

Minutes – May 16, 2002
Media/Public Safety Co-Op Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Shelly Alley	Roanoke Police
Jennifer Conley-Sexton	Roanoke County Fire and Rescue
Jim Phipps	Court and Community COrrrections
Rick Burch	Roanoke County Fire and rescue
Donna Wilson	US Dept of Forest
George McMillan	Roanoke Sheriff's Office
Jennifer Donovan	Roanoke Sheriff's Office
Jimmy Brubaker	Roanoke Sheriff's Office
Emily Morgan	Newschannel 10
Erin Barnhart	Newschannel 10
Tammy Keller	Blue Ridge Parkway
Dutchie Hughes	WVTF
Melissa Preas	Newschannel 10
Shane Moreland	Newschannel 10
Reg Gray	Salem PD
Meg Hibbert	Salem Times Register
Mike Stater	VA State Police
Christince McKinnon	NRV Radio
Kim O'Brien	Roanoke Times
Chris Thomsen	Dept of Forestry
Julia Dixon Smith	Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries
Jim Bowman	Dept of Game and Inland Fisheries
Sam Alexander	Secret Service

I. Welcome by Shelly Alley, Roanoke police

II. Virginia Department of Forestry, presented by Chris Thomsen, resource forester

- Don't confuse forestry department with United States Forestry Service, National Park Service or Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.
- VDOF is a state agency headquartered in Charlottesville. Its mission is to protect and develop healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians, including timber, recreation, wildlife, clean air and water. (FACT: one football field worth of trees provides enough oxygen for 16 people to live.)
- Founded in 1914 as single teaching position at UVa. Two goals: Stop raging forest, reforest denuded land
- VDOF has @ 270 employees. Most counties have a professional forester and a chief forest warden. Primary an advisory agency. Protected against

- trespass. Goal: Suppression of forest fires. Counties pay one nickel per wooded acre for our protection
- Smokey Bear taken to schools for 40 years. Virginia is only state permitted to make own costume.
 - Services
Forest management plans, technical forestry work, planting, site prep., monitor air quality, nurseries, environmental education, state forests, forest inventory analysis

Local offices? Bedford, Floyd, Daleville, Wytheville, Salem, Christiansburg, Lexington, Spencer, Galax

Question: Smallest acreage for which the department would do a land management plan? Usually 10, but will do one acre if forester. 35-40 average acreage.

III. U.S. Forest Service, presented by Donna Wilson

- manage national forests
- conservation and other natural resources for long term
- land was stumps at turn of century. Teddy Roosevelt led effort in retaining millions of acres of federal land for future generations
- laws operated under: Weeks Act, Organic Act, Multiple-Use Act (outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, wildlife & fish)
- 153 national forests across nation
- 191 million acres (SIZE OF TEXAS!)
- more than 30,000 employees, including resource scientists
- Lots of controversy on topics: cutting trees, allowing ATVs, number of campgrounds, amount of wilderness, below cost timber sales, AEP powerline

In Virginia:

- George Washington and Jefferson National Forests
- 1.9 million acres
- 10 ranger districts
- 50 developed campgrounds
- 2,000 miles hiking trails
- 336 miles of Appalachian Trail
- 2,000 miles of streams
- 4,000 miles lakes and ponds
- rifle ranges
- Habitat for large game animals (bear, turkey, deer), 200 species of birds, endangered species (bats, salamanders, rare birds)

Under Department of Agriculture

- regional foresters in 10 regions

- forest supervisors, district rangers
- visitors can camp anywhere free

IV. U.S. Park Service, presented by Tammy Keller, district ranger, Plateau district

- includes Blue Ridge Parkway
- mission: preservation and protection of national land
- not multi-use
- it's easy to get on BRP, so most people don't realize it's part of national park system
- BRP, 469 miles long over two states
- in some area, park is only a few feet off road
- This area is part of plateau district, 111 miles long, from route 460 to North Carolina line (goes through Roanoke)
- can camp only designated areas
- focus on preservation, can't rake rocks or clippings to plant
- fires are challenge, work with firefighters more easily than in past, used to have to get permission for bulldozers
- preservation of scenic easements "scene itself" (MP 109 has view of Wal-mart. At 125, a housing development is going in right off parkway. Interstate 71 wants to come across at MP 117)
- narrow boundaries of land is problem
- very aggressive land buying near parkway, obtaining land to preserve corridor
- illegal to take ginseng, ramp. Mushrooms can be collected
- Black bear problem at Peaks of Otter, Rocky Knob. Created by picnickers
- zero tolerance on DUI and speed (between 220 and 221, people have been known to drive 77 mph in 45 mph zone)
- lots of bikers, walkers, dog people
- gate closings in winter, esp. for ice. No budget for cleaning snow, ice. Will clear when can. Won't use chemicals
- work with local police, FBI when necessary (solicitation issues, body found)
- five rangers cover 111 miles
- at least once a day, MVA vs/ deer
- partnerships with Explore Park, greenways project, Blue Ridge Music Center (concerts every Sat. night at 7 p.m.)
- 1-800-PARKWATCH to get in touch with district ranger.

V. Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, presented by Jim Bowman, regional manager in Lynchburg, Julia Dixon-Smith, media coordinator in Richmond

- wildlife, fish and boating agency
- 192 game wardens

- today in Virginia, 900,000 to 1 million deer
- also wild turkeys, black bears, fish species, striped bass, shad
- hunting, fishing, boating brings millions of \$\$ to VA
- if there's search & rescue, boating accident, bear up tree, a game warden is usually there
- 1 or 2 wardens per county
- Virginia Wildlife magazine goes to schools
- 150-200 game wardens across state

Question: Best way to reach a warden if there a boating accident on Smith Mountain Lake?

- go through sheriff's office in that locality
- will try and start using paging system

VI. Next meeting will be July 18 at Roanoke County Fire & Rescue

- business meeting only