

**VT Urban & Community Forestry Program Quarterly Report**  
**March 2021 – June 2021**

<b>Desired Future Condition 1: Biological Diversity</b>		
<b>Conserve biological diversity across all landscapes.</b>		
<b>Strategies</b>		<b>Priorities</b>
1.1	Promote sustainable planning, use, and management of public greenspaces in villages and downtowns, such as village greens, town forests, parks, trails, playgrounds, and other public gathering spaces.	✓
1.2	Increase awareness, support, and implementation of planning for urban and community forests at local, regional, and statewide scales.	✓
1.3	Encourage long-term conservation efforts such as acquisition and planning by partners to keep forests forested and address forest fragmentation.	
1.4	Promote biological diversity and resiliency in urban and community forests through planning, use, and management that sustain diverse forest types and tree species, conditions, and age.	

**Town Forests Recreation Planning**

- Forests for the People/Town Forest Educational Events: Two events remain as we near the end of this USFS Landscape Scale Restoration Grant:
  - Bench Building Workshop: this event is on hold until post-COVID (*hopefully summer 2021*)
  - Community Governance Project and Training: We are now under contract and have been actively meeting with Julie Renaud Evans with the Northern Forest Center to complete a project to better understand governance issues, gaps in skills and knowledge, and what has worked well, particularly for town forest committees:
    - Phase 1: Convene a project working group and identify questions, survey audience, and focused interviews participants.
    - Phase 2: Discovery: surveys and interviews
    - Phase 3: Summary of findings, likely a white paper
    - Phase 4: Information transfer via an online workshop for practitioners

## Forest Planning

- Forest Integrity Project: This USFS Landscape Restoration Grant project continues to move forward with a new end date of 6/30/22. Project partners are Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative (FEMC), Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC), the Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC), VT Fish & Wildlife, and VT Forests, Parks & Recreation. Project updates during this quarter include:
  - VNRC's contract was extended until September 2021 to accommodate updates to *Community Strategies for VT's Forests and Wildlife* guide and accompanying checklists (or a decision matrix) for each of the chapters focused on implementation strategies.
  - CVRPC continues to work with municipalities and other RPCs to assist in incorporating Act 171 Forest Integrity language into town and regional plans; they will begin an update to their own regional plan this summer, which will be used as a case study for the larger project.
  - UCF is under contract with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns to support the new tree warden statutes, as well as partnering with 10 municipalities to draft shade tree preservation plans (more on this under DFC #5 below).
  - Project partners met in May to discuss the final deliverable/sharing the pieces of the greater Forest Integrity project. We will be developing a RFP for a communications package focused on videos and StoryMaps about the tools and resources developed.

Desired Future Condition 2: Forest Health & Productivity		
Maintain and enhance forest ecosystem health and productivity.		
Strategies		Priorities
2.1	Identify, facilitate, and/or transfer research by academic, government, or community-led science initiatives that improves our understanding of urban and community forests, including urban forest inventory and analysis (Urban FIA).	
2.2	Survey, monitor, and support slow the spread and prevention efforts of invasive species that impact urban and community forests.	
2.3	Expand resources to assist communities to prepare for, mitigate, and recover from threats to urban and community forests including severe weather, fragmentation, climate change, and invasive pests.	✓
2.4	Increase communities' capacity to create resilient urban and community forests through growing or acquiring high-quality trees and a diversity of species.	
2.5	Encourage landscape level planning and management activities that maintain health, productivity, and ecological functions of urban and community forests in light of climate change.	

2.6	Conduct technical assistance to communities, including volunteer groups, in order to help them understand, evaluate, and/or implement actions to advance sustainable urban and community forestry programs.	✓
-----	---	---

**Urban FIA:** As we near the completion of the first full cycle of data collection for Urban FIA (7 years), the USFS and the Northwest-Midwest State Foresters Alliance are beginning to facilitate discussions about how to access and use the data. For the next 7-year cycle, VT UCF will be more involved and will likely be funding additional plots outside of Burlington (to get a more comprehensive picture of urban forests in the state).

