

The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation - Hemlock Conservation Project Update

A Growing Problem: 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 200+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). Although HWA can cause some trees to die within four years, trees often persist in a weakened state for many years. Unfortunately, it doesn't take long to spot many dead and dying hemlocks in our woods.



White HWA Egg Sacs



A Dead Hemlock
Alongside Survivors

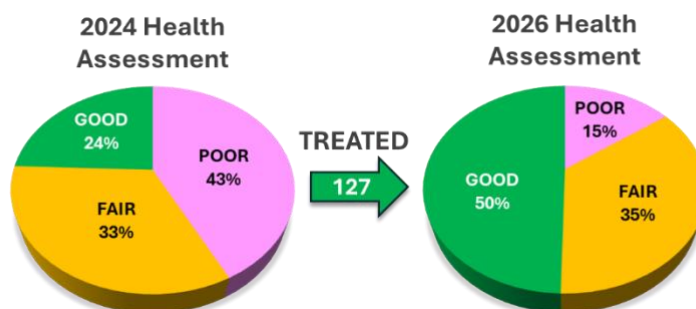


One of Our Many Tags

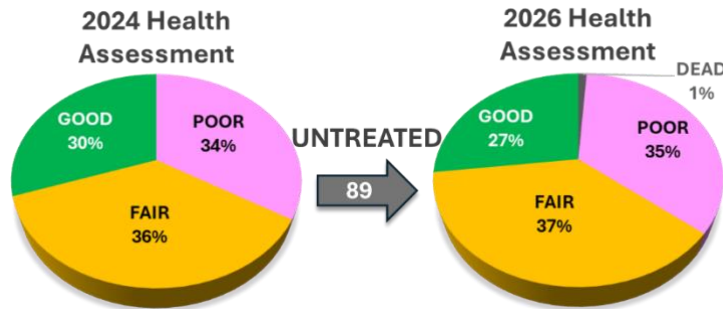
Our Intervention: To deal with the increasing HWA problem, our Foundation began a multi-year Hemlock Conservation Project in 2024 to save our highest priority trees along the creeks by using best management practices. Our concern extends beyond the loss of trees, as hemlocks play a vital role in the overall forest ecosystem, notably the quality and temperature of the creek water.

To date, we have tagged, measured, and assessed the health of 1,664 trees in the Jenkins Woods and Metzgars Easements. The results have been recorded in a large database to track tree health and assess our project's overall effectiveness. Because of pesticide application limits, only 633 trees have been treated so far.

Encouraging Results: At the beginning of this month, we checked the health of a random selection of 216 trees in Jenkins Woods, where our first treatments took place. Within this sample, the 127 trees that received treatment showed clear signs of better overall health, and many no longer had HWA.



By comparison, the 89 trees in our sample that had not been treated showed a decline in overall health, with one tree succumbing to the HWA:



Based on these findings, we will proceed with treating more than 450 additional trees in the spring, including several designated heritage trees located further from the creek. Looking ahead, we recognize that maintaining this program on an ongoing basis will be necessary, as the effectiveness of our treatment is limited to approximately four years.

Our Hemlock Conservation Project in 2026 is funded, in part, by the Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation, and the ongoing support of our Members.

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