagency communications. The system will be used to disseminate administrative and fire dispatching information much as the legacy system provides today. In the event localities are not involved and STARS handheld radios provide adequate coverage on scene, at the incident commander's discretion, fire operations may continue on the new system.

In the wake of the FCC narrow banding initiative, Forestry will continue to use analog/digital conventional radios as they remain critical to our operations. Localities are also changing their systems to meet the FCC narrowband mandate. It's in the best interest of the Commonwealth that DOF procures radio equipment filling the gap between the STARS and the systems used by the localities.

Information Systems:

With the current operational functions of APT and FPMC the agency does not see a need for another major IT project to address internal needs. Existing IFRIS application functions can be expanded and improved to resolve problems with the current system and extend functionality. The agency has identified the following incremental enhancements to its IFRIS application:

- FPMC minor fixes, reports and enhancements
- Operations and Maintenance Plan
- APT Accomplishment Model Redesign
- Data Quality Management Plan
- Forest Stewardship Planning
- Forest Management Mapping Upgrade
- Fleet and Assets Management
- Strategic Planning and Employee Work Plan Performance System
- Fiscal Functions

The enhancements listed above can be developed using in-house labor alone, or a combination of in-house labor and contract services.

In addition the agency wishes to answer external needs by developing three public facing applications, each of which is

likely to be a non-major project:

- IFRIS-tsp (for Technical Service Providers, includes Ecosystem Services Calculators)
- IFRIS-plan (for Resource Planners, includes Ecosystem Services Calculators)
- IFRIS-pfl (for Private Forest Landowners, includes RBTC, cost-share)

These non-major projects would require development work primarily by contract, with some technical assistance from in-house labor.

The enhancements and external applications proposed above align to DOF's Enterprise Business Architecture in the following ways:

- FPMC minor fixes, reports and enhancements

The proposed enhancements to the existing IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business:

Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category), Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category).

Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. The proposed reports and enhancements will focus on the needs of the Resource Management and Resource Protection (Wildfire and Water Quality programs) Divisions. These changes and additions will correct workflows that have changed since the FPMC portion of the IFRIS application was deployed. Combined with the additional reports that are proposed this will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of these DOF Divisions.

- Operations and Maintenance Plan

The proposed development of an Operations and Maintenance plan for DOF's agency enterprise application, IFRIS, impacts the DOF Information and Technology Management (Management of Government Resources Category) line of business. Information and Technology Management involves the coordination of information technology resources and systems required to support or provide a citizen service. In particular this will impact information management, information systems security, lifecycle/change management and system maintenance. The proposed plan will focus on the current and future operations and maintenance needs of the IFRIS application. This would allow DOF to extend the operational life of this application and thus reduce the recurring development costs for new/replacement systems by continuing to leverage the existing technology and methodologies that the IFRIS application has in place.

- APT Accomplishment Model Redesign

This proposed redesign of the existing IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category), Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category) and Knowledge Creations and Management (Mode of Delivery Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. Knowledge Creations and Management involves the programs and activities where a state government entity undertakes a specific effort to create, develop, and/or maintain a body or set of knowledge, the presentation, manipulation or analysis of which can provide inherent benefits for both the state and private sector. The proposed accomplishment model redesign will focus on changing the methodology that has been applied in how the agency collects and stores data associated with activities performed by staff members. The changes made will correct workflows that have changed since the APT portion of the IFRIS application was deployed. Combined with the additional reports that are proposed this will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of all DOF Divisions.

- Data Quality Management Plan

This proposed creation of a data quality management plan impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category), Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category), Knowledge Creations and Management (Mode of Delivery Category) and Information Technology Management (Management of Government Resources Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. Knowledge Creations and Management involves the programs and activities where a state government entity undertakes a specific effort to create, develop, and/or maintain a body or set of knowledge, the presentation, manipulation or analysis of which can provide inherent benefits for both the state and private sector. Information Technology Management involves the coordination of information technology resources and systems required to support or provide a citizen service. The proposed data quality management plan will focus on changing the methodology that has been applied in how the agency collects and stores data associated with activities performed by staff members. The changes made will address how data is audited, validated, maintained and corrected. This will

increase the accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness of all DOF Divisions.

- Forest Stewardship Planning

The proposed development of a Forest Stewardship Planning module for the IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category), Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category) and Knowledge Creations and Management (Mode of Delivery Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. Knowledge Creations and Management involves the programs and activities where a state government entity undertakes a specific effort to create, develop, and/or maintain a body or set of knowledge, the presentation, manipulation or analysis of which can provide inherent benefits for both the state and private sector. The proposed Forest Stewardship Planning module will modernize the Forest Stewardship application and plan writing process for internal DOF staff as well as citizens and their forestry consultants. Currently the process is performed on a mix of paper and electronic media which leads to duplication of efforts by all parties involved and introduces the chance of error in data entry. This will increase the accuracy, efficiency and effectiveness of data created and utilized by the Resource Management Division and general field staff within DOF as well as the USFS.

- Forest Management Mapping Upgrade

The proposed Forest Management Mapping upgrade to the IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category), Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category) and Knowledge Creations and Management (Mode of Delivery Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. Knowledge Creations and Management involves the programs and activities where a state government entity undertakes a specific effort to create, develop, and/or maintain a body or set of knowledge, the presentation, manipulation or analysis of which can provide inherent benefits for both the state and private sector. The proposed mapping upgrade will add additional functionality to the IFRIS application to specifically support the Resource Management Division with the tracking and management of tabular and spatial data related to tracts of land and stands of trees within the Commonwealth. In particular this will lead to more efficient management and more accurate recommendations to citizens and localities on the management of the forested land that they are responsible for.

- Fleet and Assets Management

The proposed development of a Fleet and Asset Management module for the IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Emergency and Disaster Response (Services to Citizens Category), Internal Risk Management and Mitigation (Support Delivery of Services Category) and Administrative Management (Management of Government Resources Category). Emergency and Disaster Management Involves all activities related to emergency responses and that are required to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and repair the effects of emergencies and disasters, whether natural or man-made. Internal Risk Management involves all activities relating to the processes of analyzing exposure to risk and determining appropriate countermeasures. Administrative Management involves the day-to-day management and maintenance of the internal infrastructure. The proposed Fleet and Asset Management module will modernize the software and processes used to manage the fleet and assets that DOF utilizes. Currently the process is performed on a mix of paper and electronic media which leads to duplication of efforts by all parties involved and introduces the chance of error in data entry. In particular this will impact the General Services and Resource Protection Divisions within DOF. The General Services Division will benefit through efficiencies gained in equipment management, fleet management and information/activities related to self insurance. The Resource Protection Division will benefit from increased accuracy in the tracking of equipment status for emergency and disaster response.

- Strategic Planning and Employee Work Plan Performance System

The proposed development of a Strategic Planning and Employee Work Plan Performance System module for the IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category), Internal Risk Management and Mitigation (Support Delivery of Services Category), Planning and Budgeting (Support Delivery of Services Category) and Human Resource Management (Management of Government Resources Category). Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. Internal Risk Management involves all activities relating to the processes of analyzing exposure to risk and determining appropriate countermeasures. Planning and Budgeting involves the activities of determining strategic direction, identifying and establishing programs and processes, and allocating resources (capital and labor) among those programs and processes. Human Resource Management involves all activities associated with the recruitment and management of personnel. The proposed Strategic Planning and Employee Work Plan Performance System module

will modernize the processes used to manage the activities and performance of the DOF staff. Currently the process is performed on a mix of paper and electronic media which leads to duplication of efforts by all parties involved and introduces the chance of error in data entry. All employees within DOF will be impacted by this module through changes related to annual Employee Work Profile generation and evaluation. Human Resources will be able to use the system to evaluate and formulate human resource strategy and perform organization and position management. The Resource Protection Division will benefit from further planning capabilities for contingency and continuity of operations (COOP) planning. The Fiscal Division will have additional tools and reports to facilitate improved budget formation, budget execution and capital planning. Agency leadership will also be able to leverage the data collected and managed by this module for strategic and workforce planning.

- Fiscal Functions

The proposed development of a Fiscal Functions module for the IFRIS application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Financial Vehicles (Mode of Delivery Category), Planning and Budgeting (Support Delivery of Services Category), Revenue Collection (Support Delivery of Services Category) and Financial Management (Management of Government Resources Category). Financial Vehicles involves those monetary exchanges or transactions between government entities as well as between the state government and non-government entities as a means to accomplishing a State or Federal goal or objective. Planning and Budgeting involves the activities of determining strategic direction, identifying and establishing programs and processes, and allocating resources (capital and labor) among those programs and processes. Revenue Collection includes the collection of government income from all sources. Financial Management includes the use of financial information to measure, operate and predict the effectiveness and efficiency of an entity's activities in relation to its objectives. The ability to obtain and use such information is usually characterized by having in place policies, practices, standards, and a system of controls that reliably capture and report activity in a consistent manner. The proposed Fiscal Functions module will modernize the processes used to manage the fiscal activities/functions of DOF. Currently the process is performed on a mix of paper and antiquated electronic systems which leads to duplication of efforts by all parties involved and introduces the chance of error in data entry. All employees within DOF will be impacted by this module through impacts related to budget formulation, budget execution, capital planning, and strategic planning. DOF's Fiscal Division will be most directly impacted through improvements in accounting, funds control, asset and liability management, collections and receivables, payments, reporting and information, cost accounting/performance measurement and tools to facilitate increased tracking and control over grants, subsidies and tax credits. The Resource Protection Division will benefit from an increased ability to track and collect debts that are owed to the agency by landowners for fire suppression activities.