### **Municipal Technical Assistance**

- **Ash Inventory:** UCF continues to support municipalities performing ash inventories and monitoring the health of public and private ash. Between March and June 2021 the towns of Chester, Jericho, Underhill, Peacham, and Windsor have all received assistance on inventory methodology and data management.
- **EAB Planning:** We continue to support towns statewide in planning for EAB. In this quarter, we provided online presentations on a variety of aspects related to municipal EAB planning to the towns of Jericho and Royalton.
- **Montpelier's Statehouse Forest:** We have been assisting Buildings, Grounds, and Services in the management of the 10 acres behind the State House in Montpelier that is adjacent to Hubbard Park and contains the "State House trail" to the tower. Some of the first work recommended there was to remove the risk trees along the trail. These trees were mostly dead red pine that were planted decades ago and that are being replaced naturally by native hardwoods. A few white ash directly behind the State House and close to buildings on an adjoining parcel were cut as a preemptive measure to mitigate hazards expected from the emerald ash borer. BGS has hired a contractor to drop the trees to the ground. This has been met with much interest and concern by members of the Montpelier Tree Board and the public; Joanne has been responding to comments and questions. UCF and FPR are facilitating communication between BGS and the City of Montpelier to advance the update of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding trail maintenance, ash tree preservation, and any other trail building in the future.
- We presented the tenants of [Resilient Right-of-Ways: A Guide To Community Stewardship of Vermont's Backroads](#) to a group of emergency management directors working with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.
- Short and informative videos on ash tree inventory techniques and the amended tree warden statutes appeared in ANR's virtual [Muni Day video series](#).

### **Urban Forest Health Outreach and Education: VTinvasives website**

- Continued to improve the structure of EAB information on VTinvasives.
- **VTinvasives E-News:** 1 produced.

- Continued to support 'Report It' submissions.
- Managing listserv to provide updates to EAB Infested Area Map and state news.

### **EAB Response & Planning**

- In late 2020 UCF released a suite of [6 case studies](#) about how municipalities have and are managing for EAB here in Vermont and beyond; we will be developing similar case studies for current EAB-related grant recipients this summer and fall, and hope to hire an intern to lead the effort.
- We led a UVM Forestry class lab through a field visit to urban green ash in downtown Richmond and emerald ash borer infested white ash along Valley View Road within Richmond town limits. The group discussed the options for replanting in urban areas to replace any untreated ash trees and considered the choices that municipalities and utility companies must make to manage infested ash trees that border roads and overhead utility lines.
- As part of the 2 special USFS Forest Health & Resilience grants we received (2019 and 2020) to increase financial support to municipalities in the face of EAB, we are coordinating a series of hands-on trainings for municipal road crews and professional arborists to take place this fall and next spring. After some fits and starts, we're finally moving forward with these trainings.

### **EAB Outreach**

- ***Checklist and Resources for Managing EAB in Town Forests:*** UCF worked with County Foresters, FPR Forest Health, and the Vermont Land Trust foresters to create a planning guide to help municipalities make good silviculture decisions for Town Forests in the context of EAB. The final resource has been reviewed and edited by all partners and will live on the UCF website.
- The Forest Pest Outreach Program (FPOP) program, which funds Ginger's position, is conducting an educational campaign targeted to recreationists in 2021. This will consist of a combination of press releases and social media campaigns targeting birders, nordic skiers, snowmobilers, hikers, fisherpeople, hunters, mountain bikers and other outdoor recreationist groups about the signs and symptoms and how to report multiple invasive forest insects. It will include information on EAB as well as other pests such as Asian long horned beetle (ALB), spotted lantern fly, hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), and oak wilt. Updates this quarter include:
  - Partnered with VT Audubon to distribute a handout on [EAB and holes in trees to people involved in the winter bird count](#) through Facebook, resulting in 2,912 people reached and 619 engagements on Facebook (The post distributed a handout by [Don't Move Firewood](#))
  - [Distributed an illustrated article on EAB, HWA and ALB](#) to 44 recreationist organizations, 4 local television stations, 50 radio stations and over 64 print media outlets. (See attachments).
  - [Offered EAB Trailhead Signs to 37 Nordic Ski Centers](#) (10 accepted)
  - [Shared social media on HWA](#) with over 44 outdoors and recreationist organizations, resulting in 83 shares, 12,067 people reached, 568 engagements and 141 post engagements.

- We worked with partners to coordinate another EAB Awareness Week from May 15th to 22<sup>nd</sup> (See DCF #4 below).

