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## Video Newsletter

Scan this QR code with your phone camera to watch a video of someone reading the newsletter.



## Virginia Forestry Biomass BMPs

In 2023, the General Assembly amended the Virginia Clean Economy Act so that woody biomass could continue being used as a source of electric power generation at three Dominion Energy plants. The energy produced can generate Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), as long as the material is harvested following best management practices (BMPs) for the sustainable harvesting of biomass. The DOF was directed to develop these Biomass BMPs.

As a result, timber harvesters now have a question on the harvest notification to say whether their harvest will include REC-eligible biomass. The following statement also appears: “The Renewable Energy Credit eligible biomass harvest currently only applies to biomass that is being delivered to the following Dominion power plants: Hopewell, Southampton, and AltaVista.” If a timber harvester is taking biomass to one of these three Dominion plants, then they should probably answer “Yes” to the REC question. This will tell the DOF inspector to monitor the harvest for biomass BMPs.

### DOF Inspection Process:

Along with normal water quality inspections, DOF inspectors will monitor these harvests for three things that would disqualify it from meeting the standard for sustainable harvesting of biomass:

1. Ineligible materials. REC-eligible biomass can include the following: mill residues, logging residues, forest thinnings, slash, brush, low-commercial value materials, undesirable species, and woody material harvested for the purpose of forest fire fuel reduction or forest health and watershed improvement.
2. Potential for sedimentation of state waters.
3. Potential for the harvesting of biomass to reduce the productive capacity of the site for forest growth. This means changes to site conditions affecting a significant proportion of the tract – such as rutting, soil compaction, or changes to surface water flow – that would prevent regeneration or forest growth.

Concerns about biomass harvesting will be handled the same way as sedimentation issues. The DOF inspector will notify the timber harvester of any concerns. If the concerns cannot be readily addressed, the DOF regional water quality specialist or engineer will work with the timber harvester. DOF will conduct repeat inspections so that concerns can be addressed before the harvest is closed out.

During the final harvest inspection, DOF will record whether all three factors for REC-eligibility have been met.

## How Many Credits Do I Need? How Can I Check My Credits?

Everyone with current SHARP status is now on an 8-credit, 2-year renewal cycle. If your SHARP logger status expired on 1/1/2024, then you might still need to earn 12 total credits. Everyone must take the required SHARP Logger Update Class in every renewal cycle. **The number of CE credits you still need is printed above your name on the mailing label.** If the label says "Update Needed" then you have not attended the required SHARP Logger Update Class and need the Update before you can renew. **Even if you have more than enough credits, you must take the Update.** The label will also show your renewal date. If it says your credits are due by 1/1/2024 then your SHARP logger status has expired and you must earn the required CE credits by the end of this year or you will have to retake the Core Program to become a SHARP Logger again.

You can also check your credits, Update status, and renewal date on the website ([www.SharpLogger.vt.edu](http://www.SharpLogger.vt.edu)), by typing your last name (only) in the "check credits" box at the top of the page. If your record does not come up, either your SHARP status is expired or there is an error. Contact the SHARP Logger Program at 540-231-6494 or [SharpLogger@vt.edu](mailto:SharpLogger@vt.edu).

## Upcoming Continuing Education (CE) classes

### SHARP Logger Update Class (2 CE Credits)

The SHARP Logger Update Class includes a BMP refresher, a logging safety refresher, and other topics that impact logging businesses. The training meets the "SHARP Logger Update Class" Continuing Education requirement. SHARP loggers must attend at least one of these required classes during each renewal period. Shortened to 2 hours & **2 CE credits**. This class will be offered at the following locations:

**Palmyra:** September 26

**Colonial Heights:** November 8

**Martinsville:** December 13

**Courtland:** December 13

### Additional CE Credit Opportunities

**Legal Issues:** Colonial Heights (11/8). Following the SHARP Logger Update Class.

**Topics in Sustainable Forestry:** Palmyra (9/26), Martinsville, (12/13), & Courtland (12/13)

Following the SHARP Logger Update Class.

All classes tentative. Check [www.SharpLogger.vt.edu/training.html](http://www.SharpLogger.vt.edu/training.html) or contact the SHARP Logger Program at [SharpLogger@vt.edu](mailto:SharpLogger@vt.edu) or 540-231-6494 for the most up-to-date information.