- IFRIS-tsp (for Technical Service Providers, includes Ecosystem Services Calculators)

The proposed IFRIS-tsp application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category) and Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. The proposed application will create a subscription interface for the IFRIS application geared towards consulting foresters and other service providers. Specifically, this application will provide technical users with a mapping interface, ecosystem services calculators, plan builders and a repository for data related to activities performed for clients or employers related to forestland and natural resources. Select GIS layers and data generated by DOF staff will be available on demand through this interface. Through the utilization of the ecosystem services calculators landowners will become educated about options available in the growing ecosystem markets which will lead to increases in voluntary environmental mitigation activities.

- IFRIS-plan (for Resource Planners, includes Ecosystem Services Calculators)

The proposed IFRIS-plan application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category) and Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. The proposed application will create a subscription interface for the IFRIS application geared towards community planners. Specifically, this application will provide technical users with a mapping interface, ecosystem services calculators and other tools geared towards community planning activities. Select GIS layers and data generated by DOF staff will be available on demand through this interface that may not be available in the IFRIS-tsp application.

- IFRIS-pfl (for Private Forest Landowners, includes RBTC, cost-share)

The proposed IFRIS-pfl application impacts the following DOF lines of business: Environmental Management (Services to Citizens Category) and Natural Resources (Services to Citizens Category), Direct Services to Citizens (Mode of Delivery Category), Financial Vehicles (Mode of Delivery Category) and Public Affairs (Support Delivery of Services Category). Environmental Management includes all functions required to monitor the environment, determine proper

environmental standards and ensure their compliance and address environmental hazards and contamination. Natural Resources includes all activities involved in conservation planning, land management, and state park/monument tourism that affect the state's natural, historic, and recreational resources, both private and state. Direct Services to Citizens includes the delivery of a good or service to (or on behalf of) the citizenry or other governmental organizations by the state government with no other intervening persons, conditions, or organizations. Financial Vehicles involves those monetary exchanges or transactions between government entities as well as between the state government and non-government entities as a means to accomplishing a State or Federal goal or objective. Public Affairs involves the exchange of information and communication between the state government, citizens and stakeholders in direct support of citizen services, public policy, and/or state interests. The proposed application will create an account based interface for the IFRIS application geared towards private landowners. Specifically, this application will provide landowners with a mapping interface, ecosystem services calculators and access to data related to activities performed by DOF employees and/or consultants related to property owned by the account holder. Landowners will also be able to use this application to search for cost share, tax credit and other programs that they may be eligible for and initiate the application process.

- *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	\$257,636	-\$564,353	\$257,636	-\$564,353
Estimated VITA Infrastructure	\$1,261,327	-\$439,994	\$1,276,383	-\$438,129
Specialized Infrastructure	\$90,000	\$0	\$90,000	\$0
Agency IT Staff	\$511,722	\$125,931	\$511,722	\$125,931
Non-agency IT Staff	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Application Costs	\$75,000	\$0	\$75,000	\$0
Agency IT Current Services	\$1,938,049	-\$314,063	\$1,953,105	-\$312,198

Comments:

VITA projects several fees will change in the future.

- *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	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Non-major IT Projects	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0
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
Total Proposed IT Investments	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0

- *Projected Total IT Budget*

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	Cost - Year 1		Cost - Year 2	
	General Fund	Non-general Fund	General Fund	Non-general Fund
Current IT Services	\$1,938,049	-\$314,063	\$1,953,105	-\$312,198
Proposed IT Investments	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,938,049	-\$239,063	\$1,953,105	-\$312,198

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

Capital

- *Current State of Capital Investments:*

As of July 2009, DOF owns approximately 200 buildings (60 office buildings) and approximately 50,000 acres of land. The agency is responsible for the maintenance, repairs and improvements on these properties. In 2009, through the Conservation Bond, DOF will increase the acreage of State Forests by 12,898 acres for a total of approximately 62,000 acres.

General Funded Properties:

Most of DOF's buildings are considered general funded facilities and receive maintenance reserve funding. Repairs generally are made by the Buildings and Grounds Crew under the General Services Division.

The agency depends upon an adequate maintenance reserve funding to meet minimum standards for its diverse building stock. DOF buildings range in age from the late 1750's (farm house) to as recent as 2006 (pole sheds) and include our modern Headquarters in Charlottesville (1995). Unique DOF structures include dozens of pole sheds for our wildfire emergency vehicles, seed sorting/drying sheds, modern seedling processing facilities, solar cone drying sheds and a caboose.

Most of the office buildings were constructed during the 1950s -1960s. The cost of maintaining older facilities has escalated and the rate for the cost of maintenance increases is expected to continue over the next few 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.

Nongeneral Funded Properties:

State Forest lands, DOF nurseries and the facilities located thereon are considered special revenue operations and receive no general funds including no maintenance reserve funding. DOF depends on revenues from timber harvests, hunting licenses, recreational fees (new), and the sales of seedlings and seeds to pay for salaries and associated costs, maintenance needs and the continuation of management for these lands and buildings. While the maintenance for the structures is what you expect, the land management includes road and parking lot construction and upkeep, installing gates, installing and repairing recreational trails, and the implementation of forestry activities (demonstration plots, research plots, prescribed burning, thinning timber stands, wildlife habitat improvement and, insect, disease and invasive species control) and numerous other related activities.

- *Factors Impacting Capital Investments:*

The continued reduction in budgets is among the greatest impact on capital investments needs at this time. DOF is working to continue to implement our mission with reduced budgets and finding means to reduce our costs while maintaining our programs.

Factors Impacting General Funded Property:

As our budget decreases, DOF is not retaining the level of staff needed on the Building and Grounds crew to monitor, maintain and repair our 200 buildings. Our B&G crew is down from seven (7) in 1999 to four (4) in 2009. The number of buildings they are responsible for has not changed significantly, however, the amount of work they are expected to perform has increased.

The DOF has made some important strategic changes during the past bi-ennium to meet budget reductions that affect capital outlay and maintenance reserve requests. First and foremost, DOF has moved from six (6) regional office complexes to three (3) regional offices: Eastern, Central and Western. In addition, many county offices have either been eliminated or moved to other existing offices. Consolidation of offices will continue throughout this bi-ennium. In

addition, DOF listed the Staunton Office for sale starting July 1, 2009.

The consolidation of the Eastern Regional 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.

Factors Impacting Non-general Funded Property:

The recent decline of home building and remodeling (and the decline of Virginia's economy in general) has resulted in a decline in the harvest of forest products (particularly lumber) and, as a result, a decline in our nursery products (tree seedlings for reforestation and seeds to other nurseries).

Decreased revenues from our timber and nursery operations poses a significant challenge in maintaining our State Forests system and nursery operations. The costs for maintaining the buildings, nursery equipment and forestlands continues to escalate. DOF is constantly looking for ways to reduce maintenance costs and increase revenue while we defer much of our maintenance. The situation has also led us to delay many projects such as restoring several significant historical buildings for offices and conference centers across the ownerships.

- **Capital Investments Alignment:**

Capital investments and maintenance reserve allow DOF the flexibility to mould our activities to reflect public priorities as we strive to protect and develop healthy forest resources. The role of forestry management has changed over the past decade from a focus on traditional pine timber production to a broader mission that recognized and incorporates the economic benefit of growing timber with the ecological benefits that society demands (clean water, air, wildlife habitat, biodiversity conservation, recreation, etc.).

As demands on our forest resources grow with increasing population, DOF is struggling to meet the needs to educate the public on both the economic and ecological benefits of forest management. This includes establishing and maintaining educational facilities (buildings, trails, interpretive displays, etc.) and programs (prescribe burning certification, arboricultural certification, chainsaw certification, fire trainings, etc.).

State Forests provide a venue for DOF to demonstrate to the public forest management practices (prescribed burns, timber stand improvement, tree species selection, pest control, wildlife management, etc.) that are shown to improve their forests and income potential. These lands are also part of the Commonwealth's effort to conserve the forestland base in Virginia so that the people of the Commonwealth have access to forest benefits (clean water, clean air, places for recreation, biodiversity conservation, affordable forest products and others). In addition, these lands serve as research areas for testing new forest management practices, improved tree species, controlling pests and numerous research projects.

The proposed capital projects are directly aligned with the DOF mission to protect and develop healthy sustainable forest resources for Virginians. DOF can meet its mission, mandates, and Virginia's long-term objectives only by placing personnel in most counties where commercial forestland is available

Agency Goals

Goal 1

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

Goal Summary and Alignment

The Commonwealth's forest lands will be protected from damages resulting from wildfires. Virginia will be a national leader in the effort, by ensuring the DOF has adequate suppression equipment and radio communications to effectively interoperate with local, state, and federal agencies, sufficiently trained personnel, an appropriate fire prevention program and trained staff in arson and law enforcement prepared for the changing needs in wildfire protection and wildland/urban interface. 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 Objectives

- We will reduce the forest land burned by wild fires.

Objective Strategies

- Agency Forest Fire Readiness and Mobilization plan will be in place during the spring and fall fire seasons to maintain a state of high wildfire readiness.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Goal 2

Protect, promote, and enhance forested watersheds, non-tidal wetlands and riparian areas.

Goal Summary and Alignment

Provide technical services, best management practices information, and silvicultural activity enforcement on the Commonwealth's forest 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 Objectives

- We will protect and enhance water quality by increasing compliance with BMPs on forest harvest sites.

Objective Strategies

- Utilize comprehensive Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS) to support the water quality law enforcement program that allows for harvest operation tracking from point of notification to inspections close-out. Continue to promote and increase the use of the Water Quality Improvement Act funds to support the Logger BMP Cost-Share Program.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

- Increase the amount of forestland protected and/or established in Virginia watersheds.

