

# The TRAIL BLAZER

SPRING 2026



Neil Clark  
2026 APSAF Chair

## Buckle Up!

By Neil Clark, 2026 APSAF Chair and Chief Executive Officer

**Y**ou know when you hear these words you're getting ready to go on a wild ride. Such is our environment right now—a lot of ups and downs, twists and turns. Hopefully at the end of it all, it will be the thrill of a lifetime.

When I was younger, I had a fear of roller coasters. Thankfully I love roller coasters now, as does my daughter. (If you are ever interested, she can give you an in-depth history of each one.) But in all honesty, part of the thrill of the roller coaster is the perceived danger. I love that some parks have a separate unloading zone so that when you get ready to load the cars are empty, and you don't know what happened to the last batch of people. More often, you are standing in line in anticipation—your adrenaline is flowing, your heart is pumping, and you just know you're gonna die—then, you see the riders returning with big smiles on their faces. They're excited and exuberant.

we're all riding. So, buckle up! I'm like the long-haired, tatted-up dude with the eye patch at the fair in charge of the scrambler that may or may not have all the bolts holding it together. Let's go!

Speaking of ups and downs, I watched the winter Olympics this year and saw the moguls race with its many ups and downs. It is designed that way. How competitors handle those with grace and alacrity is what earns a medal. I also know that for every smiling medal winner you see, there are 50 “also rans” who practiced just as much, tried just as hard or harder, reached a personal best, or things just didn't work out that day. But you know who impresses me most are those who come back to their fifth and sixth Olympics. *They do not give up!* So, while it is not my aim to create obstacles and challenges, that's what life dishes out, and I hope our team does its best to help us navigate the course of this year with grace and alacrity -- together.

Looking around the room at the 2026 APSAF Conference in Greenville, we witnessed a group of spectacular, amazing people! That is why we do what we do. That is why we have a profession, even though we often spend our time doing what we do to manage the trees. And why do we manage the trees? For the people! At the end of things it's about the people. (Okay, some of it is also about the trees, critters, air and water, and so on.) Please join me in recognizing the *amazing* job that Tara, Russ, Amy, and their team has done.

—continued on page 2

**“Suddenly, I realized that this is not just about me, this is about every member of APSAF. Although I may have been reluctant to find myself in this position, I am honored that APSAF members felt confident that I could drive the bus we're all riding.”**

That's what this time of becoming the APSAF Chair feels like to me. I'm standing here in fear and trembling, then I see Tara Dickson standing by, super excited, with a huge smile on her face. (Of course, that might just be an expression of “Yay, it's over and I survived!”) Suddenly, I realize that this is not just about me; this is about every member of APSAF. Although I may have been reluctant to find myself in this position, I am honored that APSAF members felt confident that I could drive the bus



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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, *continued*

I also want to recognize the broader team of APSAF leaders who have worked on so many aspects of APSAF throughout the year. There will be more to come about those things in future issues of *The Trailblazer*.

“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts” as stated by Aristotle, Abraham Lincoln, or George Jetson. Whoever said it, it points toward an interesting truth.

As you spend more time being involved in APSAF, you will come to identify several people—maybe several dozen people—who have made a positive impact on your life. You might have received a few encouraging words at a social hour or forged a new relationship, either by chance when you happened to end up at the same lunch table or through formal learning and mentorship that you received at an SAF-accredited forestry programs. Don’t take those connections for granted!

If you are a young professional involved in SAF, please know that there are a myriad of folk who have invested in you and want to help provide professional development, as well as mentorship and networking opportunities. Even when it may seem to be an uphill climb

and the road becomes tough in places, keep pushing on. You will get there, and you will succeed.

In our conversations and connections, we support each other. Most recently, a member had an accident, and many people in our organization reached out and showed support in various ways. Several years ago, when storms impacted many of our members’ homes, APSAFers reached out to help.

Researchers today are publishing in journals that were established decades ago by SAF leaders. Practitioners gain knowledge from the research which, in turn, helps them make better on-the-ground management decisions resulting in happier clients, healthier forests, and more productive and profitable land ownership. APSAF is also contributing to SAF efforts at the national level that continue to inform our ever urban-centric decision makers on the importance of forest management. In all these and many more ways APSAF, as a whole, is accomplishing much, much more than we could do individually.

Let’s go get ‘em in 2026! Buckle up!



