VERMONT FOREST PEST PLANNING

ROADSIDE ASH TREE INVENTORY

Richford

PLANT LIVE GROW

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Vermont Forest Pest Planning Case Studies were developed to share the process that nine Vermont communities undertook to inventory their town's ash trees and develop an Emerald Ash Borer Preparedness Plan. These towns varied widely in population, size, and resources, which makes each town's experience and lessons learned unique.

Annette Goyne, a teacher at Richford Jr-Sr High School and Chair of the Richford Conservation Commission (CC), became aware of the emerald ash borer (EAB) three years ago when she attended a Forest Pest First Detector training. Since then the CC has done a lot of outreach in the classroom, at farmer's markets, and town events. What Annette soon realized was that "we have a lot of ash along certain roads and it would help our road crew to know where the trees are located, how many we have, and what size and condition they are currently in. **Our road crew doesn't have the manpower or resources necessary to remove and process a large quantity of infected trees all at once, so it makes sense to have a plan for judicious monitoring and tree removal.**" Annette connected with the conservation commissions in two adjacent towns, Enosburg and Bakersfield, to **create a multi-town collaboration planning board.** As Annette reflects, "Why reinvent the wheel? We're all physically linked to each other, so it made sense that our plans, while specific to each town, kind of treat the area in a similar fashion."

The Urban & Community Forestry program connected Richford with **four students in a UVM service-learning course**. The students had experience with ash tree identification and GIS mapping. The students gained valuable field experience while assisting Richford over two days. For their hard work the students were treated to dinner by Annette using some of the money from a **$500 EAB incentive.**

The UVM students surveyed three roads, totaling 12 miles. The roads were selected **by Annette and the town road foreman based on where large stands of ash trees exist.** The students only inventoried trees 6" in diameter and larger as anything smaller was unlikely to cause damage. The ash tree inventory provided the data necessary for creating an action plan. Richford also used the EAB incentive to create a poster to display their inventory results at town meeting. The **action plan** will be presented to the Richford select board with recommendations for the best ways to **ease the financial burden of dealing with the arrival of EAB.**

FAST FACTS

LOCATION: The town of Richford is located in the northeast corner of Franklin County.

POPULATION: 2,321

LAND AREA: 43.3 miles^2

MILES OF TOWN-MAINTAINED ROADS: 51.7

MILES OF ROAD INVENTORIED: 12

ASH TREES INVENTORIED: 548

TIME: 38 student hours

PROJECT PARTNERS: 5 member Conservation Commission (2 members completed the First Detector training); Four UVM students; Multi-town planning commission (Richford, Enosburg, Bakersfield); Road Crew (foreman and four workers)

FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Urban & Community Forestry Program $500 EAB Incentive

EQUIPMENT: Students came equipped with survey sheets, Garmin GPS unit, clipboards, maps, and orange safety vests.

PLANNING RESOURCES: EAB planning templates and resources on VTinvasives.org

THE RICHFORD BOY SCOUTS SPREAD THE DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD MESSAGE AT THE 4TH OF JULY PARADE.

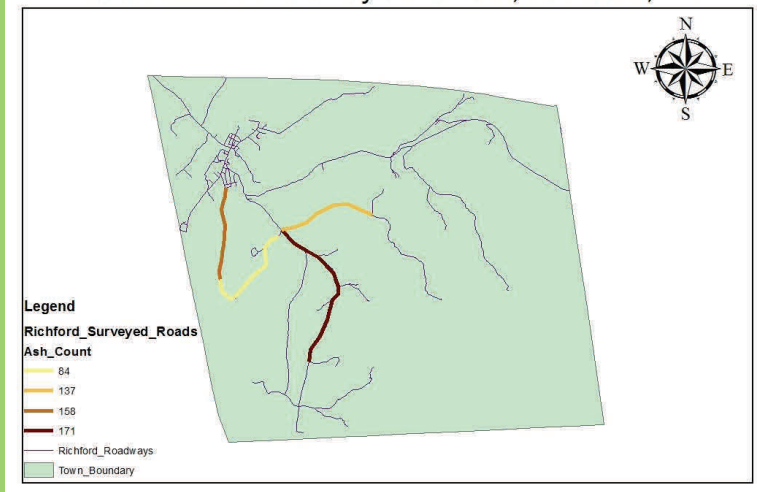
HOW THEY DID IT

Roadside walking survey

1. Student teams of 2 walked along both sides of 12 miles of roads.
2. Data was recorded for all ash within the road right-of-way. (The ROW is 3 rods on all roads, which is 24.9′ from the road center line.)
3. Data was analyzed and trees were mapped using GIS.

Parameters Collected

Tree health (***poor condition***—visible dead branches over 2″ in diameter, dieback, decay OR ***good condition***—no structural defects)
Diameter at breast height in increments: 6-12″, 12-18″, 18-24″, 24″+
Location—GPS waypoint marked for each tree



The likelihood now is pretty obvious that it [EAB] is going to come, so why not plan and try to save your town some money and headaches, and be well prepared for it. -Annette Goyne, Richford Conservation Commission

LESSONS LEARNED

- The best time to survey is the beginning of winter/end of spring; when the weather is mild and the trees are dormant and have no leaves.
- Look into the history of the town to understand ash tree distribution. Richford had a hockey stick factory until the 1980s, resulting in the harvest of many large stands of ash trees. Many of the ash stands in Richford are mid-sized and of similar age.
- Knowing the size of ash trees and whether the trees were in good or poor condition helped Richford prioritize management.
- Don't reinvent the wheel. Richford has developed protocol data sheets. These and other resources are available on the website VTinvasives.org.

Case study prepared by the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program, a joint initiative between UVM Extension and the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, using a template created by the Vermont Green Infrastructure Initiative.