Objective Strategies

- Work collaboratively with partners, agencies and groups to establish new buffers as outlined in the Riparian Forest Buffer Implementation Plan.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Goal 3

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 Objectives

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

Objective Strategies

- Prepare professional management plans for landowners.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

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

Objective Strategies

- Maintain the number of new forest stewardship plans.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Goal 4

Conserve the forestland base.

Goal Summary and Alignment

Reduce the rate of conversion of forests with important conservation value by identifying those forest lands that provide the greatest combination of economic and environmental benefits. Provide technical assistance and information on the conservation methods available, and by accepting working forest conservation easements and fee simple acquisitions.

Goal Objectives

- Increase the number of acres of forestland protected from conversion.

Objective Strategies

- Develop educational materials and programs and use these to raise landowner awareness of the need for and methods available for forestland conversion.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Goal 5

Promote forest industry and diversified markets for forest landowners including ecosystem service markets.

Goal Summary and Alignment

The forest industry is the largest manufacturing sector in Virginia and provides economic benefits to communities and citizens in every county and city in the state. The majority of the forestland in Virginia is owned by private citizens. If forest landowners are to continue to own and manage forests in a healthy, sustainable way they will need to receive benefits or forests may be converted into other uses. By fostering a strong forest products industry and providing diversified markets and benefits, this goal aligns with the Agency's Mission to protect and develop healthy sustainable forest resources. Markets for ecosystem services, such as water quality, air quality, and carbon sequestration, provide a financial opportunity for forest landowners. These markets are very important by providing additional tools and incentives to curb the loss of Virginia's forestland.

Goal Alignment to Statewide Goals

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

Goal Objectives

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

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

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

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Goal 6

Collect, maintain and disseminate forest resource inventory information and applied research.

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 Objectives

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

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

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

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

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 Objectives

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

Objective Strategies

- We will follow the Commonwealth IT Accessibility Standard (ITRM GOV 103-00) when creating and editing Web pages and applications.
- We will continue to audit pages and applications at random using the online W3C Markup Validation Tool.
- We will continue to review our agency's summary of web site accessibility on the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) web site.
- We will continue to follow the Commonwealth Information Security policies, standards and guidelines as presented and directed by VITA when creating and editing Web pages and applications.
- We will continue to review our agency's summary in the annual VITA Commonwealth of Virginia Information Security Report and make changes as appropriate.
- We will promote fairness and equity.
- Target recruiting advertisement to obtain more female and minority applicants.
- We will attract and retain a talented workforce.
- Seek additional funding to enable our agency to pay competitive salaries to its Area Foresters, Forest Technicians, senior managers, and executive managers.
- We will annually review positions for eligibility to telework or work an alternative schedule and continue to encourage employees in eligible positions to telework and/or work alternative schedules.
- Continue to follow all Department of Accounts (DOA) and Department of General Services (DGS) Policies and Procedures.
- Strengthen the internal control environment by combining the expertise of the fiscal and procurement functions and provide immediate feedback to the buyer on issues of noncompliance with DOA and DGS regulations as

part of the pre-audit function.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

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

- 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 12:30 pm

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

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 and was designed to meet the 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	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 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 Reforestation of Timberlands 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 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 2011		FY 2012		FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2011	FY 2012
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund						
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*

There are currently no positions designated under this service area. However, this function is covered by the agency's Area Foresters as part of their job duties. Area Foresters are predominately responsible for writing forest management plans; coordinating cost share programs within their assigned work areas, which includes the Reforestation of Timber program; monitoring reforestation activities; performing forest management; responding to wildland fires; enforcing the Water Quality and Fire laws; monitoring logging sites for water quality issues; conducting school programs; and performing building and grounds maintenance activities. The variety and number of functions this position performs equates to heavy workloads for individuals in these positions. The individuals in the positions are often pulled in a

variety of directions and sometimes have challenges completing all assigned work, especially when attempting to cover bigger work areas due to the resignation or retirement of personnel in adjacent counties.

State employees received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 through Fiscal Year 2008. In Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This enabled the agency to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. However, DOF still lagged the market for several positions most notably its Area Foresters. In Fiscal Year 2009, raises were not given to state employees due to the state's budget situation. Raises are not being granted in Fiscal Year 2010 either. This results in the agency further lagging the market for its salaries.

In addition, the state has not funded its pay-for-performance system. This has contributed to both turnover and recruiting challenges in the past. The agency had a difficult time attracting qualified, experienced candidates for open Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. Due to the economic situation nationwide, more people are out of work. This has resulted in large pools of applicants for positions the agency is able to fill. These pools have included highly skilled and experienced applicants. These individuals are predominately available due to layoffs at their former places of employment. Once the nation's economy improves, we anticipate the agency's applicant pools to return to the pre-economic crisis levels. In addition, we anticipate that some of the individuals hired during the crisis will leave for positions more in line with their experience and salary expectations.

Prior to the crisis, in order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time-to-fill, the agency recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Area Forester positions. Implementing this change is still vitally needed. Once the state's overall budget situation improves, the agency needs additional funding to provide appropriate, fair, and competitive salaries for its Forest Technicians and Area Foresters.

Personal data assistants (PDAs) were recently implemented as part of the agency's enterprise system called the Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS). The PDAs are used by field staff to record information gathered during sites visits for forest management plans, inspections of logging sites, etc. Personnel received specialized training on the use of the PDAs and will need on-going support.

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2009	
Total Authorized Position level	15	
Vacant Positions	2	
Current Employment Level	13.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)	0	<i>breakout of Current Employment Level</i>
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	13	
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0	
Faculty (Filled)	0	
Wage	0	
Contract Employees	0	
Total Human Resource Level	13.0	<i>= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees</i>

- *Factors Impacting HR*

There are a small number of positions designated under this service area. However, this function is covered by the majority of the agency's Area Foresters as part of their job duties. Area Foresters are predominately responsible for writing forest management plans; coordinating cost share programs within their assigned work areas, which includes the Reforestation of Timber program; monitoring reforestation activities; performing forest management; responding to wildland fires; enforcing the Water Quality and Fire laws; monitoring logging sites for water quality issues; conducting school programs; and performing building and grounds maintenance activities. The variety and number of functions this position performs equates to heavy workloads for individuals in these positions. The individuals in the positions are often pulled in a variety of directions and sometimes have challenges completing all assigned work, especially when attempting to cover bigger work areas due to the resignation or retirement of personnel in adjacent counties.

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- **Anticipated HR Changes**

The agency has a large number of employees eligible for retirement in the next 5 years. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in work load coverage, especially in field positions. 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 retirements, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees. A major factor in retention is having competitive salary levels.

Prior to the state's budget crisis, in order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time-to-fill, the agency recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Area Forester positions. Implementing this change is still vitally needed. Once the state's overall budget situation improves, the agency needs additional funding to provide appropriate, fair, and competitive salaries for its Area Foresters.

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.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of the forest resource.
- Agency Goal: Promote forest industry and diversified markets for forest landowners including ecosystem service markets.

Objective Strategies

- 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: 90 Date: 7/1/2007

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: 92 Date: 6/30/2012

Measure Target Description: 92% by July 1, 2012

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.

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:30 pm

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

Service Area 2 of 4

Forest Conservation, Wildfire & 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 resources.
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 eight 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. Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of forest resources.
4. Conserve the forestland base.
5. Promote forest industry and diversified markets for forest landowners including ecosystem service markets.
6. Collect, maintain, and disseminate forest resource information.
7. We will be prepared to act in the interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. and its infrastructure during emergency situations by actively planning and training both as an agency and as individuals.
8. Ensure resources are used efficiently and programs are managed effectively, and in a manner consistent with state and federal requirements.

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*

10.1-1100 through 10.1-1119, General and specific powers and duties of the State Forester.

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 -1135 -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 – 1158 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.

Chapter 17, §10.1-1701 authorizes any public body to acquire title or any interests in real property for the preservation or 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 Agencies	Federal Land Management Agencies - USFS, USFWS, NRCS, FSA	4	4
Fire Departments	Fire Departments - all voluntary and many paid Virginia fire departments	712	765
Forest Industry & Associated Businesses	Forest Industry & Associated Businesses - all	6,500	15,000
General Public	General Public - all	200,000	7,000,000
Local Governments	Local Governments - all	100	100
Forest Industry & Associated Businesses	Loggers	1,200	3,000
Non-Governmental Organizations	Non-Governmental Organizations - VFA, VFPA, TNC, others	20	50

Other State Agencies	Other State Agencies - DCR, DEQ, VDACS, DHR, VOF, VSP, DGIF, universities, others	12	12
Private Forest Landowners	Private landowners	6,000	300,000
State-Supported Educational Organizations	State Universities - VT, VSU, others	8	39

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

The privately held forest land in Virginia is expected to be owned by more individuals, while the average size land holding will decrease. DOF anticipates that its services will be expected by more customers as a result of this ownership change and an increased interest and need to better manage land holdings and improving our environment and quality of life. Decreasing funding will challenge DOF to meet increased customers' needs. DOF will strive to encourage incentives for land owners, including the acceptance of marketable ecosystem services from managed forestland, seek funding for improve and expand services for management and protection, and collaborate with partners to enhance the quality of forestlands.