Desired Future Condition 3: Forest Products & Ecosystem Services		
Maintain and enhance forest contribution to ecosystem services.		
Strategies		Priorities
3.1	Facilitate opportunities to utilize urban wood including after natural disasters or pest infestations.	
3.2	Identify and facilitate opportunities to integrate local agroforestry into urban and community forestry in public spaces.	
3.3.	Promote awareness and use of urban and community forestry practices to protect water quality in rural and urban Vermont landscapes through implementation of low impact development (LID), green stormwater infrastructure (GSI), and sound silvicultural practices that support resilient community trees and forests.	
3.4	Promote awareness and use of urban and community forestry practices at the municipal level to adapt climate change strategies that mitigate urban air temperatures, water and air pollution, and support biodiversity.	✓
3.5	Monitor and explore opportunities for forest carbon credits for urban and community forestry in Vermont.	
3.6	Promote awareness and stewardship around the ecosystem services of community forests and other public spaces.	
3.7	Fund, promote, and record progress on implementation of best practices and outreach initiatives that support functional ecosystems at local and regional scales.	✓
3.8	Facilitate impact mitigation of invasive forest pests at regional and statewide levels and the associated ecosystem services and cultural losses resulting from infestations and the decline of specific impacted tree populations.	

## Climate Change

UCF was asked to contribute a section on Vermont urban forestry and climate change for the updated [Vermont Climate Assessment](#), led by UVM's Gund Institute. Elise and Joanne co-authored the piece with Ali Kosiba, FPR's Climate Forester, and are eager to see the final product when it is released this summer.

## Black Ash & EAB

As part of EAB Awareness Week UCF hosted the webinar [Black Ash Research and Cultural Practices in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer](#), with speakers from the Abenaki basket making community, University of Maine, and Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe. Moderated by Allaire Diamond of the Vermont Land Trust, this webinar broadened our understanding of the ecological and cultural role of black ash throughout the northeast and introduced the many people involved in its seed preservation, inventory, and harvest for basket making (34 attendees).

## Energy Saving Trees/Vermont Community Canopy

- Spring 2021: We worked with the Arbor Day Foundation to run this program this spring in Newport City and Bennington, giving out 316 trees.
- Fall 2021: We will be running a late summer/fall Community Canopy program in three Chittenden County towns to complement urban heat island research conducted last year by the Vermont Department of Health's Climate & Health Program. We are currently developing the subaward agreement with the Arbor Day Foundation and have begun planning.
- Funding: We have received two years' worth of funding to run this program through an air quality settlement fund via the Air Quality Division at the Department of Environmental Conservation. We have also received some unexpected funds to support this year's program from the Vermont Department of Health's Climate & Health Program (thank you Jared!).

Desired Future Condition 4: Land Ethic		
Maintain and enhance an ethic of respect for the land, sustainable use, and exemplary management.		
Strategies		Priorities
4.1	Create awareness and foster recognition of the ecological, social, cultural, and economic contributions that urban and community forests provide to Vermont, and the need to sustain forest health and productivity to ensure continued benefits for this and future generations.	✓
4.2	Maintain and expand public outreach, social media, and technology transfer.	

4.3	Educate and engage the public, including students, in urban and community forest stewardship and community science, including Vermont Tree Stewards and Forest Pest First Detectors.	
4.4	Educate landowners, tree wardens, forestry professionals, professional arborists, municipal staff, and land managers on the benefits of urban and community forest stewardship.	✓
4.5	Promote the implementation and demonstration of sustainable forest management on private and public lands, including town forests.	
4.6	Promote urban and community forests as an opportunity to respond to the COVID 19 global pandemic and help Vermont communities restore civic life, build social connections, spark economic vitality, and improve environmental sustainability.	✓
4.7	Support volunteer groups, particularly municipal tree committees, conservation commissions, and town forest committees, in issues of community governance and leadership.	

#### **Arbor Day (or, Arbor Month in 2021!)**

- Growing Works of Art Contest: [Winners](#) were selected for our annual art and writing contest (kindergarten through eighth grade). This year's contest theme was *Healthy Trees, Healthy Lives: Share Your Tree Story!* We received over 225 contest entries from 16 schools and 12 homeschool families from around Vermont. Winners received a Vermont State Parks pass, and were featured in a video.
- Public Places Awards: Partnered with VPA, VT ASLA to host 2021 awards. [View the 11 2021 Public Places awardees.](#)
- We promoted Governor Scott's [Arbor Day Proclamation](#).
- We hosted a weekly "[Ask an Arborist](#)" webinar series (Fridays, 10am throughout May) with a variety of municipal, utility, and university arborists in the state.
- We partnered with the Vermont Department of Libraries to create and distribute Arbor Day Celebration Kits. Kits include at home activities: tree identification guide, [craft ideas](#), [a tree scavenger hunt](#), and sugar maple seed packets. 50 kits were distributed to [libraries statewide](#).
- We partnered with Horsford Gardens & Nursery to distribute [10 trees to schools](#) in Chittenden and Addison Counties.
- We recognized and honored this year's [Tree Steward Award](#) recipients.
- We recognized the 2020 [Tree City USA](#), [Tree Campus USA](#), and [Tree Line USA](#) designees.

