

VT Urban & Community Forestry Program Quarterly Report
March 2022 - June 2022

Desired Future Condition 1: Biological Diversity		
Conserve biological diversity across all landscapes.		
Strategies		Priorities
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.	

Forest Planning

- **Forest Integrity Project:** We are in the final stretch of this USFS Landscape Restoration Grant project, with an end date of 6/30/22. Project partners have been the 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:
 - CVRPC's contract expired. CVRPC's project goals were to work with municipalities and other RPCs to assist in incorporating Act 171 Forest Integrity language into town and regional plans
 - The final component of the project is a **communications project** to develop a series of 5-6 short videos to communicate planning requirements under Act 171 and the tools that have been developed to support municipalities. We selected Peregrine Productions LLC (Vince Franke) as the contractor; Vince has been working hard on the video series and has been utilizing the partner network for feedback.

Vermont Tree Selection Guide and Tool

Last summer Joanne and Elise met with Bob Popp, a Biologist with VT Fish & Wildlife, to discuss edits to our VT Tree Selection Guide and VT Tree Selection Tool. The discussion focused on specific species that are on the state's rare, threatened, or endangered plant list, as well as those that might be potentially invasive if planted outside of a "horticultural setting". Updates this quarter:

- The team finished all edits for the 2nd edition of the guide. Of note, we added a list of principles for tree planting in VT (David Raphael's contribution) and ultimately decided to remove *Syringa reticulata* (Japanese tree lilac) from the tree list, based on evidence that it may in fact be invasive in some situations.
- Gwen completed the updates to the InDesign document and online Tree Selection Tool.
- The website was updated with the new edition PDF.
- 150 print copies were produced; a portion of these will be distributed through the VT Chapter of ASLA to landscape architects and designers.

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.	✓

Municipal Technical Assistance

- **Ash Inventory and EAB Planning:** UCF continues to support municipalities performing ash inventories and monitoring the health of public and private ash. Between March and June 2022, the town of Halifax received assistance on inventory methodology and data management.
- **Public Tree Inventory:** Our public tree inventory tool was first launched back in 2014; we are currently working with ANR IT to modernize the tool, add new fields, and integrate with ArcGIS Field Maps (Collector is sunseting). This quarter we assisted the towns of Windsor, Lyndon, and Charlottle with inventory of their public village/street trees using our existing Public Tree Inventory tool.
- **Ordinances and Policies:** In this quarter, we supported the Town of Essex and the Town of Waterbury in drafting new tree ordinances. We are planning to reach out to all municipalities with an existing tree ordinance or tree policy to ensure consistency with the amended Tree Warden Statutes.
- **Municipal Training:** Joanne presented on EAB and general tree biology/maintenance practices for an audience of primarily municipal parks staff at the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association meeting in Middlebury.

Resilient Urban Forests for All

VT UCF received special funding from the USFS to design a new [Resilient Urban Forests for All Assistance Package](#) is to support and grow downtown trees and forests in Vermont's most populated areas in partnership with communities that lack capacity and need assistance to advance their urban forestry programs. We received four applications for the project and selected The **Town of Windsor** and the **Village of Lyndonville** as the pilot partner communities. Joanne has begun to work with these towns to plan for the year ahead; these municipalities will receive a package valued at over \$20,000 that includes funding for strategic planting or tree maintenance, inventory work by a UCF intern, tree care supplies and resources, and training for staff and citizens. Highlights this quarter include:

- Grant agreements for both town were submitted; each town will be maintaining and planting a number of trees with a \$10,000 award
- Lyndon Institute (High School) juniors and seniors conducted urban tree inventory during class in the first week of May. The group culminated their week's work on Vermont Arbor Day, planting an oak tree on municipal property and speaking to a newspaper reporter about the current work.
- Windsor volunteers walked the downtown district to look at existing street trees and potential planting locations. The team also trained on the new public tree inventory tool and will use it this spring and summer to update their tree inventory.

Urban Forest Health Outreach and Education: VTinvasives website

- Continued to improve the structure of EAB information, including improvements to the EAB map, on VTinvasives. Slow the Spread Recommendations were updated.
- VTinvasives E-News: 1 produced.
- Continued to support 'Report It' submissions.
- Gwen is working on a new “wandering broadhead planarian” page and has received 4 reports in May.