Partners

Partner	Description
Federal Agencies (USFS, NPS, USFWS, NRCS)	Cooperative agreements, cost-share funding, and consolidated grants for fire, forest health monitoring, Chesapeake Bay and other watersheds, forest management, ecosystem services, wildfire, and forest health initiatives and programs.
Local governments	County governments and Planning District Commissions interested in maintaining their forest resources and the ecosystem services they utilize accurate and timely forest resource information in their planning processes.
Non-governmental Organizations	These groups represent a strong partner base in land conservation, urban and community forestry, ecosystem services, 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.
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.
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. Additional funding is necessary to recruit, train, and retain qualified employees.

Finding dedicated funding to consistently replace equipment through purchase or lease 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 per year). Parcelization, the division of forest land into smaller and smaller ownerships occurs along with conversion. Both 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 twofold problem. First, we must better manage the remaining acres of forestland 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 at the county, State, and federal level.

Because land use decisions are determined primarily by local governments, impacting forest conversion on a large scale will require outreach to and influencing the local planning process. Quality training is necessary to insure that a workforce of knowledgeable employees have the latest technical information and are able to effectively communicate appropriate forest resource assessment 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.

In addition to utilizing the agency-owned plane, it may be necessary to contract for aircraft services 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 (TIMOs), Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), and private individuals. This shift away from a vertically integrated forest industry will have significant impacts on forestland 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, and smaller ownerships, an increase in harvest inspections and the demand for assistance with preharvest planning and enforcement of the water quality laws and procedures could occur.

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 credits.

Efforts in voluntary mitigation, employing forest conservation specialists, and increased awareness of the DOF's conservation easement program, is resulting in a significant 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. Adequate funding to meet these increasing needs over time will be necessary.

As forestland becomes increasingly fragmented and IFRIS reporting is enhanced, the DOF expects an increased interest 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 strong 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 forestland conversion.

Participation in climate change discussion and planning efforts has significantly increased recently. 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 300,000 potential forest landowners.
- 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.
- 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 seedling 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 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 allows 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 firefighter's 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 currently 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 and provide leadership as part of the Virginia Prescribe Fire Council.
- Participate in the development of ecosystem service markets.
- Exploring, developing, and providing incentives to conserve forest land and maintain working forests.
- 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 approve all cost-share projects for water quality protection.
- Enhance and develop market opportunities for Virginia's forest products. This includes both traditional forest products and speciality, niche products.
- Provide and develop information related to forestry industry.
- Develop, hold, monitor, and enforce conservation easements provided either through donation or partial purchase.
- Administer the U.S. Forest Service 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 land owners 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

Forestry Conservation, Wildfire and Watershed Services receives funding from General Fund Appropriations (77%), Special revenue funds (15%), and Federal grants (8%). The majority of the funding in this service area is needed to fund salaries, which continue to increase; thus reducing our discretionary spending. In addition, the majority of our federal funding in this service area is from competitively-funded special projects dedicated for specific projects, thus further 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 2011		FY 2012		FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2011	FY 2012
	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund				
Base Budget	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268				
Change To Base	-\$279,416	\$700,000	-\$279,416	\$700,000				
Service Area Total	\$14,887,078	\$7,379,268	\$14,887,078	\$7,379,268				
Base Budget	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268				
Change To Base	-\$279,416	\$700,000	-\$279,416	\$700,000				
Service Area								

Total	\$14,887,078	\$7,379,268	\$14,887,078	\$7,379,268
Base Budget	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268	\$15,166,494	\$6,679,268
Change To Base	-\$279,416	\$700,000	-\$279,416	\$700,000
Service Area Total	\$14,887,078	\$7,379,268	\$14,887,078	\$7,379,268

Human Resources

• Human Resources Overview

The agency's Area Foresters and Forest Technicians perform a variety of functions. The Forest Technicians predominately are responsible for responding to wildland fires; training of volunteer firefighters within their assigned counties; monitoring logging sites for water quality issues; enforcing the Water Quality and Fire laws; performing forest management activities; conducting school programs; and performing building and grounds maintenance functions at their assigned offices. Area Foresters are predominately responsible for writing forest management plans; coordinating cost share programs within their assigned work areas; monitoring reforestation activities; performing forest management; responding to wildland fires; enforcing the Water Quality and Fire laws; monitoring logging sites for water quality issues; conducting school programs; and performing building and grounds maintenance activities. The variety and number of functions these positions perform equates to heavy workloads for these positions. The individuals in the positions are often pulled in a variety of directions and sometimes have challenges completing all assigned work, especially when attempting to cover bigger work areas due to the resignation or retirement of personnel in adjacent counties.

In the past, the agency divided the counties in the state into 6 regions for management purposes. The regional headquarters were in Waverly, Tappahannock, Charlottesville, Farmville, Salem, and Abingdon. Partially as a cost savings measure, the agency consolidated its regions down to 3. This consolidation was started in Fiscal Year 2008 and completed in Fiscal Year 2009. The major cost savings came from the elimination of 3 Regional Forester positions. The 3 regions are basically divided by the different forest types in the state – coastal plain, piedmont, and mountain. Initially, the regional headquarters will be Tappahannock for the Eastern Region, Charlottesville for the Central Region and Salem for the Western Region. Over time, the Eastern Region headquarters will be moved to New Kent and the Western Region headquarters will be moved to the Christiansburg/Blacksburg area. Prior to the consolidation, each region had approximately 25 to 35 staff members. The consolidated regions have approximately 60 to 70 staff members. Each region had a unique culture and the small size allowed for a high level of camaraderie. A challenge of the consolidation was merging the culture of each of the former 2 regions into one while still maintaining a level of camaraderie.

To emphasize the importance of forestland conservation, the agency created the Forest Land Conservation Division in June 2008. This division encompasses conserving the forest land base, monitoring forest product markets, and leading efforts for new incentives such as ecosystem services. To enable our field staff to assist with conservation efforts additional training is needed. Training is also needed on new incentives such as ecosystem services. Due to the current restrictions on training from the Governor's Office, the agency has been unable to provide this training. When the state's budget situation improves, training will be conducted in this area.

In October 2006, the agency implemented a physical fitness policy for its firefighters. As stated previously, this type of work is physically demanding. In order to safely and effectively fight fires and respond to other emergencies, staff members need to be in the appropriate physical shape. Maintaining a specific level of fitness is a requirement for individuals hired into responder positions after October 2006. The testing used to determine physical fitness is the Federal pack test for wildland firefighters. This test has been validated. As of October 2007, all responders must pass this test in order to work on an active fire line. Employees who have not passed it may serve in support functions, but cannot work on the active fire line.

Prior to January 2009, personnel in responder positions were authorized to commute in state vehicles due to their fire response responsibilities. Effective January 1, 2009, this authorization was abolished as a cost savings measure. Individuals in responder positions are still authorized to commute during the spring and fall fire seasons. Outside of fire seasons, though, responders are required to pay if they wished to commute in the state vehicle. This change was met with resistance and resentment by some of the affected personnel. The change has led to challenges with morale. It was seen by some people as a reduction of salary.

State employees received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 through Fiscal Year 2008. In Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This enabled the

agency to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. However, DOF still lagged the market for several positions most notably its Area Foresters and Forest Technicians. In Fiscal Year 2009, raises were not given to state employees due to the state's budget situation. Raises are not being granted in Fiscal Year 2010 either. This results in the agency further lagging the market for its salaries.

In addition, the state has not funded its pay-for-performance system. This has contributed to both turnover and recruiting challenges in the past. The agency had a difficult time attracting qualified, experienced candidates for open Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. Due to the economic situation nationwide, more people are out of work. This has resulted in large pools of applicants for positions the agency is able to fill. These pools have included highly skilled and experienced applicants. These individuals are predominately available due to layoffs at their former places of employment. Once the nation's economy improves, we anticipate the agency's applicant pools to return to the pre-economic crisis levels. In addition, we anticipate that some of the individuals hired during the crisis will leave for positions more in line with their experience and salary expectations.

Prior to the crisis, in order to reduce our turnover rate and lower our time-to-fill, the agency recommended an increase in the starting salaries for our Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. Implementing this change is still vitally needed. Once the state's overall budget situation improves, the agency needs additional funding to provide appropriate, fair, and competitive salaries for its Forest Technicians and Area Foresters.

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 levels 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 within the agency more difficult and challenging.

In particular, the agency has severe issues with the salary levels of its upper management positions. This has led to upper level positions being less attractive for internal applicants. It also causes challenges with recruiting qualified external applicants. Since November 2004, DOF has recruited 12 times for upper management positions. Of those positions, 4 were filled internally. One Regional Forester position had to be posted 3 times before an appropriate candidate was found. The General Services Director position was open 4 times between May 2006 and August 2008. It was filled 3 times and the incumbents generally stayed 4 months. All 3 left for higher paying positions – 1 for a lower level position in state government; 1 for a county government position; and 1 for a Federal government position. The Resource Information Director position could not be filled externally. Instead, the agency re-organized to cover the position with current staff members. The predominant reason cited for the lack of interest in senior management positions and the difficulty filling them is their salary levels. To correct this, the agency recommended salary upgrades to upper management positions to make them more competitive and in-line with other agencies. This recommendation was made prior to the current economic crisis. Once the state's overall budget situation improves, the agency needs additional funding in order to implement these changes.

Also, as stated earlier, DOF's Forest Technicians and Area Foresters are 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 Forest Technician and Area Forester positions. This in turn would lead to greater safety for state citizens and a higher level of protection for the state's forested land.

As additional elements of the agency's safety program are implemented, there is a corresponding increase in training needs for employees relating to safety. We anticipate these training needs to continue to increase in the future. Once the training program is fully implemented, there will be training requirements for staff members to stay current in such areas as CPR, first aid, ATV operation, forklift operation, etc.

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.