## Virginia's Hardwood Initiative

*Article by Joseph Rossetti, Virginia Department of Forestry*

In the last article we discussed Timber Stand Improvement (TSI), a generic term foresters use to communicate ways to make a forest better. One approach to TSI is removing cull trees. Cull trees are non-merchantable trees that do not help the forest meet the landowner's objective. They are likely trees with poor form, late-stage disease or health concerns, or rot and decay. Yet with all these *[continued page 3]*

## Core SHARP Logger Program Schedule

The Core Program consists of classes on Sustainable Forestry, Logging Safety, and Harvest Planning & BMP's. Participants must attend both core sessions to become a SHARP Logger. For more information or to register, please contact the SHARP Logger Program at [sharplogger@vt.edu](mailto:sharplogger@vt.edu) or (540) 231-6494.

Core 1	Core 2	Location
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Wednesday, Sept. 11 Wednesday, Sept. 25	Wednesday, Sept. 18 Thursday, Sept. 26	Clifton Forge Halifax
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**Registration required!** For more information, contact the SHARP Logger Program at: [sharplogger@vt.edu](mailto:sharplogger@vt.edu) or 540-231-6494.

**Check our website at [www.SHARPllogger.vt.edu](http://www.SHARPllogger.vt.edu) for the most up to date listing of classes.**

## Online Continuing Education Logger Training

There are currently 10 one-credit SHARP online trainings available on the SHARP online training webpage at [www.sharplogger.vt.edu/onlinece.html](http://www.sharplogger.vt.edu/onlinece.html). The SHARP Logger Update Class is available under all of the one-credit classes. SHARP loggers can also get CE credit for viewing Mid-Atlantic Logger Training Webinars. MALT webinars are available from West Virginia Cooperative Extension, with a link and instructions for creating a free user account on the SHARP online training webpage.

*[Hardwood Initiative, continued from page 2]*

undesirable traits, cull trees are still often found in the canopy.

Removing cull trees frees up growing space for the other, more desirable trees. With the extra space, these remaining desirable trees can expand their crowns, grow faster, produce more seeds, and be healthier.

Cull trees can be removed from the canopy with herbicides or by cutting them down. Girdling sometimes works but is the least reliable method to control culls. Cutting down culls removes them from the canopy immediately and causes most hardwoods to resprout. The resprouts can be desirable as nutritious deer browse or to grow into another tree. If resprouting isn't desired or if the landowner wants a snag, then an appropriately labeled herbicide applied using hack-and-squirt method is a good approach for controlling culls.

All hardwood practices should start with a complete stand assessment followed by a prescription. The prescription should fully describe the practice, including information on which species should be removed, stem quality, size, and how much to remove. Since this practice isn't intended to regenerate the forest but instead to manage the current crop of trees, no more than 10 or 20% of the trees in the stand should be described as culls and removed.

Nearly every hardwood forest has cull trees, so this practice can be used widespread. If the stand you're looking at harvesting has culls, remove them for the benefit of the landowner, the future landowner and the next logger. Some landowners don't want to harvest yet but want cull trees removed to improve their forest. How much would you charge someone to cut and leave their cull trees?



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## Virginia SHARP Logger Newsletter

Find more information online at [www.SHARPllogger.vt.edu](http://www.SHARPllogger.vt.edu)

### 2024-2025 Online SHARP Logger Update

The 2024-2025 Online SHARP Logger Update Class has now been posted to the SHARP website ([www.SharpLogger.vt.edu/onlineCE.html](http://www.SharpLogger.vt.edu/onlineCE.html)). This is a 2-hour/2-credit version of the required SHARP Logger Update Class. Taking this class plus 6 one-credit classes will fulfill your SHARP renewal requirements. See page 2 for the schedule of in-person classes.

The 2024-2025 version was made using the same technology as the one-credit classes, so it should not have the glitches that were common in the 2022-23 Online Update. It is still a good practice to take a screenshot of the last screen for your records. If you find problems with the 2024-2025 Online Update, please let us know so that we can fix them. We can be reached at (540) 231-6494 or [SharpLogger@vt.edu](mailto:SharpLogger@vt.edu).

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, sex (including pregnancy), gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law.

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodations to participate in these activities, please contact Karen Snape at 540-231-6494/TDD\* during business hours of 8a.m. and 5p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event. \*TDD number is (800) 828-1120