EAB Response & Planning

- As flight season approaches, the FPR EAB team came together several times this quarter to discuss the state's Slow the Spread Recommendations and overarching outreach and prevention approach to EAB. Based on the extent of Vermont's current [EAB Infested Area](#) – covering nearly 2/3 of the state - the [recommendations for moving ash material](#) have been updated to allow for greater movement of low-risk ash material in Vermont while providing greater protection of uninfested trees and forests.
- Last year UCF released a suite of [case studies](#) about how municipalities have and are managing for EAB here in Vermont and beyond; we are in the process of developing additional case studies for current EAB-related grant recipients; this quarter **Richmond's** case study was completed, and slowly work continued on a number of other case studies.
- As part of the two special USFS State Urban Forest Resilience grants we received (2020 & 2021) to increase financial support to municipalities in the face of EAB, we will be hosting **two hands-on workshops** for tree warden, municipal staff, and arborists this July. The workshops will focus on how to throw guide lines into trees for safe removal and visual risk tree evaluation. In this quarter, details were finalized, registration was opened, and the workshops are being promoted.
- Based on a visit to LR Jones State Forest in February, Joanne wrote an article about **FPR's biocontrol program**, which was published in the Vermont League of Cities and Towns' May newsletter. Check out the article [here](#).
- **Black Ash Field Naturalist Project:** UVM Graduate Student Charlotte Cadow has launched into the many facets of a Vermont-based community science data collection project focused on the current location of black ash, the expected ecological impact of the loss of black

ash due to EAB, the cultural implications of the loss of black ash for the Abenaki people, and the logistical challenges surrounding preservation of black ash trees for future study. Highlights this quarter include:

- Leading a session on black ash for UVM Forestry Camp participants (25 forestry majors).
- Mapping community relationships among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous basketmakers and ecologists interested in the preservation, treatment, and harvest of black ash trees.
- Attended two ash pounding workshops with members of the basketmaking community -- one at the Ethan Allen Homestead, one in the Nullhegan Basin.

Pest Outreach

- **The Forest Pest Outreach Program (FPOP)**, had been primarily focused since 2018 on EAB and hemlock wooly adelgid. This year the program broadened its education and outreach to include other invasive pests that are likely to be established in Vermont soon, such as spotted lanternfly and common vectors, such as moving firewood. Highlights this quarter:
 - Partnered with FPR, VAAFM, VT Fish & Wildlife, Audubon Vermont, and Vermont Center for Ecostudies on an **eight week on-line FPDF training course: For the Birds**. One hundred and fifteen people from seventy-two Vermont municipalities, five other states and Montreal registered for the course, which included three field trips (one monitoring for HWA; one looking at forest management practices for birds and forest health; and one visiting an EAB biocontrol release site). The course also included six live webinars. All course participants have access to educational materials to use in their community education efforts. Thirty-three participants volunteered to become Forest Pest First Detectors and will be monitoring pests and educating others in 24 municipalities in Vermont and two towns in NH.
 - Ginger is partnering with Kate Forrer and Lisa Sausville to produce two episodes for their **podcast series**, [Heartwood](#).
 - The cultural and ecological significance of black ash in the face of EAB has been released: [check it out here \(episode 6\)](#)!
 - The benefits of diverse tree plantings in urban settings is still in production.
 - **EAB Awareness Week** was May 22nd - 28th. Ginger updated and promoted [the EAB Awareness Week Toolkit](#), engaged in a week-long social media campaign, and developed a press release.

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.	

Energy Saving Trees/Vermont Community Canopy

- Spring 2022: Gwen has navigated yet another round of planning and coordination for the spring VCC program. We're working with Burlington, Rutland, and Montpelier to distribute 285 trees, focusing on reaching underserved audiences by launching the programs in partnership with specific local organizations: Edmunds Elementary School, Champlain School, and the Fletcher Free Library in Burlington, the Montpelier Tree Board, and the Rutland Parent Child Center and BROCC Community Action in Rutland.