During those same budget cuts, DOF lost its Forest Pathologist position. This individual was responsible for studying, researching, monitoring, and working to resolve tree illnesses and diseases within the state. When the position was lost, the agency's Entomologist took over these duties. The Entomologist is responsible for studying, researching, monitoring, and working to eliminate bugs and other pests that invade and destroy trees. The education for a Pathologist and an Entomologist are significantly different. Having 1 person cover both positions is not effective. As more insects and diseases attack Virginia's trees, having the appropriate people in place to diagnose and help

eradicate these problems will be vital.

In 1988, the agency implemented a bloodhound program to track wildfire arson suspects. The program has been extremely beneficial and at its high point the agency had 3 bloodhounds tracking teams. 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. This meant we lost both the handlers and the dogs. The agency was left with 1 bloodhound tracking team. The agency has acquired 1 new bloodhound team. These teams have been successful in limiting arson fires in their areas and have also provided assistance to local law enforcement. However, DOF would benefit from having additional teams in other areas of the state. To attract additional employees to perform this important work, the agency needs to offer a financial incentive. Additional funding is required to do this.

Another 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 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. The agency anticipates this to become a greater issue in the future. In order to address the issue, the DOF budget will have to be increased. The budget is currently inadequate to fill all approved vacancies. Attempting to provide on-call compensation within the current budget is impractical and not sustainable.

DOF has instituted 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. 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. In addition, the recent budget cuts have impacted this program. Funding needs to be restored before the program can be fully implemented.

The agency fully implemented its recognition program. This program has become integrated into the agency's culture. Employees accept and utilize it. DOF continues to ensure consistency, particularly in the instant recognition program, agency-wide. The program has an overall cost of approximately \$15,000 per year which is less than \$56 per employee. With the recent budget reductions, parts of the program have been scaled back. However, the agency is maintaining its full instant recognition program. Recognizing and thanking employees for outstanding work is especially important in light of the state's budget situation.

In Fiscal Year 2004, the agency full implemented its training program. The program was fully utilized by staff throughout the agency and was integrated into the agency's culture. All agency personnel were required to obtain a certain number of training credit hours during each performance year. The agency had achieved a rate of at minimum of 99.0 percent of its personnel attending training each fiscal year. However, in February 2008, the Governor's Office instituted restrictions on training due to the state's budget situation. This meant that the agency was able to provide only mission critical training for agency personnel. As a result, the number of agency personnel provided with training in Fiscal Year 2009 dropped to 69.1 percent. The agency needs to be authorized to resume its full training activities as soon as possible.

The agency implemented a Forest Management Academy in September 2005. The academy was geared predominately towards Foresters and Technicians, but was open to all agency staff. It provided specialized training in forest management, forest health, water quality, communications, computer skills, and other areas. It enabled the agency to offer its employees high-quality training in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The academy was very successful and well received. Due to the state's budget situation, it has been placed on hold the last 2 years and is expected to continue to be on hold through at least next year. Restoring this academy as soon as possible is vital to the continued and effective training of the agency's field staff.

Personal data assistants (PDAs) were recently implemented as part of the agency's enterprise system called the Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS). The PDAs are used by field staff to record information gathered during sites visits for forest management plans, inspections of logging sites, etc. Personnel received

specialized training on the use of the PDAs and will need on-going support.

In the future, the agency anticipates several training needs in addition to the ones related to safety and technology. Forest health will continue to be a major training need. The need also exists for more supervisory/management and train-the-trainer courses. In addition, the agency needs to ensure our staff members remain up-to-date on forest management issues.

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2009	
Total Authorized Position level	244	
Vacant Positions	14	
Current Employment Level	230.0	
Non-Classified (Filled)	1	<i>breakout of Current Employment Level</i>
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	229	
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0	
Faculty (Filled)	0	
Wage	170	
Contract Employees	1	
Total Human Resource Level	401.0	<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 an additional five (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 five (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. services 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 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 bloodhound tracking team. The remaining team has been successful in limiting arson fires in their area. The agency has recently acquired one 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 five (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*

The regional consolidations are shifting the functions and work load of supervisory and administrative staff members. The changes are enabling supervisory staff members to spend additional time in the field with their subordinates. This provides them the opportunity to provide more effective and in-depth training and mentoring of new staff members. In addition, supervisory staff members are better able to support and manage all their subordinates. As the consolidations are fully implemented, the agency anticipates additional functional changes for its regional staff members.

One of Governor Kaine's priorities for the Commonwealth of Virginia is the conservation of forested land. Relating to this, in Fiscal Year 2007 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 individuals would be charged with assisting local governments, agencies, and landowners to decrease the fragmentation of forested land and increase the amount of forested lands in urban areas. The agency reclassified 2 existing positions to Forest Conservation Specialists for the Richmond and Charlottesville areas. These positions were filled. A third position was reclassified; however, funding is not available to fill it. Additional funding is needed to fill that position and create the 2 remaining positions.

Forest Technicians and Foresters have been the agency's first responders for wildland fires. In particular, the Forest Technician typically was the primary person in a county responsible for wildfires. With the turnover especially among Forest Technicians and the agency's inability to fill positions due to the state's budget situation, the agency did not have enough Forest Technicians and Foresters to effectively cover wildland fires in all counties. Therefore, Water Quality Specialists, Water Quality Engineers, Assistant Regional Foresters, and several other positions have been relied upon to provide fire coverage. These individuals were originally second responders. Since the line between first and second responders no longer substantially exists, the agency recently changed its Forest Fire Mobilization and Readiness Plan to designate all these individuals as responders. The agency no longer has first and second responder designations.

Individuals in fire responder roles also respond to hurricanes and other disasters throughout the state. (This function is coordinated by the state's Department of Emergency Management.) The arduous nature of wildland fire suppression and the stress of complex incident management results in the need for an early retirement option for individuals serving in these positions. The traditional retirement plan for state employees is not able to provide a suitable retirement program for this highly specialized work force. Therefore, the agency has been actively pursuing an enhanced retirement option for its employees in these positions.

The agency is actively recruiting to fill 2 vacant positions. Recruiting for other positions has been suspended pending additional budget cut decisions expected from the Governor's Office. As of June 30, 2009, the agency had 31 authorized positions which were vacant. These positions are predominately Forest Technicians and Area Foresters. This has an impact on the workload for our current county staff. The increased workload leads to job satisfaction challenges and morale issues. Fully restoring the agency's budget once the economic crisis subsides will enable the agency to fill its authorized positions.

The agency's training coordinator was assigned the additional task of serving as the agency's safety officer 4 years ago. The agency has traditionally focused its occupational health and safety program primarily on wildland fire fighting. In the past 4 years, the program has been expanded and the agency is 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; ensure the agency is in full compliance with state and Federal occupational health and safety laws; and enable the agency to reduce its Worker's Compensation costs.

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. services 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 as outlined in DOF's strategic plan. The agency was given 8 Water Quality Specialist positions instead of the 15 requested. Currently, 7 of these positions are filled and 1 was lost under the budget reductions in December 2008. Once the state's overall budget improves, the agency will continue to advocate for additional positions in the future.

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

The agency has a large number of employees eligible for retirement in the next 5 years. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in work load coverage, especially in field positions. 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 retirements, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees. A major factor in retention is having competitive salary levels.

The state is in the process of implementing an inter-agency radio communication system called STARS. DOF uses its radio communication system for emergency dispatch and regular communications. As the radios are installed in agency vehicles and offices, training of personnel on their use will be needed.

Service Area Objectives

- We will reduce the forest land burned by wild fires.

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.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Protect the citizens, their property, and the forest resource from wildfire.

Objective Strategies

- Complete 12 new Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) and carry out 12 wildfire hazard mitigation projects in high wildfire 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 wildfire 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 was 95.4%

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 94.7% by July 1, 2012

Long-range Measure Target Value: Date:

Long-range Measure Target Description: 93.7% by July 1, 2014. Long range trend is to decrease human caused forest fires and keep forest fire size small. Weather and increasing population can adversely affect all agency efforts.

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 protect and enhance water quality by increasing compliance with BMPs on forest harvest sites.

Objective Description

Protect water quality by increasing compliance with Best Management Practices (BMPs) on forest harvest sites.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Protect, promote, and enhance forested watersheds, non-tidal wetlands and riparian areas.

Objective Strategies

- Engage water quality specialists to provide more consistency to regional staff for implementation and enforcement of the water quality law.
- Utilize comprehensive Integrated Forest Resource Information System (IFRIS) to support the water quality law enforcement program that allows for harvest operation tracking from point of notification to inspections close-out. Continue to promote and increase the use of the Water Quality Improvement Act funds to support the Logger BMP Cost-Share Program.
- Identify BMP implementation rates by individual BMP groups and utilize that information to target specific training programs for the SHARP Logger Program.
- Utilize Water Quality Penalty funds to support logger training across the Commonwealth.
- State-wide BMP implementation rate on timber harvesting operations.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Cost to conduct a forest harvest water quality inspection

Measure Class: Measure Frequency: Preferred Trend:

Frequency Comment: The number of inspections and the total costs of inspections are tracked and reported on a quarterly basis.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Average of last three quarters in FY 2008

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: The target is in 2008 dollars and will be adjusted for 2010 dollars

Long-range Measure Target Value: Date:

Long-range Measure Target Description: All efforts will be made to lower the cost of harvest inspections.

Data Source and Calculation: Numerator: forest harvest water quality inspection costs (includes salary, wages, and operating costs) Denominator: # acres of forest harvest inspected (total number of forest harvest acres inspected during the time period)

- Percentage of Best Management Practices implemented on timber harvesting operations.

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

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

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 82.4% of audited sites showing BMP implementation during the 2007-2008 time period using a newly implemented BMP Implementation auditing process.