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# Appalachian Society of American Foresters, Inc.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

(As of December 31, 2025)

| Distribution account                                              | Total               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Assets                                                            |                     |
| Current Assets                                                    |                     |
| Bank Accounts                                                     |                     |
| <b>Total for 10100 Virginia APSAF Checking</b>                    | <b>\$30,757.60</b>  |
| 10110 Blue Ridge (VA) Chapter APSAF Checking                      | 1,991.13            |
| 10120 Rappahannock (VA) Chapter APSAF Checking                    | 4,468.28            |
| 10130 Robert E. Lee Chapter (VA) APSAF Checking                   | 429.80              |
| 10140 Skyline (VA) Chapter APSAF Checking                         | 14,785.92           |
| 10150 Southeastern (VA) Chapter APSAF Checking                    | 4,903.86            |
| 10160 Southwest (VA) Chapter APSAF Checking                       | 16,105.41           |
| 10190 Virginia Tech (VA) Student Chapter APSAF Checking           | 485.82              |
| <b>Total for 10200 NC APSAF Checking</b>                          | <b>\$31,369.81</b>  |
| 10210 Albemarle (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                       | 270.00              |
| 10215 Catawba (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                         | 5,569.90            |
| 10220 Croatan (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                         | 2,539.54            |
| 10225 Piedmont (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                        | 4,805.32            |
| 10230 Pisgah (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                          | 2,176.02            |
| 10235 Sandhills (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                       | 5,262.60            |
| 10240 Tar River (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                       | 3,377.90            |
| 10245 Triangle (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                        | 4,695.13            |
| 10250 Waccamaw (NC) Chapter APSAF Checking                        | 2,615.74            |
| 10270 Duke University (NC) Student Chapter APSAF Checking         | 0.00                |
| 10280 NC State University (NC) Student Chapter APSAF Checking     | 1,010.09            |
| <b>Total for 10300 SC APSAF Checking</b>                          | <b>\$24,885.57</b>  |
| 10305 Restricted - Museum funds                                   | 37,584.25           |
| 10310 Central Carolina (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                | 10,398.80           |
| 10315 Edisto (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                          | 11,697.36           |
| 10320 Enoree (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                          | 2,072.45            |
| 10325 Keowee (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                          | 1,864.45            |
| 10330 Old Hickory (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                     | 8,262.52            |
| 10335 Pee Dee (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                         | 4,426.97            |
| 10340 Santee (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                          | 8,913.65            |
| 10345 Winyah (SC) Chapter APSAF Checking                          | 1,135.12            |
| <b>Total for 10000 APSAF Checking (0804) - 1</b>                  | <b>\$36,929.99</b>  |
| 11100 APSAF Savings (4218) - 1                                    | 31,930.08           |
| 11500 APSAF-PayPal                                                | 49,612.60           |
| 12200 APSAF First Citz Brokerage Shell Account (4992) - 1         | 267,980.03          |
| 12400 KP Funderburke Endowment Brokerage Shell Account (4984) - 1 | 203,508.38          |
| <b>Total for Bank Accounts</b>                                    | <b>\$589,961.08</b> |
| Other Current Assets                                              |                     |
| Uncategorized Asset                                               |                     |
| 12900 Credit Card Receivable                                      | 0.00                |
| <b>Total for Uncategorized Asset</b>                              | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Total for Other Current Assets</b>                             | <b>\$0.00</b>       |
| <b>Total for Current Assets</b>                                   | <b>\$540,348.48</b> |
| <b>Total for Assets</b>                                           | <b>\$540,348.48</b> |

Cash Basis Sunday, January 18, 2026 05:33 PM GMT-05:00

**Please direct questions, items for discussion, and receipts to [apsaftreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:apsaftreasurer@gmail.com).**

JANUARY 21-23 | GREENVILLE, SC

# 2026 APSAF ANNUAL CONFERENCE



There was a packed house for this year's Annual Conference in Greenville, South Carolina.

## RECAP & THANKS

by Tara Dickson, Past-Chair

**W**e extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended the 2026 APSAF Conference in Greenville, SC. Your presence, engagement, and enthusiasm made this year's gathering truly exceptional. The planning committee devoted countless hours to creating a meaningful experience, and it was inspiring to see that work come to life. We began with informative and enjoyable pre-conference workshops, followed by outstanding speakers, and vibrant discussions throughout the event. This conference was a success because of each attendee. Your participation and commitment are what makes this community truly exceptional. It is unsurpassable the way our members show up, support one another, and pour energy into making gatherings

like this meaningful. Thank you for helping make Greenville a memorable and energizing experience for APSAF. Check out some of the highlights throughout this issue!