#### **Vermont Big Tree Program**

- We are updating the VT Big Trees Program, but our work with ANR's IT gurus is on hold (lower priority than some major projects). We have received ~15 nominations over the past couple of months (more people spending time in the woods?), so we are hoping to move on this as soon as possible.

### **Forest Pest First Detectors**

- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Phenology Pilot Project: A critical factor for success with biocontrol of HWA is knowing when two important HWA life stages occur. We recruited and conducted an on-line training for three people who will help Jim Esden, Forest Health forester, pilot a project collecting phenological data on HWA infestations in southern Vermont.
- Purple Prism Traps: Coordinated the 2021 volunteer program with partners from FPR and Agency of Ag. Fifty FPDF volunteers as well as staff from FPR will be monitoring 112 traps in 61 towns during this EAB flight season.
- Ailanthus/Tree of Heaven: We are talking with FPR Protection staff and an intern with FEMC about engaging the FPDF network to monitor for ailanthus statewide. Ailanthus is a critical host for spotted lantern fly.
- Online FPDF Course: We are in the process of creating an online Forest Pest First Detector course. It will be offered in the summer. The course will cover foundational concepts about invasive forest insects: EAB, hemlock wooly adelgid, Asian long horned beetle, spotted lantern fly, beech leaf disease, and oak wilt. The course will also include modules on how to work with municipalities on preparedness and management plans, ideas for publicity and education campaigns, tips on working with volunteers, and a live webinar on community engagement.
- Reorganization of materials on our website to create on-line toolkit: Currently materials related to community engagement and working with municipalities on pest preparedness are in a number of different locations on two of our websites and are a little difficult to locate for someone not familiar with the sites. As part of our website reorganization, we will be placing these materials in one location for Forest Pest First Detectors to use and share with other volunteers.

### **Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week**

May 15<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> was Vermont's Emerald Ash Borer Awareness Week. UCF supported public understanding and awareness of EAB through the following activities:

- Hosting the [EAB Awareness Week Toolkit](#) on vtinvasives.org
- Organizing two webinars:
  - Black Ash Research and Cultural Practices in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer (*see summary under DFC#3 above*)
  - An update on [EAB in Vermont: Current Status and State Response](#) with FPR's own Josh Halman as the presenter (40 attendees).
- [An Across the Fence episode](#) devoted to how municipalities are preparing for the impact of EAB, highlighting East Montpelier.
- Ash tagging kits and EAB educational materials were distributed to 9 new communities that had not received one in the past (Braintree, Georgia, Guilford, Huntington, Sharon, Tinmouth, Williamstown, Windsor, and Woodstock), as well as to Grand Isle County communities under the Grand Isle EAB Task Force.



### **Backyard Woods Course**

- 2021 Course: We are migrating the course into a new learning management system and will host this program in the summer.

### **Forestry Education Programs**

- We answered questions from the UVM Extension Master Gardener course via webinar on tree planting and care in urban and developed areas. The group was curious about tree species to plant in a changing climate and the growing field or research about mycorrhizal fungi and trees.
- Launched Heartwood Podcast, a new podcast that connects Vermonters to our forests, forest management, and the forest economy, funded by WLEB grant. [Listen to the first 2 episodes](#)
- Professional Webinar Library: The on-demand forestry webinar library developed and maintained by UCF staff continues to be an important resource for VT licensed foresters. The webinar library now hosts over 40 archived forestry webinars. We are partnering with Society of American Foresters (SAF) to make the webinars available to VT foresters for post-approved SAF credits. The webinar library was designed and built by Tamarack Media. Check out the webinar library [here](#).
- Women Owning Woodlands (WOW) VT: We continue to support this partner initiative of VT UCF, Vermont Coverts, Vermont Land Trust, the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation, Vermont Woodlands Association, UVM Extension, and the Women's Agricultural Network.
  - Our proposal to the High Meadows Fund to host 2 trainings on facilitating WOW learning circles was funded.
  - Our funded USFS Landscape Scale Restoration project will begin this fall.