Measure Target Description: 85% by July 1, 2012

Long-range Measure Target Value: 88 Date: 7/1/2014

Long-range Measure Target Description: 88% by July 1, 2014. Long range target is to increase the percentage of voluntary logger usage of best management practices and eliminate every chance for sediment from logging to move into any Virginia waters.

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 expressed as a percentage of total BMPs by category with an overall BMP Implementation percentage score for the year. The results are based on a sample size of 240 tracts per year.

- 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.

Objective Strategies

- Develop educational materials and programs and use these to raise landowner awareness of the need for and methods available for forestland conversion.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of forest management projects implemented on private land.

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

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

Measure Baseline Value: 604 Date: 7/1/2006

Measure Baseline Description: 2415/year (604/quarter) average number of forest management projects from recent five year period.

Measure Target Value: 650 Date: 7/1/2012

Measure Target Description: 2600 forest management projects annually (650 projects/quarter)

Long-range Measure Target Value: 700 Date: 7/1/2014

Long-range Measure Target Description: 2800 forest management projects annually (700/quarter). Long range target is increase the number of projects, but forest conversions and sales of larger forest tracts into smaller tracts may make this difficult or impossible to accomplish any increase.

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 forestland 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, and maintaining riparian forest buffers along streamside management zones.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Protect the citizens, their property, and the forest resource from wildfire.
- Agency Goal: Conserve the forestland base.
- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of the forest resource.

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.
- 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 established and/or protected in Virginia watersheds.

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

Frequency Comment: Number of forest land acres established and/or protected.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Average acreage accomplishments as reported in IFRIS for past four years for riparian buffer establishment, afforestation, and riparian buffer tax credit.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: Acres forest land protected and/or established in Virginia (riparian buffer establishment, open land planting, riparian buffer tax credit, and urban tree planting)

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

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

Objective Strategies

- Prepare professional management plans for landowners.
- Identify and develop management plans for municipal, county and other public lands.
- Maintain the number of new forest stewardship plans.
- Update State Lands forest stewardship plans on 10% of tracts and initiate recommended projects.
- Focus plan preparation in high priority areas.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

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

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

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Average number of plans for seven reporting years: 153,920 acres/year or 38,480/quarter

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 135,000 acres/year by July 1, 2012 (33,750 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 and Tree Farm Plans.

- 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. 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.

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.

Objective Strategies

- DOF will complete two annual exercises, with after action reviews, to identify areas to implement possible improvements.
- The agency Emergency Coordination Officer will stay in regular communication with the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, and other Commonwealth Preparedness Working Group agencies.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Agency Preparedness Assessment Score

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

Measure Baseline Description: 2008 Agency Preparedness Assessment Results (% out of 100)

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: Minimum of 75%

Data Source and Calculation: The Agency Preparedness Assessment is an all-hazards assessment tool that measures agencies' compliance with requirements and best practices. The assessment has components including Physical Security, Continuity of Operations, Information Security, Vital Records, Fire Safety, Human Resources, Risk Management and Internal Controls, and the National Incident Management System.

- Promote diversification of forest markets and a healthy forest industry to keep forestland 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 forestland base.
- Agency Goal: Improve the stewardship, health and diversity of the forest resource.
- Agency Goal: Promote forest industry and diversified markets for forest landowners including ecosystem service markets.

Objective Strategies

- Promote Virginia forest industry and products.
- Maintain up-to-date economic and industry data on the importance of forests and forest industry.
- Work with existing forest industry to identify concerns and opportunities.
- Work with partners to identify and distribute information on new and changing forest markets.
- Develop and participate in conferences, workshops and demonstrations on market opportunities for landowners and industry.
- Promote opportunities for private landowners to participate more in certified forest markets.
- Identify and promote opportunities for forestland owners, industry and public to participate in the use of bio-energy.
- Identify and promote opportunities for forestland owners, industry and public to participate in the use of bio-energy.

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

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

- Increase awareness of ecosystem services provided by forestland 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 landowner. In addition to markets, consideration of these environmental services in county planning, land conversion activities, and voluntary mitigation is critical. This objective will utilize conferences, presentations, workshops, etc. to promote ecosystem service initiatives.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Conserve the forestland base.
- Agency Goal: Promote forest industry and diversified markets for forest landowners including ecosystem service markets.

Objective Strategies

- Develop and participate in ecosystem services workshops, seminars, and presentations for landowners, natural resource managers, and other stakeholders.
- Develop tools for quantifying ecosystem services that can be used in land use planning, mitigating land conversion activities, and market participation.
- Participate in various efforts such as climate change initiatives and market development, that promote ecosystem services.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of presentations/workshops/conferences and projects developed to promote market opportunities for landowners.

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

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: New Measure - base line to be developed 7/1/2011

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: Number of presentations/workshops/conferences and projects developed to promote market opportunities for landowners.

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

- Increase the number of acres of forestland protected from conversion.

Objective Description

Use voluntary conservation measures such as donated conservation easements, state acquisition, or other long-term use restrictions to protect forests from being converted to development. This effort will utilize 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 forestland base.

Objective Strategies

- Assist landowners in placing working forest conservation easements on forested properties.
- Utilize funding from Forest Legacy and Virginia Land Conservation Fund when available to purchase conservation easements or fee simple interest in land.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of acres protected from conversion.

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: 73,000 total cumulative easement acres recorded by 7/1/2012

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.

- 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 inventory information and applied research.

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 by July 1, 2012

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

- 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 inventory information and applied research.

Objective Strategies

- Develop and implement research projects that apply to a wider landowner base, address practical forest management problems, and achieve appropriate data results in time to address emerging issues and problems.
- Provide new information to continuously improve the health, sustainability, and conservation of Virginia's forests.
- Communicate results of research using reports, presentations, and field demonstrations so that employees, other technical experts, and landowners can use and apply the 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 by July 1, 2012

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

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

Objective Description

To 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.

Objective Strategies

- We will continue to audit pages and applications at random using the online W3C Markup Validation Tool.
- Target recruiting advertisement to obtain more female and minority applicants.
- Seek additional funding to enable our agency to pay competitive salaries to its Area Foresters, Forest Technicians, senior managers, and executive managers.
- Strengthen the internal control environment by combining the expertise of the fiscal and procurement functions and provide immediate feedback to the buyer on issues of non-compliance with DOA and DGS regulations as part of the pre-audit function.
- We will follow the Commonwealth IT Accessibility Standard (ITRM GOV 103-00) when creating and editing Web pages and applications.
- We will continue to review our agency's summary of web site accessibility on the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) web site.
- We will promote fairness and equity.
- We will attract and retain a talented workforce.
- We will annually review positions for eligibility to telework or work an alternative schedule and continue to encourage employees in eligible positions to telework or work an alternative schedule and continue to encourage

employees in eligible positions to telework and/or work alternative schedules.

- Continue to follow all Department of Accounts (DOA) and Department of General Services (DGS) Policies and Procedures.
- We will continue to follow the Commonwealth Information Security policies, standards and guidelines as presented and directed by VITA when creating and editing Web pages and applications.
- We will continue to review our agency's summary in the annual VITA Commonwealth of Virginia Information Security Report and make changes as appropriate.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Percent of administrative measures marked as "meets Expectations" for the agency.

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

Frequency Comment: Agencies are required to publish results for their administrative measures on Virginia Performs after the end of each fiscal year. The specific deadline for publishing results will be posted in the Leadership Communique.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: The FY2009 score of the agency

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: To achieve 100% "meets" expectations by 7/1/2012

Data Source and Calculation: There are currently 13 administrative measures organized into five categories. Each measure has a different data source. Agencies should refer to the administrative measures data source information table to locate the data source for each measure. The table is located in Virginia Performs/Agency Planning and Performance/Administrative Measures. Calculation: Agencies select the appropriate colored indicator (green, yellow, red) for each measure, depending on results. A gray indicator is used for measures where data are unavailable. The agency administration measure is the percent of the administrative measures that have a green indicator (meets expectations). Exclude items with a gray indicator from the calculation.

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:30 pm

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

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.

Nurseries:

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.

State Forests:

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 for 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 the sale of 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.

State Lands:

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 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 denuded by clearing and abandoned farming operations in late 1800s and early 1900s. Now, the state forests attest to sustainable nature of managed forests. Currently, the State Forest provides many miles of trails on the State Forests devoted to recreational use by the public. Budgetary constraints will govern expansions to the existing trail system, requiring the State Forests to prioritize where and when expansions occur.

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	20	50

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 significantly 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 is currently underway.

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

Partner	Description
American Chestnut Foundation	DOF cooperates with the American Chestnut Foundation in the breeding and testing work to reestablish a resistant American Chestnut into Virginia's forests.
Department of Game & Inland Fisheries	DGIF and DOF participate in research and demonstration areas on the state forests and Nurseries 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 a percentage 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 all of the Commonwealth's watersheds.

The availability of laborers to carry out the work in the nursery is an important factor impacting products. Two nurseries now carry the entire seedling production for Virginia.

The State Forests are impacted by weather, severe storms, insects, diseases and markets. In addition, growing recreational demands will affect finances and personnel resources for the State Forests. Another factor impacting the State Forest is the amount of allowable acreage or tree volume the State Forest is allowed to remove annually to meet the State Forest Plan and its budget.

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

DOF anticipates decreased requests for most tree species, especially loblolly pine for reforestation. This decrease is the result of a depressed timber market.

The agency expects the public to 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.

DOF expects to increase the number of forest management projects on non-DOF owned state lands.