### 2026 APSAF WINTER MEETING PLANNING COMMITTEE

|              |                |               |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Amy Doty     | Jon Carter     | Scott Danskin |
| Asija Rice   | Lesha Berkel   | Scott Reigel  |
| Blair Owen   | Neil Clark     | Tara Dickson  |
| Greg Cooper  | Pat Straka     | Tres Hyman    |
| Jacob Murray | Russell Hardee | Orrin Goure   |

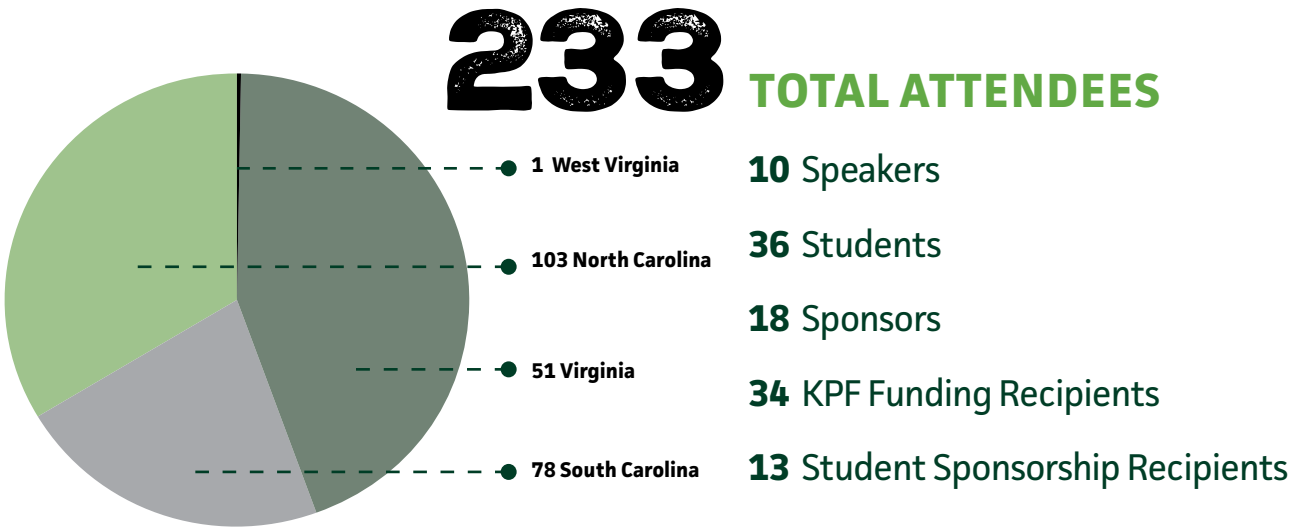
*Thank you, Planning Committee! I would have been lost without you!*



The Annual Conference delivers fun social gatherings, industry tours, and engaging speakers

# 2026 APSAF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## BY THE NUMBERS

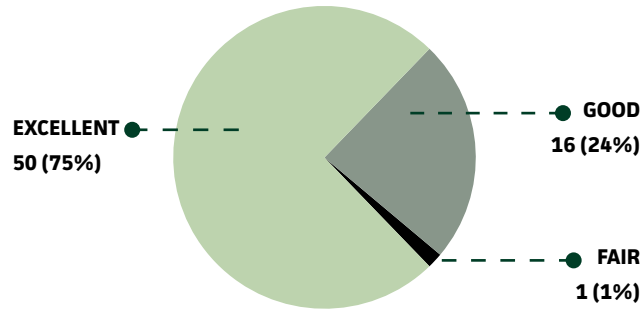


## THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!

We appreciate all replies to the post conference survey. This is helpful in planning division meetings and the 2027 conference. We received 67 responses, and the high-level summary includes the following:

- Attendees consistently praised the quality of the speakers, the food, and the positive atmosphere, with ‘good’ and ‘speakers’ being the most frequent keywords in positive feedback.
- The most common suggestions for improvement included shorter presentations, more technical content, and heavier meal options, especially for breakfast and evening socials.
- Overall conference ratings were predominantly ‘Excellent’ and ‘Good’, indicating high levels of satisfaction, but there are actionable suggestions to further enhance future events.

### OVERALL CONFERENCE



### CONFERENCE MEALS



#### 2025 SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Grace Lingo, Haywood  
Elysium Sigmond, Clemson  
Nora Waide, VT



Tara Dickson passes the gavel to 2026 APSAF Chair Neil Clark.

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## 2026 APSAF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### APSAF Recognizes Members for Outstanding Service and Leadership



#### **Distinguished Service: SAM COOK**

The Distinguished Service to Forestry Award is the highest award given by the Appalachian Society and is presented to an individual who has made an especially notable contribution to the profession of forestry. This award has been presented to a deserving APSAF member each year since 1956. Sam has been a member of SAF since 2013 and has served our society with distinction as SAF National President and at the local and regional level with student programs, diversity efforts, mentoring and more. Sam is currently Executive Director of Forest Assets and Vice President of the Natural Resources Foundation, NC State University College of Natural Resources. Prior to this, Sam worked for IP's Forest Resource Division for 15 years, Duke Energy for nine years, and he first laced up his boots with the USFS in Idaho. Sam has degrees from Tuskegee and NCSU.



