VT Urban & Community Forestry Program Quarterly Report

June 2021 – September 2021

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.	

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 on 9/30/21:
  - **Bench Building Workshop**: Cosponsored by VLT and Newbury Town Forest Committee, to be held at Tucker Mountain Town Forest. Tentatively scheduled for late October, by invitation. Each community will take home a bench for their town forest.
  - **Community Governance Project and Training**: We are now under contract and have been actively meeting with Julie Renaud Evans and two new staff 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 (Complete).
    - Phase 2: Discovery: surveys and interviews (In process).
    - Phase 3: Summary of findings (In process).
    - Phase 4: Information transfer via an online workshop for practitioners (September).

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:

    o   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.

    o   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, which will be used as a case study for the larger project.

    o   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).

    o   Project partners are reviewing a scope of work drafted by UCF staff for a communications package focused on videos and StoryMaps about the tools and resources developed, as well as Act 171 itself and with a focus on highlighting municipalities that have implemented planning.

Vermont Tree Selection Guide and Tool

We 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". We have reviewed the guide and have made draft edits to clarify the intent of the guide and better align with other Agency of Natural Resources guidance and lists regarding tree plantings and species selection. The next step will be to convene a committee of Council members to review and discuss these proposed changes.

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. UCF and FPR staff met with US Forest Service partners this quarter to better understand how we might utilize the data and plan for the next cycle.

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 June and September 2021, the towns of Peacham, Stowe, Chester, and Williston (as conducted by Chittenden County RPC interns) have all received assistance on inventory methodology and data management.

- 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. BGS contracted McCullough Brothers, Inc. to drop approximately 177 risk trees to contact with the ground. Most were dead red pine; a small number

were ash trees overhanging private property or the statehouse. Joanne continues to respond to questions from the Montpelier Tree Board and concerned neighbors. A draft forest management plan is in process that will be presented for input to BGS to guide future ash tree management, trail use, invasive plant management, and user education.

- 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 sunsetting). Towns with experience using the tool, such as Charlotte, have been helpful in providing feedback about the new version of the tool. This quarter we assisted the towns of Irasburg and Brandon inventory of their public village/street trees using our existing Public Tree Inventory tool. Additionally, we have been providing technical assistance to Brattleboro regarding use of their 2015 public tree inventory to guide future planning for the urban forest.

- Johnson Arboretum Tour: In June, Joanne and Elise made a site visit to Johnson to see the new Johnson Arboretum, partially funded through a UCF grant. The project is a true labor of volunteer love and will continue to develop over time, as funding is acquired. We recommend checking it out if ever you are in Johnson!

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 are in the process of developing an additional 7 case studies for current EAB-related grant recipients; field site visits to Richmond, Essex, and Middlebury to document and interview key project participants took place this quarter.
- As part of the two 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. The first two workshops will take place on September 8th (Essex) and September 9th (Montpelier) and will be led by Emmett Shutts, Regional Trainer with Davey Tree Expert Company.

- We led a training of four summer interns of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission about emerald ash borer, the role of ash trees in urban and rural ecosystems, and the responsibilities of ash tree management in public ways and places. The group learned how to use the state's Roadside Ash Inventory data collector and will inventory municipal right-of-way ash trees in Williston this summer.

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 (pending!).
- The Forest Pest Outreach Program (FPOP), 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:
    o 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**)
    o 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).
    o Offered EAB Trailhead Signs to 37 Nordic Ski Centers (10 accepted)
    o **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.
    Shared social media and requested that Forest Pest First Detectors post information on the following pests on their local Front Porch Forums: **spotted lanternfly** (2,670 people reached, 303 engagements through Facebook); **tree of heaven** (an important host of spotted lanternfly, 2,754 people reached, 171 engagements through Facebook); and **August is Asian longhorned beetle** tree check month video (1,523 people reached and 73 engagements through Facebook).
    o Created new forest pest identification cards. Gwen designed new wallet-sized identification cards with VTinvasives.org branding for EAB, HWA/EHS and SLF. We are in the process of distributing 5,000 of the cards to Forest Pest First Detectors and state forestry staff.