- *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, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and riparian buffer plantings. Many seedlings are the result of genetic improvement work. All seedlings produced are appropriate for Virginia's climate and soils.
- State Forest System must pay for their operations through the sale of timber, forest products and user fees. The largest component of their budget is made up from timber sales conducted on the State Forests. Timber is offered by competitive sealed bidding to the highest bidder and sold periodically from stands of mature trees or ready for harvest. These products 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.
- The State Forest System offers many forest recreation uses, 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 persons who wish to use the State Forests, such as hunters, trappers, fishermen, bikers, and horseback riders for a fee. As a group, these recreational uses produce a significant percent of the State Forest System's budget.
- Research and academic pursuits are benefits of the State Forest and nurseries. DOF partners in research with 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. 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, forest products and user fees. The majority of the funding is made up from the sale of timber. The user fee 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 a percentage of the gross proceeds from the timber sales to the local government.

- *Financial Breakdown*

	FY 2011		FY 2012		FY 2011	FY 2012
	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		
Service Area Total	\$0	\$3,758,538	\$0	\$3,758,538		
Base Budget	\$0	\$3,758,538	\$0	\$3,758,538		
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		
Service Area Total	\$0	\$3,758,538	\$0	\$3,758,538		

Human Resources

- *Human Resources Overview*

The agency's state forests and nursery centers employees predominately have 15 or more years of service. As these individuals continue to approach retirement age, the agency will need to be proactive in replacing them in order to ensure continuation of service. This service area is the most diverse of agency employees.

- *Human Resource Levels*

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

- *Factors Impacting HR*

The agency's 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 or when sales of seedlings do not meeting seedling production. Seedlings cannot be carried over to the next year.

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.

State employees received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 through Fiscal Year 2008. In Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This enabled the agency to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. In Fiscal Year 2009, raises were not given to state employees due to the state's budget situation. Raises are not being granted in Fiscal Year 2010 either. This results in the agency further lagging the market for its salaries.

The agency fully implemented its recognition program. This program has become integrated into the agency's culture. Employees accept and utilize it. DOF continues to ensure consistency, particularly in the instant recognition program, agency-wide. The program has an overall cost of approximately \$15,000 per year which is less than \$56 per employee. With the recent budget reductions, parts of the program have been scaled back. However, the agency is maintaining its full instant recognition program. Recognizing and thanking employees for outstanding work is especially important in light of the state's budget situation.

In Fiscal Year 2004, the agency full implemented its training program. The program was fully utilized by staff throughout the agency and was integrated into the agency's culture. All agency personnel were required to obtain a certain number of training credit hours during each performance year. The agency had achieved a rate of at minimum of 99.0 percent of its personnel attending training each fiscal year. However, in February 2008, the Governor's Office instituted restrictions on training due to the state's budget situation. This meant that the agency was able to provide only mission critical training for agency personnel. As a result, the number of agency personnel provided with training in Fiscal Year 2009 dropped to 69.1 percent. The agency needs to be authorized to resume its full training activities as soon as possible.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

Forest Technicians and Foresters have been the agency's first responders for wildland fires. In particular, the Forest Technician typically was the primary person in a county responsible for wildfires. With the turnover especially among Forest Technicians and the agency's inability to fill positions due to the state's budget situation, the agency did not have enough Forest Technicians and Foresters to effectively cover wildland fires in all counties. Therefore, Water Quality Specialists, Water Quality Engineers, Assistant Regional Foresters, and several positions in the Nursery

Centers and State Forests Units have been relied upon to provide fire coverage. These individuals were originally second responders. Since the line between first and second responders no longer substantially exists, the agency recently changed its Forest Fire Mobilization and Readiness Plan to designate all these individuals as responders. The agency no longer has first and second responder designations.

The agency has a large number of employees eligible for retirement in the next 5 years. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in work load coverage. In order to effectively fill the upcoming vacancies due to retirements, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees. A major factor in retention is having competitive salary levels.

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 cost.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Promote forest industry and diversified markets for forest landowners including ecosystem service markets.
- Agency Goal: Manage agency resources to effectively and efficiently accomplish the strategic initiatives.

Objective Strategies

- Obtain future seedling sales projection 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 a survey in 2007 which resulted in 97%.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 90% by July 1, 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.

Alignment to Agency Goals

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

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

- Percentage increase in net revenue generated by the state nurseries.

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 2012 will be compared to net revenues ending on June 30, 2010.

- 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 level of 75% of the available crop. This annual harvest level will ensure a sustainable supply of forest products into the future.

Alignment to Agency Goals

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

Objective Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive annual work plan which will meet the goals of the State Forest System plan.
- Develop a survey to assess the best public uses of State Forest lands and the reasons the public visit the State Forests.
- Define the best locations for public use on State Forests that complement forest management objectives and timber sales.

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

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 80% of allowable harvest completed

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

Service Area Strategic Plan

Department of Forestry (411)

3/11/2014 12:30 pm

Biennium: 2010-12 ▼

Service Area 4 of 4

Financial Assistance for Forest Land Management (411 501 05)

Description

This service area consists of providing technical and financial assistance to help improve the livability of cities and communities through managing urban forest resources to promote a healthy ecosystem. DOF provides leadership to the Commonwealth's urban and city areas to accomplish this goal, liaisons with the U. S. Forest Service and works closely with communities to ensure success. This service area also consists of providing training and financial assistance to Virginia Volunteer Fire Departments (VFDs) who serve a key role as primary cooperators for the agencies wildfire suppression role.

This service area consists of:

Urban & Community Forestry:

- Providing technical assistance to cities, towns and non-profit organizations.
- Making federal grants available to cities, towns, 501-c-3 non-profit organizations, other state agencies and educational institutions.
- Coordinating the Tree City USA Program in cooperation with the National Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of State Foresters
- Conducting or coordinating urban/community forestry workshops, conferences, seminars, field days, etc., in cooperation with other state agencies and various organizations.
- Providing appropriate training on urban forestry technology, issues and programs to DOF employees.

Assistance to Virginia Volunteer Fire Departments:

- Providing training in wildfire suppression and advanced incident management to VFDs across the Commonwealth.
- Providing federal grants to VFDs to aid them in obtaining specialized wildfire equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Administering the Virginia Dry Hydrant Grant Program to increase the rural water supply available for fire suppression needs.

Background Information

Mission Alignment and Authority

- *Describe how this service supports the agency mission*

The Urban and Community Forestry (U & CF) Program is aligned with DOF's mission in the following ways:

- U & CF encourages the conservation and management of forest land in urbanizing areas.
- U & CF encourages the protection of unique and fragile habitats in urbanizing areas.
- U & CF encourages the enhancement of forested watersheds and protection and enhancement of riparian areas.
- Urban and community forests contribute to economic development in cities and towns.
- Urban and community forests "... protect its atmosphere, lands and water from impairment or destruction (and provide) for the public benefit, enjoyment and general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth..." Article XI, Virginia Constitution.
- Urban and community forests encourages and supports the green infrastructure approach to land conservation.
- Urban and community forests encourages and supports the development of greenway projects in communities.
- Urban and community forests supports and helps to implement environmental leadership training through the Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute.

The Forest Resource Protection - Assistance to Rural Volunteer Fire Departments Program is aligned with DOF's mission:

- VFDs are a primary cooperator with the VDOF for the protection of the forest resources of the Commonwealth from wildfire.
- Wildfire prevention and suppression is crucial for protecting and maintaining Virginia's vast forest resources.
- *Describe the Statutory Authority of this Service*

Forestry Title 02 Federal Farm Bill (USDA) provides grant funds and authority for state forestry agencies to authorize payments for approved urban forest projects.

Chapter 11, Forest Resources and the Department of Forestry, Article 2, Duties of the State Forester and General Provisions Section 10.1-1105, authorizes the State Forester to cooperate with counties, municipalities, corporations and individuals in preparing plans and providing technical assistance for the protection, management and replacement of trees, wood lots and timber tracts and the establishment and preservation of urban forests.....

§10.1-1128. Acquisition and administration: Each county, city and town acting through its governing body, is authorized to acquire by purchase, gift or bequest tracts of land suitable for the growth of trees and to administer the same, as well as any lands now owned by any such locality and suitable for the growth of trees, as county, city or town forests.

§28.2-401 - Fire Programs Fund - Dry Hydrant Fire Grant Priorities.

Assistance to Virginia Volunteer Fire Departments

Chapter 11, Article 6, §10.1-1135 - 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.

Customers

Agency Customer Group	Customer	Customers served annually	Potential annual customers
	General Public	0	0
	Local governments	115	146
	Local Planning Districts	10	20
	National Non-Governmental Organizations	6	10
	Other Federal Agencies	4	6
	Other State Agencies	3	8
	State Supported Educational Organizations	19	25
Fire Departments	Volunteer Fire Departments	700	762

Anticipated Changes To Agency Customer Base

[Nothing entered]

Partners

Partner	Description
Allegheny Energy	Joint efforts to manage trees along utility right of ways.
Alliance for Community Trees	Consultation on National U&CF issues, advocacy, policy
American Forests	Joint efforts to promote the care and management of community trees.
Appalachian Power	Joint efforts to manage trees along utility right of ways.
Community Colleges	Cooperative educational workshops and networking opportunities.
Dominion Power	Joint efforts to manage trees along utility right of ways.
Green Infrastructure Center Inc.	LEadership and technical assistance on green infrastructure projects.
International Society of Arboriculture	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests.
Local Governments	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests. Project development and implementation.
Local Land Trust Organizations	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests.
Local non-governmental organizations (non-profits)	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests.
Mid-Atlantic Chapter of ISA	Consultation, joint educational efforts, professional certification.
National Arbor Day Foundation	Joint efforts to promote the care and management of community trees.