#### **Volunteer Service: GLEN WORRELL**

The Volunteer Service Award must "make especially notable contributions to the profession of forestry and/or exhibit sustained voluntary service to SAF." With over 31 years as a Consulting Forester, Glen has seen a lot change in the region. He has been a Manager with F&W Forestry Services since 1996 and has served the Society at the chapter level and in numerous APSAF planning committees over the years. He's served the industry in multiple volunteer facets and is one of the best-known names in Virginia's Forestry Community. Glen's forestry degrees hail from Virginia Tech.



#### **Young Forester Leadership: SARA CERV**

The Young Forester Leadership Award recognizes outstanding leadership by a forestry professional younger than 40 years of age whose actions have benefited the practice of forestry and the Society of American Foresters. With two B.S. degrees and an M.S. in Forestry from Virginia Tech, Sara is currently the Forest Conservation Director with the Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society. Previously, she led GIS work for GFR Consulting. Her involvement has gained notoriety in SAF for her leadership and ingenuity as APSAF Membership Chair, participation on numerous APSAF task forces, planning committee, and as a speaker at SAF national meetings.

## National Recognition Awards

### GOLDEN MEMBERS



Henry E. Kodama – Edisto Chapter, SC, Patricia Layton – Keowee Chapter, SC, Phillip O. Epps – Enoree Chapter, SC, (Not in Attendance: Sara A. Browning – Pisgah Chapter, NC, Robert S. Mazur – Tar River Chapter, NC, Michael C. Rushton – Enoree Chapter, SC)



#### **PRESIDENTIAL FIELD FORESTER: Dan Sheffing, CF**

Additional awards, not pictured:

**SAF FELLOW: Les Hunter**

**OUTSTANDING LOCAL UNIT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: Skyline Chapter, VA**

# 2026 APSAF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## Student Awards

### STUDENT POSTER WINNERS:

#### FIRST PLACE

Ryan Bohannon, Clemson



Ryan Bohannon



Basanta Shresta

#### SECOND PLACE

Basanta Shresta, Clemson

### STUDENT ORAL

#### PRESENTATION WINNERS:

#### FIRST PLACE

Brenn Kurtz, Virginia Tech

*"Do different southern Appalachian red spruce seed sources have the capability to acclimate to a changing environment?"*



Brenn Kurtz



Siddhartha Regmi

#### SECOND PLACE

Siddhartha Regmi, Clemson

*"Coastal forest mortality in South Carolina over three decades: The role of repeated storm surges, hydrology, and climate."*

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# LOOKING AHEAD: 2027 APSAF ANNUAL CONFERENCE



The 2027 APSAF Annual Meeting will be held in historic Williamsburg, Va., and an historic Silent Auction is being planned! We've adopted a vintage talisman figurine, Sir Walter Woodsman, believed to date from the colonial era (give or take a century or two). Sir Walter will be showing up all year to remind you that the Silent Auction is a wonderful fund raiser for APSAF—all donations are *Created Equal*, big or small, old or new, store-bought or homemade; and sending items is a *Pursuit of Happiness!* Donating to the Silent Auction will make you happy! That is *Self-Evident!*

## Get Set for Historic Silent Auction in Williamsburg

It's never too early to start thinking historically. Get a big box and put it behind your sofa or under your desk and start collecting donate-able stuff. Jewelry and jelly, treasures and trinkets,

old posters and new prints. Start whittling, stitching, or painting. If you've never donated to the Silent Auction before, this is your chance to make history as a first-time donor. It's easy, and even if

you are not sure you'll attend the Annual Meeting, the historic Silent Auction team will help arrange getting your donations to Williamsburg.

We believe it was Patrick Henry who said, "I know not what course others may take, but as for me... I'm donating a bunch of stuff to the to the APSAF 2027 Silent Auction!" Sir Walter Woodsman is counting on you.

Questions, concerns or revolutionary ideas? Contact Greg Cooper, Silent Auction Chair at [greg.cooper.87@gmail.com](mailto:greg.cooper.87@gmail.com). or Mike Skinner, Amateur SAF Historian at [confluencefstry@comcast.net](mailto:confluencefstry@comcast.net).



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# GOLDEN Wisdom

## Perspectives from Golden Members



**DR. PAT LAYTON**

### *What APSAF means to me.*

When I joined the organization as a founding member of Clemson's student chapter, little did I know the role that membership in SAF would influence my career and indeed my life. From the first National meeting I attended in Washington, DC, SAF has taken me on travels across the country and allowed me to meet some of the most renowned forest scientists, journalists, and practitioners. The Society became the source for meeting lifelong friends and colleagues. I learned forest policy development, program and meeting planning, and most importantly, professional ethics from serving on key committees. I wrote my first newsletter for a SAF working group on forest genetics. Looking back at my resume, my skills and accomplishments were honed through my participation in the SAF.