- Fall 2022: Planning has begun for the fall VCC program; we'll be working with 4 communities (including Lyndon and Windsor) to distribute 475 trees.
- Funding: The spring 2022 program is funded through the remainder of an air quality settlement fund via the Air Quality Division at the Department of Environmental Conservation. The fall 2022 program will be funded by the Resilient Urban Forests for All USFS (see DFC #2 above) and funding from the Department of Health's Climate & Health Program (see below). The Governor's proposed budget includes \$1 million for UCF for tree planting in cities, which would allow us to expand this program substantially in the coming years.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure

- Lake Champlain Sea Grant has hired a new Green Infrastructure Coordinator, Jill Sarazen, to lead the Green Infrastructure Collaborative. The group includes public and private sector professionals and will be reviving statewide green infrastructure coordination planning this spring.
- Joanne, Elise, and our USFS grant administrator, Karl Hononken, presented at the Lake Champlain Research Conference in Burlington in May. The presentation focused on the Resilient Right-of-Way Project, which was funded by the USFS and ran 2015-2020. Due to the pandemic, several planned presentations were canceled, so this was a fun opportunity to share. Additionally, we were able to distribute hefty stacks of both the [Vermont Green Streets Guide](#) and the [Resilient Right-of-Ways Guide](#).

Department of Health: Climate & Health Funding

Our partners at the Department of Health's Climate & Health Program have once again reached out with an opportunity to access funding this summer to support outreach and programming to highlight the public health benefits of trees and forests. This funding will primarily support the fall Vermont Community Canopy program and a seasonal FPR staff member under our Climate Forester, Ali Kosiba.

Fruit and Nut Tree Program

This spring, we awarded a grant to the [Vermont Garden Network](#) (VGN) to support fruit and nut tree plantings at community gardens statewide, with a broad goal of increasing food access and exposure to the benefits of trees. We worked with VGN to design a mini-grant program and select recipients. With additional support from Branch Out Burlington, 20 project applications were funded across the state. Read more about the program and recipients [here](#). Elise and Gwen were also both able to volunteer a day in support of some of these projects; orchard planting galore! We hope to continue this program next year.

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

- We planned 3 in-person events: Tree Walk in Middlebury; EAB & Resilient Roads in Montpelier and a Town Forest Walk in Huntington. We were only able to host the Huntington event. Unfortunately, covid and low enrollment numbers prevented the other events from happening. The team has established minimum requirements and protocols to ensure events are managed successfully with the extra considerations needed.
- The Growing Works of Art Contest (grades k-8) A total of 355 students from 14 schools and 23 families (home school and public school students working independently) entered the Growing Works of Art contest. Entries were judged on creativity and originality (50 percent) and how well the story was told through writing and illustration (50 percent). This year's theme was *Share your Tree-mendous story*. A winning entry was selected for each grade, k-8. [Check out the artwork and companion stories here.](#)

- We partnered with Horsfords Nursery to run the Greening Schools on Arbor Day Program and offered a selected shade tree to the following schools: *Allen Brook School, Brewster-Pierce Memorial School, Founders Memorial School, Mary Hogan School, Shelburne Community School, Underhill Central School, Vergennes Union Elementary School, Williston Central School.*
- We worked with the Vermont Department of Libraries to offer Arbor Day Celebration kits to 66 libraries statewide. See the [2022 recipients](#). The kits included scavenger hunts, tree ID handouts, craft ideas, tree benefits activity and sugar maple grow kits! Feedback is overwhelmingly positive and we hope to continue this partnership next year.
- UCF staff were encouraged to take Arbor Day (Friday May 6th) as our team holiday, and to spend at least a portion of it outside, with trees!

Recognition Programs:

- [Tree Steward Awards](#) were announced and celebrated at a small, but wonderful virtual ceremony on May 17.
 - ARBOR DAY AWARD: David Raphael
 - HAMILTON AWARD: Paul Wieczoreck, Hinesburg
 - LEADER AWARD: Amanda Garland, Barre City
 - PRACTITIONER: Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County forester
 - UNSUNG HERO AWARD: John Akielaszek, Montpelier
 - VOLUNTEER GROUP AWARDS: Barre Town Weed Warriors, Burke Conservation Commission, Johnson Tree Board
- Earning **2021 Tree City USA** recognition were Burlington, Essex Junction, Hartford, Middlebury, Montpelier, Rutland, Shelburne, South Burlington and Winooski.
- Middlebury College received the **Tree Campus USA** award.
- The Vermont Electric Power Company earned **Tree Line USA** recognition for the sixteenth consecutive year.

Vermont Big Tree Program

- The big tree program has been launched to the public! A press release went out in May to announce the new list and solicit big tree nominations. The response has been interesting! Many people call with a love of their tree, but most have turned out to be small to medium sized trees. The goal of this program is to connect with people as a helpful outreach tool, so staff will continue to balance calls

and capacity to ensure viability of the program. UCF staff have intern Julia, to help support outreach and manage requests. Check out the [new map and list](#)!