Regional Planning District Commissions	Joint efforts to identify and quantify the value of forest cover in communities.
Resource Conservation & Development Districts (RC&Ds)	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests. Project development and implementation.
Scenic Virginia	Development of program information for legislators at state and federal level.
Society of Municipal Arborists	Joint efforts to promote the care and management of community trees.
University of Virginia	Cooperative educational workshops and networking opportunities. Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute (VNRLI)
US Forest Service	Cooperative agreements and joint projects to enhance a state and federal program.
US National Park Service	Cooperative agreements and joint projects.
Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)	Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests. Project development and implementation.
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)	Collaboration and cooperation on trails and greenway projects. Joint efforts on greenway and green infrastructure education.
Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)	Tree Planting projects.
Virginia Horticultural Foundation	Joint educational effort.
Virginia State University	Cooperative educational workshops, community outreach and networking opportunities.
Virginia Tech	Cooperative educational workshops, research, community outreach and networking opportunities. Project development and implementation. Partnership with Community Design Assistance Center (CDAC).
Virginia Urban Forest Council (Trees Virginia)	Program development, consultation and delivery. Joint educational and informational efforts aimed at improving and protecting community forests. Project development and implementation.

Products and Services

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

Funding is the primary factor impacting this service area. The service area represents the act of primarily offering federal grants to communities and volunteer fire departments interested in the protection, development and improvement of their community forests.

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

DOF recognizes a strong interest from communities and volunteer fire departments 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.

- *Listing of Products and/or Services*

- 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 state universities and colleges 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, to the extent possible within its budget constraints, makes these events accessible to underserved audiences through scholarships.
- 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. Through its Urban and Community Forestry Program, DOF is continuing its decade long partnership with DCR and the National Park Service RTCA program to support local greenway and trails efforts. DOF does this through joint projects with Virginia Tech's Community Design Assistance Center to do conceptual planning. DOF also accomplishes this by co-sponsoring workshops and conferences on greenways and trails with DCR and others. Through its Urban and Community Grant Program, DOF also supports local government and/or non-profit organizations with limited funding for staff working on greenways and trail projects.

- 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, the proposed front Royal Greenway, the Dante RV Trail, the Great Eastern Trail, the Tobacco Heritage Trail (in Brunswick and Mecklenburg Counties), and others.
- DOF has been instrumental in advancing the green infrastructure concept of land conservation planning to Virginia. DOF hosted the first Virginia training on green infrastructure concepts to a statewide audience in 2005. It has since supported a major green infrastructure planning effort in the New River Valley and the Charlottesville area and has funded several local conferences and workshops to advance this concept. DOF is working with the Planning School at the University of Virginia to see that green infrastructure concepts are introduced to students in this planning program. Through its Urban and Community Grant Program and other sources of Federal (USFS) funds, DOF is supporting green infrastructure work being done by the non-profit Green Infrastructure Center. DOF will continue to use a portion of its Urban and Community Forestry funds to support green infrastructure initiatives to the extent possible with this limited funding.
- The Forestry Workgroup and the Chesapeake Executive Council of the Chesapeake Bay Program has recognized the retention and expansion of urban tree canopy U=(UTC) as a strategy in its "Expanded Riparian Forest Buffer Goals" Directive 03-01 states that "By 2010, (the Chesapeake Bay Program through DOF) will work with at least five (5) local jurisdictions and communities....to complete an assessment of urban forests, adopt a local goal to increase urban tree canopy cover and encourage measures to attain the established goals in order to enhance and extend forest buffer functions in urban areas". DOF, through its Urban and Community Forestry Program, is supporting urban forest assessments in 15 communities within the Chesapeake Bay watershed and will continue to support these efforts through very limited funding from the Chesapeake Bay Program, state Water Quality Improvement Funds and other grant funds. Some communities have already established UTC goals and DOF will monitor communities doing assessments and encourage goal setting measures by them in order that Virginia meets the UTC targets set forth within Directive 03-01 of the five (5) state Chesapeake Bay Agreement.
- DOF is utilizing a portion of the WQIA (distributed by DCR) funds to support on-the-ground urban and community forestry activity to improve community water quality. These funds are used to support grants to local governments or organizations to establish riparian areas, restore wetlands, install bio-retention projects (i.e. rain gardens), etc. The Urban and Community Forestry program will continue to support this activity as long as WQIA funds are available.
- DOF realized the need for a professional forestry response to communities after the urban forest destruction caused by Hurricane Isabel to Richmond and Tidewater in 2003. The Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Program, in cooperation with U&CF programs in other states, have trained a number of its employees and other professional arborists/urban foresters in urban storm response as members of "urban forest strike teams (UFSTs). The storm response takes the form of post-storm evaluation of residual trees in accordance with FEMA standards. DOF has utilized its employees to respond to storm events in several states beginning in 2008. It will continue to participate as members of the 13 state southern region UFSTs and respond to storm events when requested. DOF is also in the process of coordinating this function with activities of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and will integrate with VDEM on a formal basis once the needed protocols are established. DOF will continue to offer UFST training to its employees and other Virginia partners as new trainings occur.

Finance

● *Financial Overview*

This service area provides financial assistance to non-profits. DOF administers federal pass-through grant programs to communities and non-profits to develop and maintain urban and community forests as well as volunteer fire department to train wildland fire fighters and purchase fire fighting 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 entirely from Federal sources.

● *Financial Breakdown*

FY 2011	FY 2012
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	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund	General Fund	Nongeneral Fund
Base Budget	\$0	\$675,000	\$0	\$675,000
Change To Base	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Service Area Total	\$0	\$675,000	\$0	\$675,000

Human Resources

- *Human Resources Overview*

This service area consists of pass through grants. Therefore, the agency does not have any employees tied to it.

- *Human Resource Levels*

Effective Date	7/1/2008
Total Authorized Position level	0
Vacant Positions	0
Current Employment Level	0.0
Non-Classified (Filled)	0
Full-Time Classified (Filled)	0
Part-Time Classified (Filled)	0
Faculty (Filled)	0
Wage	0
Contract Employees	0
Total Human Resource Level	0.0

breakout of Current Employment Level

= Current Employment Level + Wage and Contract Employees

- *Factors Impacting HR*

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

A recent addition to the agency's emergency response capabilities which falls partially under this service area is the establishment of urban forest strike teams within the agency. Individuals associated with these teams receive specialized training to conduct post-storm evaluation of residual trees in accordance with Federal Emergency Management Agency standards. Individuals on the teams are sent to areas throughout the United State Forest Services' Southern Region as requested.

State employees received annual increases from Fiscal Year 2004 through Fiscal Year 2008. In Fiscal Year 2006, the state gave an additional \$50 a year increase to staff with 5 or more years of continuous service. This enabled the agency to get closer to the market salaries for comparable positions. In Fiscal Year 2009, raises were not given to state employees due to the state's budget situation. Raises are not being granted in Fiscal Year 2010 either. This results in the agency further lagging the market for its salaries.

- *Anticipated HR Changes*

The agency has a large number of employees eligible for retirement in the next 5 years. This has the potential for fundamentally changing the agency and leading to large gaps in work load coverage, especially in field positions. 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 retirements, the agency needs to reduce the turnover rate of newer employees. A major factor in retention is having competitive salary levels.

Service Area Objectives

- Provide available financial resources to rural volunteer fire departments for training and the acquisition of small equipment and wild land personal protective equipment.

Objective Description

Provide available financial resources to rural volunteer fire departments for training and the acquisition of small

equipment and wild land personal protective equipment.

Alignment to Agency Goals

- Agency Goal: Protect the citizens, their property, and the forest resource from wildfire.

Objective Strategies

- Maintain and update annually the contact for each volunteer fire department within the county to the regional data base, and to maintain an effective working relationship.
- Increase the use of available Federal Excess property to volunteer fire departments within identified high fire risk areas.
- 20% of the Commonwealth's rural volunteer fire departments will receive DOF pass-through financial assistance on an annual basis based on needs and current wildfire response capabilities.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Percentage of eligible rural volunteer fire departments receiving available state and federal financial assistance.

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

Frequency Comment: Percent of eligible volunteer fire departments actually served with grant funds.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: Percentage. Average of 27% (2000-2006) of the eligible VFDs served annually.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 40% by July 1, 2012

Data Source and Calculation: DOF will count the number of volunteer fire departments who received funds annually compared against the number of eligible rural volunteer fire departments as listed by Department of Fire Programs.

- Increase urban forest management in Virginia communities.

Objective Description

Urban and community forest management activities in Virginia communities will be increased. Forests play an important role in the environment and economy of urban communities. DOF will work with communities to help them understand the importance of forests and encourage them to adopt a variety of activities to protect and enhance healthy urban community forests.

Alignment to Agency Goals

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

Objective Strategies

- Categorize Virginia communities into the various program levels using USDA Forest Service guidelines.
- Target U&CF grants and technical assistance to communities interested in upgrading their community tree program to the next level.
- Promote the benefits of urban and community forestry to community officials through workshops, conferences, publications, and other media.

Link to State Strategy

- nothing linked

Objective Measures

- Number of communities assisted with forest and/or tree resource management.

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

Frequency Comment:
DOF will count the

number of communities assisted each year.

Measure Baseline Value: Date:

Measure Baseline Description: 107 assists per year for past three federal fiscal years calculated 7/1/2009.

Measure Target Value: Date:

Measure Target Description: 110 assists/year by 7/1/2012.

Data Source and Calculation: DOF will count the number of community assists received by communities, including grants, technical assists, Tree City USA, and active urban forestry plans.

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