In the early days, when I worked in East Texas, our SAF chapter was where all the young foresters met and where we established our friendships, since we were normally spread out across a wide area of East Texas. While working on that chapter, we trained in leadership and professionalism. Later, as I moved around the US, I was able to quickly connect with new colleagues in other companies and agencies, building a great network of colleagues and friends that I still hold dear. As a professor, I encouraged my students to participate, and now they are the leaders in our state and region.

My SAF participation took a little of my time; however, the rewards from the investment overwhelmingly outnumber my

investment. The SAF is a professional home, but it is so much more. I encourage all foresters to join me in the journey to be Golden!

**DR. DAVID WM. SMITH**

### *What APSAF means to me.*

I look at APSAF members like I look at my family. It is so important to keep in contact and up-to-date with family members. I feel the same way about members of the forestry family. Keeping in contact is one of the best ways to keep informed and up-to-date in a rapidly changing and evolving profession like forestry. Managing our forest resources is complex and requires a solid understanding of owner objectives, site and environment capabilities and limitations, markets, economics, legal constraints, and the social and political environment. How better to do this than by being able to reach out to fellow professionals you know and trust that are well versed in one or more of these critical areas?

### *Favorite People/Memories*

I have been going to APSAF meetings for over 50 years and have had many, many great memories and experiences—it's hard to pick just one.

### *Memorable Quote*

"Everything goes somewhere! Everything is connected to everything else! There is no such thing as a free lunch,"  
—Barry Commoner (in an ecological context).





Dan W. Callaghan  
North Carolina Division Chair

## DIVISION UPDATES

# NORTH CAROLINA

## From the Division Chair

Greetings APSAF members! I am excited to step in as NC Division Chair for 2026 and proud to represent our vibrant and vital organization over the next year. To those that don't know me, I have been working for Wildwood Consulting, PLLC, as a consulting forester based out of Asheville since 2019. I graduated with a M.S. in forest resources from Clemson University in 2018 after receiving B.S. in environmental studies from Warren Wilson College in 2010. I have been an SAF member since 2017 and have served in multiple local chapter roles, including participation on the planning committee for the 2025 NC Division Summer Meeting in Asheville.

I have found being an APSAF member a truly rewarding experience. Having the opportunity to share ideas, fellowship, and promote our profession with my fellow foresters has enhanced both my career and personal life. I want young foresters to know that being involved with SAF gives them the opportunity to build personal and professional relationships that will last throughout their career—and beyond. At the end of the day, forestry is about people, and APSAF folks are some of the best around.

In 2026, I look forward to continuing to work with the Croatan Chapter to create a great summer meeting experience in Washington, NC. I also plan to engage with our members to make sure that they are getting the most out of their membership and to support local chapters in furthering our mission at SAF.

## NC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

*Chair*  
Dan Callaghan, Wildwood Consulting

*Immediate Past-Chair*  
Seth Plank, Weyerhaeuser

*Secretary*  
Casey Wofford, NCSU

*Treasurer*  
Olakunle Sodiya, NCSU

*Membership Chair*  
Casey Wofford, NCSU

*Professional Recognition Chair*  
Tara Dickson, Weyerhaeuser

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Hans Rohr, NCSU

*Science & Technology Chair*  
Mike Berzinis, Overstory Analytics

*Communications Chair*  
Noelle Arena, FORTA

*Chapter Chairs:*  
Albemarle - Mike Neal  
Catawba-Devin Walker  
Piedmont-Brad Howard  
Pisgah - Herb Yancey  
Triangle - Jameson Boone  
Waccamaw- Cassidy McCarty  
Duke - Eddie McDonald & Victoria Thompson  
NCSU - Benjamin Pierce

## NC DIVISION UPCOMING EVENTS

**May 9**  
**Young Professionals Event**  
Salt Face Mule Brewing Co. | Woodfin, NC

**July 15-17**  
**NC Summer Meeting**  
Washington Civic Center | Washington, NC

## Croatan Chapter

by Tara Dickson

Several Croatan Chapter members attended the APSAF Conference in Greenville, SC. It was a great time with record-setting attendance!

Our first chapter meeting of the year will be on April 9 at Cool Springs. We hope everyone will join us for hamburgers and hot dogs. We are planning on having a speaker and offering CFEs.

On May 1-2, we will sponsor( \$250 level) and promote attendance for the annual Log A Load For Kids Miracle Shoot.

The Croatan Chapter will host the NC Division Meeting this summer in Washington, NC. The meeting is set for July 16 at the Washington Civic Center, and there will be a tour and presentation at Goose Creek State Park on July 17.

