



The Connestee Falls News

NRSC offering free treatment of Hemlocks on Private Property

Andy McCumber for the NRSC

In a continuing effort to preserve and protect Connestee's Hemlocks, the Natural Resources Stewardship Committee (NRSC) is offering treatment of Hemlocks on private property. This foundational species, the "Redwoods of the East" is under threat from the invasive insect Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA). The NRSC will provide volunteers to apply pesticide treatment to slow the spread of HWA at no cost to residents.

Andy McCumber from the NRSC or another volunteer will schedule a visit to assess the Hemlocks and then return to apply a chemical treatment. The treatment is generally considered effective for 5 years so the NRSC will keep track of the retreatment schedule.

All training and education has been graciously provided by the Hemlock Restoration Initiative (HRI), a regional nonprofit from Asheville, working to protect Hemlocks throughout Western North Carolina. While treatment is provided at no cost, donation envelopes will be available at the time of service to allow continued support of this critical work.

This important initiative began with the Hemlock Friends, whose foresight and dedication is very much appreciated. In total, close to 3,000 Hemlocks have been successfully treated in Connestee.

Special thanks most recently to Roger Whitmer, Lisa Smith and other volunteers for their residential treatment efforts.

We encourage all to take advantage of this program to broaden our community protection. If you believe you have Hemlocks on your property, please visit our website <https://www.connesteefallsnrs.com/> and click the 'Contact Us' button or send us an email at: cfpoanrsc2021@gmail.com.



Woolly Adelgid Hemlock infestation – courtesy of Bartlett Tree Experts

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2026 "Hemlock Friends" from L to R: Kristine and Mike Buckley, Andy McCumber, Doug Kish, David Smale, Russ Leuthold, Brian Murphy, Roger Witmer, Ray Jackson, Mary Clark, Bill Bullivant, Betsy Wise, and Debra Smale. Not pictured: Abby Braman, Laurel Young, Debbie Bond, and David Sett

1,081 Hemlocks Protected!

Four days. Dozens of volunteers. Over a thousand Connestee Falls trees saved.

In March, Connestee Falls residents, trained by the Hemlock Restoration Initiative, treated hemlocks along key trails to protect them from the destructive hemlock woolly adelgid. These towering, centuries-old trees aren't just beautiful—they anchor entire ecosystems, cooling streams, stabilizing slopes, and supporting wildlife. Without action, they vanish, leaving behind eerie "ghost forests" of lifeless gray trunks.

Thanks to early intervention and ongoing efforts, most CF hemlock groves still thrive. While areas like Salola Trail show past damage, recovery is underway, and trails like Amakola and Equestrian remain lush and healthy. This work builds on a long-standing community effort that has already saved thousands of trees. And it continues because hemlocks need treatment every five years to survive.

To all who showed up, hiked miles, and treated trees big and small, thank you! You're protecting the future of our forest. And we're not done! Hemlock Friends return this fall. Learn more and join the Hemlock Friends here: <https://www.connesteefallsnrs.com/hemlock-friends>