

## The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation - Hemlock Conservation Project

Eastern hemlock, the state tree of Pennsylvania and the iconic tree of the Buck Hill Falls community, is featured in the Company logo and is showcased in the Hemlock Cathedral within Jenkins Woods - where many 400-year-old growth specimens can be found rising more than 100 feet over Buck Hill Creek. It is both ironic and tragic that these ancient trees are endangered by a tiny, aphid-like insect from Asia called the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA). The egg sacs of these insects look like the tips of cotton swabs clinging to the undersides of hemlock branches.

Previous efforts by the Foundation to protect our hemlocks from HWA were successful, but the threat posed by this insect has intensified in recent years without extremely cold polar vortexes - which are a natural way to keep them at bay. To deal with the increasing HWA problem, the Foundation has begun a new multi-year Hemlock Conservation Project in an effort to save our highest priority trees by using current best management practices. Our concern extends beyond the loss of trees, as hemlocks play a vital role in the overall forest ecosystem.

To get started, Ranger Joe and Ed Post have been tagging, measuring, and evaluating the health of the trees along Buck Hill Creek in Jenkins Woods. About 1000 hemlocks within the project zone have been tagged and added to a database, where an overall health rating is assigned. Unfortunately, we are finding that about 40% of the trees are in poor shape, and they will receive priority treatment. Our database will be used to chronicle the health of the trees and to evaluate the overall effectiveness of our project.

Until long-term solutions involving biological control agents and/or host resistance are available, insecticide treatments are recommended to be applied as a low-pressure spray directly to the bark on the bottom of a tree's trunk. This method can be used near water since the product is applied directly to the tree. To supplement our efforts to reduce HWA impact on hemlocks, the Foundation will install additional deer fencing to allow saplings to regenerate the area (yes, deer also eat hemlock!). To read the full project report click [here](#).

While the initial focus area is within the Jenkins Woods conservation easement, we hope to expand our scope upstream along Buck Hill Creek. This project would not be possible without the ongoing support of our members.

PS - You can also help our battle against HWA on your home front! If you spot them on the trees on your property, you can treat them with over-the-counter products, such as [BioAdvanced™ 12 Month Tree & Shrub Protect & Feed](#).