Reach out to Tara Dickson by email at [tara.dickson@wy.com](mailto:tara.dickson@wy.com) for additional information about both meetings.



## ■ Pisgah Chapter by Dan Callaghan

The Pisgah Chapter hosted their first meeting of 2026 on February 26 at River Arts District Brewery. The Chapter voted in Herb Yancey of International Woodland Company as the new Chapter Chair and expressed its appreciation for everything Nate Osborne did as the previous Chapter Chair. We also want to recognize the work that John Welker has been doing as the Chapter Membership Chair in assisting with outreach and helping to put our meetings together.

We also welcomed an always engaging history lesson from Robert Beanblossom of The Cradle of Forestry and learned about mid-twentieth century wildfire prevention efforts through the eyes of southern West Virginian mountaineers.

On May 9, the Pisgah Chapter along with APSAF and the NC Division, will co-host a Young Professionals Event in Woodfin, NC. More details will be made available soon.

## ■ Triangle Chapter by Casey Wofford

The Triangle Chapter kicked off the year by reconnecting with members during its first-quarter meeting at Amedeo's Italian Restaurant in Raleigh. The gathering provided a valuable opportunity for members to reconnect with longtime colleagues and welcome new faces. We were especially pleased to have representation from both Duke University and North Carolina State University student chapters.

During the business portion of the meeting, a call for a Chair-Elect nomination was opened. Sam Cook nominated Luke McCormick, who graciously accepted the role. We look forward to Luke's leadership and an engaging year ahead.

Mark your calendars for our upcoming quarterly meetings on April 16, July 29, and October 29. Be sure to follow the Triangle Chapter and APSAF on social media for the latest updates and event information.

## ■ Duke University Chapter

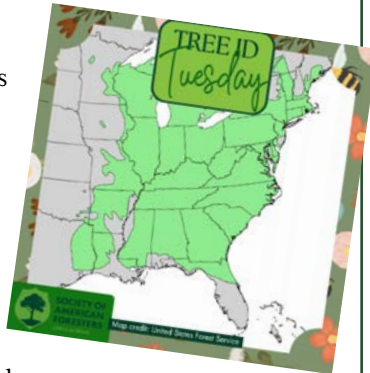
The Duke Society of American Foresters (SAF) 16th Annual Spring Symposium is a student-led, full-day professional conference that brings together forestry professionals, landowners, industry leaders, faculty, and students around a theme selected each year by SAF students.

The 2026 theme, *The Future of Forestry: Building Resilience in Uncertain Times*, explores how the forestry sector is responding to market uncertainty, tariff shifts, and ecological pressures. The day is designed to move from historical context to present-day challenges and conclude with forward-looking insights that help guide the next generation of foresters, natural resources managers, and conservation professionals.

Please reach out to our Symposium Chair, Annabel Weyhrich ([annabel.weyhrich@duke.edu](mailto:annabel.weyhrich@duke.edu)), with any questions. We hope to see you there!

### Tree ID Tuesday Challenges, Meeting Updates, and Much More can be Found on APSAF Social Pages

APSAF's communication team is strengthening efforts to create and share timely information from our organization as well as our regional chapters. You can send chapter updates to your state division communications chairs, or send updates to the APSAF Social Media Manager. If you have any questions or comments, feel free to reach out to [apsaf.comms@gmail.com](mailto:apsaf.comms@gmail.com).



**CONNECT  
WITH APSAF**



Use these links to find APSAF on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

**THE FUTURE OF FORESTRY**

**Building Resilience in Uncertain Times**

**Saturday, March 21, 2026**

**Nicholas School of the Environment**

Duke  
NICHOLAS SCHOOL  
of the ENVIRONMENT

SAF



Asija Rice  
South Carolina Division Chair

## DIVISION UPDATES

# SOUTH CAROLINA

## ■ From the Division Chair

It has already been a month since I stepped into the role of South Carolina Division Chair. I am honored to serve our members and promote sustainable forestry, professional development, and public outreach. As the days pass, I encourage members to stay engaged, share knowledge, and take the lead through guest speaking or voluntary events. Your involvement strengthens our division and the forestry profession as a whole.

### Berkeley County Community Forestry Champions Workshop & Forestry Tour

**SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2026**

**10:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

The Richburg Estate  
2610 HWY 311, Cross, SC 29436

#### TOPICS

Sustainable Forestry  
Bird Habitat Conservation  
Prescribed Burning  
Climate Change  
Land Management  
SC Audubon Society Forestry Tour

*Hosts: South Carolina SAF Division,  
The Center for Heirs' Property, and the SC  
Audubon Society*



**SC SAF SUMMER MEETING**  
**JUNE 11<sup>TH</sup> – 12<sup>TH</sup> : PEEDEE CHAPTER**



## ■ Edisto Chapter *by Asija Rice*

The South Carolina Society of American Foresters hosted a free, kid-friendly activity called "Good Fire, Bad Fire" at the South Carolina State Museum on March 1, 2026. Participants had the opportunity to dress in Nomex shirts, hard hats, and gloves, and practice deploying a fire shelter. The event also included giveaways and educational materials. Many thanks to everyone who participated!