### **Town Forests Stewardship Demonstration and Leadership Training**

FPR, UVM Extension, and the Vermont Land Trust continue to work on the USFS Landscape Scale Restoration project, ***Community Forests as Models of Stewardship***. The goal of this project is to highlight community forests as models of stewardship through planning, developing, mapping, and promoting stewardship demonstration sites, addressing various management challenges, new educational programming that trains community leaders on stewardship, and professionals on working with communities. Highlights this quarter include:

- Forester Facilitation Training: We are planning a summer/ fall webinar series to address some of the common challenges of town forest planning; potential topics include virtual community engagement and navigating conflicts in community planning.
- Community Leadership Training: Curriculum development is underway for a leadership training program for municipal officials and volunteers engaged in town forest stewardship planning, management activities and decision making.

- Demonstration Project Library: We will be conducting 2 focus groups with potential user groups to inform our work with partners to develop a template for a demonstration library, to be hosted by VT ANR, to document and highlight best practices in forest planning and management in town forests in Vermont.
- A summer intern (hosted by VLT) has been working on compiling demonstration site case studies and best practices.

#### **Media/Communications:**

- Social Media: Continue to support our social media account (Facebook); the team rotates posting responsibilities.
- Newsletters: Bimonthly TREEmail; monthly VolunTREEmail.
- Listserves: A listserv has been created for the municipalities with which we are partnering to develop pilot Shade Tree Preservation Plans so that they can share information, network, and ask questions.
- Website: Continue to maintain and improve the site - [www.vtcommunityforestry.org](http://www.vtcommunityforestry.org). We will be engaging in the Discovery phase of our website upgrade/rebuild and are laying the groundwork for the website transition this fall.
- Podcast! Through a partnership with VT Coverts, UCF has been hard at work on a series of podcasts, called [Heartwood](#). The podcast intends to connect Vermonters to our forests, forest management, and the forest economy. Bonus: theme music for the podcast written and performed by UCF's own Joanne Garton!

Desired Future Condition 5: Legal, Institutional, & Economic Framework		
Vermont has a legal, institutional, and economic framework in place for forest conservation and sustainability.		
Strategies		Priorities
5.1	Sustain and expand funding opportunities to support local, state, and regional efforts for urban and community forest stewardship, health, and sustainability.	✓
5.2	Educate state leadership, including legislatures, secretaries, commissioners, and division/department directors of programming efforts, opportunities, and challenges.	
5.3	Educate communities, volunteers, and residents about urban and community forest policies, governance models, rules, and laws including Vermont's Tree Warden statutes.	✓
5.4	Advocate for policies, programs, and initiatives that assist in urban and community forest stewardship, health, and sustainability.	

5.5	Strive to strategically identify emerging issues and meet immediate challenges and establish an appropriate level of infrastructure and staffing.	
5.6	Foster strategic partnerships to deliver innovative urban and community forestry programming and support organizational capacity.	✓
5.7	Promote and cultivate cross-program and cross-agency cooperation and communication, within Vermont as well as with regional and national partners, to improve efficiency and effectiveness.	
5.8	Maintain and develop data management systems, ensure indicators are appropriate to monitor progress, and share data among partners to enhance internal and external communications and collaborations.	
5.9	Support professional development, continued learning, and succession planning for program staff.	
5.10	Foster an organizational culture within the program that rewards excellence, celebrates accomplishments, encourages teamwork, and recognizes achievements.	
5.11	Increase access to the benefits of trees and urban and community forests for all Vermonters by applying a lens of environmental justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity across programming.	✓

### **Tree Wardens**

- **VLCT Project:** We are under contract with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns' Municipal Assistance Center to develop a suite of online resources, such as a legal FAQ and model ordinance language, to support municipalities in understanding and adopting the amended tree warden statutes. VLCT developed an article focused on the new tree warden statutes for its spring newsletter. VLCT will also host an online training for municipal officials on June 17<sup>th</sup>.
- We have updated our [web resources](#) with information on the new legislation.
- **Tree Warden Reporting Button:** We worked with ANR-IT to develop an [online reporting "button"](#) (form) on the Forestry Division and UCF webpages to feed into our growing tree warden database. Certification of tree warden by each municipality is now required by statute, and so far over 125 towns have reported.
- **Tree Warden School:** UCF developed and ran a new self-guided online course called [Tree Warden School](#). Over 40 Vermont tree wardens were enrolled in the course and weekly live facilitated web conversations offered participants the opportunity to learn from each other. Mark Duntemann, Board Certified Master Arborist and owner of Natural Path Urban Forestry, participated in the first run of the course to discuss risk tree assessment and risk management. We are offering the course again in June.

