

Saving the Hemlocks at Carters Lake

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Carters Lake, in partnership with Friends of Our Beautiful Carters Lake Inc., has initiated efforts to protect Hemlocks around the lake from the invasive Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. Hemlocks are unique conifers, easily identified by their graceful, drooping branches and flat, needle-like leaves. These trees provide essential habitat and shelter for numerous wildlife species. Their dense canopies help create cool, shaded microclimates that regulate stream temperatures, benefiting aquatic species like trout and salamanders. Hemlocks also contribute significantly to soil stabilization, nutrient cycling, and the overall health of forest ecosystems.

The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, a destructive, nonnative pest, feeds on the nutrients stored in the tree. In addition to depleting the tree's resources, the adelgid also impedes water transport, ultimately leading to the tree's death. The infestations are easily identifiable by the white, woolly egg sacs that appear on the undersides of branches. Without intervention, these infestations are typically fatal to affected trees.

In September, rangers at Carters Lake began identifying and tagging infested hemlocks, marking a total of 55 trees exhibiting signs of infestation. Of these, 11 displayed a severe presence of infestation. By November, all tagged trees received targeted soil injection treatments designed to eliminate the adelgid.



Above: A tree displaying signs of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid infestation.



The trees treated last season were just the beginning of ongoing efforts to protect and preserve the health of Carters Lake forested areas. This coming year, the aim is to expand the reach and treat an even larger number of trees, covering a more significant area within the project.

By building on last year's progress, the commitment to combating the threats posed by pest and disease is strengthened, ensuring a lasting, positive impact on the ecosystem and wildlife that rely on these habitats. ■



Friends group members, Red and Val, help treat hemlock trees.