*Photos of volunteers and participants at "Good Fire, Bad Fire" in March.*



Orrin Guerre  
Virginia Division Chair

## DIVISION UPDATES

# VIRGINIA

### ■ From the Division Chair

What a time to be alive! It's been a long, cold winter and spring is finally arriving. The snow has melted and, hopefully, the mud and rut season is winding down. Although I'm allergic to pretty much everything (I know, great career choice), I am looking forward to all the beautiful blooms that come with spring. Red maple is always the first tree I notice blooming. Its tiny vibrant flowers are a welcome sight after the cold, grey winter months. I can spot their faint red crowns dotted across the drab landscape and it brings me joy. My wife and I tapped a few of our red maples this year and had a pretty decent yield for our modest attempt. It may not be the most valuable tree in the forest, but it holds a special place in my heart.

Thinking about the year ahead, front of mind for me is growth. As natural resources professionals, we are continuously faced with opportunities for growth. We are trained to analyze current conditions, look at what's working, look for short- and long-term challenges and for ways to adjust our management to provide resilience. We do this every day. It makes sense that we have a long history of learning, adapting, innovating, and growing in the face of challenges. Our industry is facing a challenging period, and I am encouraged to see our members adapting and growing in the face of these challenges. One way we can open ourselves up to growth is through innovation. By welcoming new ideas and perspectives, we challenge ourselves to think about the status quo and really think about what is working and what we might be able to change to make our "ecosystems" more resilient.

There are so many SAF members out there with unique points of view. It's one of the many strengths of our organization. It's why I always feel like I gain so much from going to our SAF meetings where I come face to face with new ideas and perspectives. I hope you will join me in making an extra effort to engage with your local chapter, your Division, and APSAF as a whole. The more we can learn from each other, the more we can grow together.

There's so much to look forward to this year. As always, we have the Virginia Forestry Summit in April and the CFE Extravaganza ahead. Both are excellent events for networking and learning. I'm also excited to hear about all the great meetings Virginia's chapters will hold this year. That said, the big headline is the Virginia Division has the honor of hosting the 2027 APSAF Annual Conference next year in Williamsburg, Va. The planning committee is already working hard to build off of the success of our recent Annual Conference in Greenville. Mark your calendars for January 27-29, 2027. The Williamsburg Lodge will be extending the conference room rate for a few days prior to and post-conference so folks can bring their families and explore Colonial Williamsburg and all it has to offer. If you're interested in getting involved in the planning process or volunteering at the event, please reach out to me at [o.e.gouere@gmail.com](mailto:o.e.gouere@gmail.com).

### ■ Blue Ridge Chapter *By Bill Sweeney*

The Blue Ridge Chapter is gearing up for an active summer!

1. The Executive Committee met to begin the planning process for our Spring meeting, which is currently slated to be held on April 17th. We're planning to have a late-afternoon field tour, followed by presentations by VT students, food, and fellowship. Look for a save-the-date in the near future!
2. The chapter will be meeting VT and MGCC students at Explore Park the following Friday to do trail maintenance on our Foresters Trail followed by burgers and beverages.
3. We're hoping to be able to schedule some dates for interpretive hikes to occur throughout the summer. More to come on that.



Neil Clark at the 2025 Franklin Lumberjack Fest. This year's event is planned for May.

## Southeastern Chapter

By Neil Clark

What a winter we have had! Finally some snow and then some more snow, and temperatures stayed cold long enough that it lingered for a while. So that was all well and good, but now is time for drying out a little and moving some wood (if you can) and planting some seedlings. We've been in touch with a few new chapter members, so will be looking to do something this spring. One thing coming up is the Franklin Lumberjack FestEvent on the morning of May 2. Here you will find Harrell Turner and an amazing display of Union-Camp history. Neil Clark is usually nearby as well slinging seedlings and telling festival-goers about "goods from the woods!" Also many collegiate and professional timber-sports competitors are there to celebrate the skills that were required for hundreds of years prior to feller-bunchers. Later on May 21, the southeastern chapter will host the Virginia Tech forestry students for the "Real Life, Real Forestry Dinner."