Forest Pest First Detectors

- 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 several 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.
- The spring 2022 online Forest Pest First Detector training had 113 participants, focused on invasive forest insects and birds, and ran for 8 weeks February - April. We partnered with Audubon Vermont, the VT Center for Ecostudies, and Vermont Fish and Wildlife on the course. In addition to the on-line component, course participants had the opportunity to participate in live webinars by VT Audubon and other organizations, and there were 3 field trips where participants got first-hand practice with host tree identification and looking at signs and symptoms of infestations (EAB in the Islands; HWA in southern VT; and a visit to the Audubon forest to discuss the relationship between forest management decisions, forest health and resilience, invasive species and birds). The field trips were co-led by Forest Health staff from FPR.

Backyard Woods Course

- 2022 Course: Planning for a fall course and Gwen is creating a “short course” that will be available anytime.

Forestry Education Programs and Youth Engagement

- **Professional Webinar Library**: We continue to maintain an on-demand forestry webinar library for VT licensed foresters to get free CEUs.
- For the 5th year, Elise and Joanne led an “Urban Forestry Day” for **UVM’s Forestry Camp**, required for all forestry majors. This year we were assisted by Burlington City Arborist VJ Comai and our graduate student, Charlotte Cadow. This is one of the only times in their full forestry curriculum that these students are exposed to themes and concepts of urban forestry and arboriculture. It has been a treat to be involved, and it’s exciting to see how much UVM’s Forestry Program is expanding (close to 25 students this year, compared with perhaps 10 the first year we did it).

- This quarter Elise presented on urban forestry and VT UCF in Cecila Dank's Community Forestry Course. Elise also led a Burlington High School YES course focused on water quality for half a day, discussing the role of urban forests in the health of Lake Champlain. Joanne taught tree health and tree inventory to a fifth grade class in Montpelier and addressed ash tree management with a seventh grade class at the Shelburne Community School.
- Staff participated in an information session and discussion about a new Arboriculture Apprenticeship Program in development through Vermont Technical College.
- Elise and Joanne presented on the UCF program and current program highlights to the full FPR Forestry Division in May; this was a great opportunity to share our work with our colleagues.
- ourVTwoods.org Upgrade: Planning is underway for improvements to ourVTwoods.org. In January, UCF's Kate Forrer facilitated a stakeholder convening to better understand and prioritize partner needs. Building the website audience was identified as the top priority moving forward. Kate is working with a website strategist to explore options for moving forward.
- 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.
 - The WOW project funded by the USFS Landscape Scale Restoration grant is moving forward; grant agreements have been submitted (and are in process at FPR) for Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Woodlands Association, Vermont Coverts, and UVM Extension. VYCC's grant agreement is in the works.
 - WOW forestry demonstration projects planning is underway! VYCC's forestry crews will be implementing forestry practices working with 3 women landowners in August, September and October. WOW will be hosting pretreatment forest walks in the coming weeks to highlight management goals and planned activities.

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:

- **Town Forest Webinar Series:** Based on the guidance of professionals across UVM Extension, FPR, Vermont Land Trust, and the Northern Forest Center, the curriculum was designed and promoted this quarter. The 5-part webinar series has begun:

- *Public Input Needed: Designing and Facilitating Community Engagement in Town Forests*, May 18th (32 participants)
- *Engaging your Community Virtually: Harnessing Online and Socially Distanced Tools in the Times of COVID*, June 2nd (9 participants)
- *Making Decisions: Exploring Models of Town Forest Governance*, June 7th
- *Town Forest Management Planning 101*, June 14th
- *Successfully Implementing Stewardship Activities in Town Forests*, June 21st
- **Demonstration Project Library:** Planning is underway for the creation of the community forestry demonstration library to provide access for private landowners to visit places where forest management has been happening. The database will be build using Drupal and will be hosted on vtcommunityforestry.org, and will be built to RSS feed to share projects with Northeast Silvicultural Library.

Media/Communications:

- **Social Media:** Continue to support our social media account (Facebook); the team rotates posting responsibilities.
- **Newsletters:** Bimonthly TREEmail; monthly VolunTREEmail, special Arbor Day edition of TREEmail.
- **Website:** Continue to maintain and improve the site - www.vtcommunityforestry.org. We have completed the “discovery” process for our website rebuild and the contract to rebuild with Tamarack Media has been executed. The site will have a new look and a revamped architecture (organization); migration of content will be the focus on the remaining two quarters of the year.