- Shade Tree Preservation Plans: As part of the guidance UCF is providing related to the amended tree warden statutes, we are working with 10 selected municipalities over 13 months to draft municipal shade tree preservation plans. The components and goals of the plans are outlined in the statutes, but we are working with each community individually to develop a suite of templates for communities of varied size, population, and land use. The program supports East Montpelier, Monkton, St. Albans, Charlotte, Hartford, Johnson, Middlebury, Mount Holly, Shrewsbury, and West Windsor until March of 2022. Unofficially, we're also working with the Town of Shelburne to update their comprehensive urban forest management plan and include required components of a shade tree preservation plan, and have met with volunteers in the Town of Calais regarding their plan. In this quarter, volunteers from the Town of Charlotte met with UCF to identify potential shade tree policies on sections of inventoried rural roads bordering Lake Champlain. UCF also met online with volunteers from Hartford, Johnson, and Middlebury to advance draft shade tree preservation plans.

### **Financial Assistance to Communities**

- 2020 Grants:
  - Caring for Canopy grants program and special Emerald Ash Borer Management grants are either completed or still in process due to COVID-19. [See grant awardees here.](#)
  - EAB Management grant projects partners (East Montpelier, Northfield, Essex/Essex Junction) are either wrapped up or are finishing the projects (by 6/30/21). We're developing case studies on these projects.
- 2021 Grants:
  - Ash Tree Management Grants: 7 municipal projects were funded and are underway. [See grant awardees here.](#) We will be developing case studies on these projects.
  - Arbor Day Tree Planting Grants: We awarded 18, \$1100 Arbor Day Tree Planting grants. We offered these small grants with no match requirement and the focus was tree planting. [See grant awardees here.](#)
- UCF staff are considering how to better tell our story through the projects funded and municipalities supported financially over the years. We are starting to add these to our website and are making some alterations to our [Community Map](#) to be able to show the impact of UCF's funding statewide.

### **Financial and Programming Partnerships**

UVM Extension: We are developing the 2021/2022 grant agreement to support our UCF staff at Extension.

#### US Forest Service:

- We were officially awarded a Landscape Scale Restoration Grant to support the Women Owning Woodlands Network through demonstration projects, trainings, mentorship, and enhancing communications; the project will begin this summer.

- We submitted two project proposals for a special Urban Forest Health & Resilience grant opportunity and are waiting to hear the award announcement.
- We will be receiving a \$50,000 bump in our UCF core funding for the 2021/2022 fiscal year, due to an increase in the federal budget. This is very exciting for our program and is hopefully a budget we'll see again, as it seems that support for UCF federally is very strong within the current administration.
- Elise sits on the i-Tree Academy planning committee; this course was offered nationally for the third time this spring.

Urban Forest Economic Study: VT is one of 11 state partners engaged in an economic impact study of urban forestry in the northeast region. We continue to hear updates about the responses as they come in.

#### **Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity (JEDI) work**

- We presented a 7-minute talk during ANR's Science Slam on tree equity in Vermont as it pertains to data on the prevalence of heat-related illness by municipality. We are addressing tree equity during a three-session environmental justice training with Dr. Christine Carmichael of Fair Forests Consulting, hosted by the Alliance for Community Trees. UCF is also in contact with members of the Commission for Native American Affairs and local Abenaki basket makers regarding black ash outreach, inventory, seed saving, and harvest.

#### **Professional Development**

- Kate continues her EdD program at UVM this spring, remotely.
- Joanne has been periodically shadowing the Montpelier City Arborist, Adam McCullough, to learn about arboriculture and urban forestry in our capital city.
- Joanne and Ginger are participating in an environmental justice training hosted by the Alliance for Community Trees (see above).
- Gwen attended and presented at the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals virtual conference.
- Elise attended the Region 9 (previously known as 20-state region) Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA) Urban Forest Committee meeting in May; this is our annual 2-day Urban Forestry Program coordinators meeting, full of idea sharing, federal updates, and identifying issues of regional concern.

#### **Program Staffing**

- Maintaining weekly check-ins online.
- Our most recent quarterly staff meeting focused on our website rebuild.
- All UCF staff continue to work from home and are staying abreast of guidance coming from the State of Vermont and from UVM that will

inform our future work situations.

### **Council**

- The Leadership Committee met in May to discuss the June meeting.
- Council will meet virtually in June and will plan on meeting in person in September.
- Council reappointment letters went out in May; there are currently two Council vacancies.
- We are still seeking 2 members to sit on the leadership team.