## Appalachian Society of American Foresters

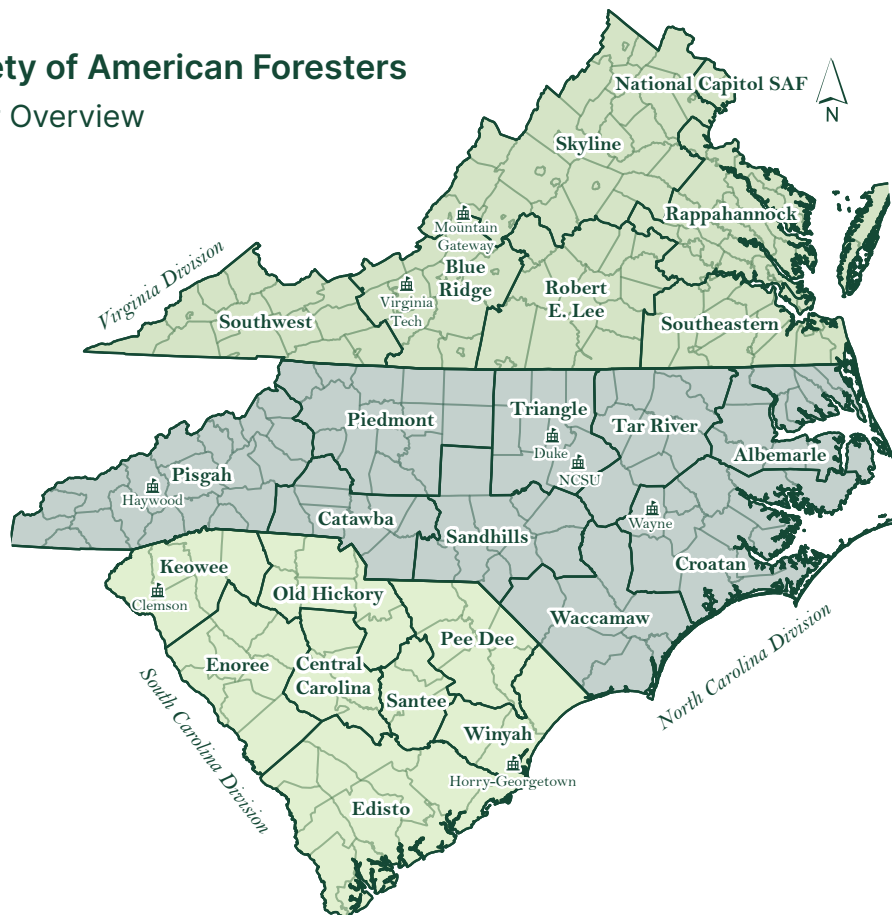
### Division and Chapter Overview

#### Legend

- Virginia Division
- North Carolina Division
- South Carolina Division
- County
- SAF

 Student Chapter

Sara Cerv, Membership Chair, March 2024



# EVENTS



## ■ APSAF Young Professionals MAY 9, 2026 | SALT FACE MULE BREWING | ASHVILLE, NC



*Hosted by North Carolina Division and Pisgah Chapter*

The afternoon will kick off with a round of mini golf, followed by gathering on the patio for great food and engaging conversations about building successful careers in forestry and natural resources. This relaxed setting offers a valuable chance to expand your professional network, gain practical insights from experienced leaders, and connect with peers who share your passion for forestry and conservation. Register today to reserve your spot!

## Summer Meetings

*Watch for more details to come about the upcoming APSAF Division meetings planned for this summer.*

## ■ South Carolina Division JUNE 11-12, 2026

*Hosted by the Pee Dee Chapter*

## ■ North Carolina Division JULY 16-17, 2026 | WASHINGTON, D.C.

*Hosted by the Croatan Chapter*



## ■ SAF 2026 National Conference OCTOBER 6-8, 2026 | TAHOMA, WA

*Registration opens June 1.*

## APSAF Board of Directors Meeting Schedule

*Regular monthly board meetings are held via Zoom, except as denoted by (\*) for in-person meetings.*

|            |                      |
|------------|----------------------|
| APRIL 13   | SEPTEMBER 14         |
| MAY 11     | OCTOBER 12           |
| JUNE 8     | NOVEMBER 9           |
| JULY 13    | DECEMBER 14          |
| AUGUST 10* | JANUARY 27-29, 2027* |

APSAF is one of 31 state/multi-state societies that make up the national body known as the Society of American Foresters (SAF). All forestry and natural resource management students and graduates are eligible for membership with SAF. For more information, visit [apsaf.org](https://apsaf.org)

**CONTACT INFORMATION FOR NATIONAL SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS (SAF) HEADQUARTERS:**  
2121 K Street NW, Suite 315, Washington, DC 20037 • Phone: 202-938-3910; Toll Free: 866-897-8720;  
Email: [membership@safnet.org](mailto:membership@safnet.org) or visit SAF's website at [eforester.org](https://eforester.org).