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.	✓

2022 Legislative Session

- The Governor’s proposed budget includes **\$1 million for UCF** to plant 5,000 trees in urban areas to support Vermont’s Climate Action Plan. We are still waiting on final word and next steps, but if all goes according to plan, this will include a 2-year limited service position to coordinate the planting projects.

Tree Wardens

- **Tree Warden Reporting Button:** After Town Meeting Day, we have about 150 town tree wardens in the database and we updated and posted our [Tree Warden Contact List](#).
- **Shade Tree Preservation Plans:** As part of the guidance UCF provides 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 and the Town of Brattleboro 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, Joanne assisted Mount Holly, West Windsor, Hartford, East Montpelier, St. Albans, Charlotte, Johnson, Middlebury, and Brattleboro. An online forum in April 2022 allowed volunteers and staff from many communities to share lessons learned in their communities and questions that have arisen during public comment periods. As of present, no municipality has passed a shade tree preservation plan; however, the towns of Johnson, Calais, East Montpelier, and Charlotte have received some public comment.

- **Tree Warden School:** Staff hosted another round of "Tree Warden School" during the month of May. 36 tree wardens from around the state participated in the self-paced, online program. Participants had 3 live discussions and were attended by tree warden veterans to new-comers. This online program is ideal to have available after tree wardens are newly appointed each town meeting day.

Financial Assistance to Communities

- 2022 Grants:
 - Growing Urban Forests in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer Grants: We funded 7 projects for a total of just over \$60,000. All grant agreements have been executed. [More information here.](#)
 - Caring for Canopy Grants: We funded 10 municipalities to support a variety of projects for a total of just over \$36,000. All grant agreements have been executed. [Learn more 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:

- Our 2021/2022 grant agreement to support our UCF staff at Extension has been executed and is supporting Gwen, Kate, and Ginger's UCF-related work.
- In this quarter the 2022/2023 grant agreement was drafted, finalized, and submitted for processing through FPR.

- Kate has been sitting on the hiring committee for the new UVM Extension Forester; an announcement should be made soon about the position.

US Forest Service:

- Core funding from the USFS for FY22 will be \$250,000; Elise submitted our program narrative and budget to access this funding.
- USFS released a RFP for another round of Sustainable Urban Forest Resilience grants (focused on EAB reforestation) and program staff submitted a project proposal requesting ~\$108k. We are awaiting the award announcement.
- Elise is serving on the Northeast Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA) Trees & Public Health Committee.
- Elise attended the Northeast Midwest State Foresters Alliance 20-state May meeting virtually.

Urban Forest Economic Study: VT is one of 11 state partners engaged in an economic impact study of urban forestry in the northeast region. The project is coming to a close and in this quarter we received a robust outreach package, including a regional and state-specific report. In the upcoming quarter we will determine how to best communicate and utilize the results of this study.

Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity (JEDI) work

- Our staff has finalized our external-facing statement regarding justice, equity, diversity, and inclusivity in VT UCF, addressing the work that the team is undertaking to advance JEDI initiatives at personal and programmatic levels. We are eager to share the statement and it is currently in the final step of being reviewed and approved by ANR Leadership. Once approved, this will live on our website.
- The group also updated measurable goals for the program to approach over the short- and long-term. This quarter continued to work on our logic model to help us track our work around JEDI issues, and to hold ourselves accountable to the goals and objectives we have identified as priorities.

Professional Development

- Kate continues her EdD program at UVM this spring, remotely.
- Kate is participating in a Community-based Social Marketing Workshop this month.

Program Staffing

- Maintaining weekly check-ins online.

- Our June quarterly staff meeting has been postponed until July due to COVID and croup (oh, sick children!).
- All UCF staff continue to work primarily from home.
- We have hired **Julia D'Alessio** as our summer intern through the UVM Rubenstein School Perennial Internship Program. Julia will be assisting us with programming and outreach across the board; her internship will span 12-week: May - August.
- Our UVM Field Naturalist graduate student, **Charlotte Cadow**, has begun her year-long black ash-focused project. See more under DCF 2 above.

Council

- We are still seeking 2 members to sit on the leadership team.
- We welcome **Kyle Mason**, Rutland County Forester, to Council as the new FPR rep.
- There is currently 1 vacancy on Council: the VT ASLA seat remains open and we hope to fill it soon.