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.

Energy Saving Trees/Vermont Community Canopy

- Fall 2021: We are offering 484 free trees to residents of Burlington, Winooski, and Colchester for the fall program to complement urban heat island research conducted last year by the Vermont Department of Health's Climate & Health Program. The free tree pickup date will be September 11th.
- 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.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure

- The Vermont Green Infrastructure Roundtable – a group of public and private sector stakeholders – met this quarter to discuss developing a new *Vermont Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan* (the last one expired in 2019). UVM is in the process of hiring a new Green Infrastructure Coordinator to lead the charge, but in the meantime, the group will begin to meet regularly to draft a plan. UCF will continue to be represented in the group and will advocate for the inclusion of trees in this new collaborative plan.
- UCF was involved in drafting a proposal for a multi-year, strategic *Trees for Main Street Initiative*, let by ACCD (and UCF Council's) Richard Amore. The project, if accepted, would access Clean Water Fund funding, and would support design and installation of engineered tree support systems (Silva Cells, CU Structural Soil) in up to 20 downtowns statewide.

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 have started to plan for next spring's Arbor Day Conference and are exploring alternate locations and dates for a May 2022 in-person event.

Vermont Big Tree Program

- We are lifting up the VT Big Trees Program and a public-facing map and updated database have been prioritized with ANR IT and will be a focus this fall.
- The existing Big Trees database is extremely out of date and most of the existing 115 State champion trees on the list had not been remeasured in at least a decade. Many of the records lack accurate location information and/or contact information for the landowner or original submission contact. This summer, Gwen and a variety of co-measurers have revisited and remeasured trees using our new AcrGIS Survey 123 tool to log the location and information on the trees. There will be a number of vacant tree species on the list. We hope to have a network of volunteers to help certify and measure trees next year to complete a full list.
- There are two standing national tree champions in VT (sweet crabapple and black birch) that were due for remeasurement and resubmission with the American Forests' National Register of Champion Trees and both were conducted this quarter.

Forest Pest First Detectors

- Purple Prism Traps: Fifty FPFD volunteers as well as staff from FPR have installed and are monitoring 112 traps in 61 towns during this EAB flight season. Mid-season trap checks resulted in a number of confirmed EAB samples and new infestations. New infestations were detected in Berlin, Highgate, Middlebury, Rupert, St. Albans, Swanton, and Wilmington.
- Online FPFD Course: The online course was finished and launched this quarter with 28 participants. The course covers foundational concepts about invasive forest insects, specific information on EAB, hemlock wooly adelgid and elongate hemlock scale and Asian long horned beetle. The course also included 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.

Backyard Woods Course

- 2021 Course: We are migrating the course into a new learning management system and registration is currently open for the fall course, which will run throughout October and November.

Forestry Education Programs

- UCF's Joanne Garton and Elise Schadler coordinated "Urban Forestry Day" for the 20 juniors and seniors in UVM's summer Forestry Camp. This is the fourth year UCF has been asked to plan a day dedicated to urban and community forestry in Vermont; this year we were joined by Burlington City Arborist VJ Comai and toured the students around Burlington's City Hall Park, a neighborhood with a monoculture of over 200 green ash street trees that is preparing for the arrival of EAB, and the Branch Out Burlington community tree nursery at the UVM Hort Farm

- Professional Webinar Library: Continue to maintain an on-demand forestry webinar library for VT licensed foresters to get free CEUs.

- ourVTwoods focus groups and survey: Thanks to new funding from High Meadows Fund, UCF's Kate Forrer is conducting focus group sessions this summer to understand partner needs in forestry outreach and education and help outline a future proposed update ourVTwoods.org that addresses needs in a sustainable, less staff intensive way. Kate has one more focus group to go; then will be conducting a broader survey this fall.

- 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.

  o Our proposal to the High Meadows Fund to host 2 trainings on facilitating WOW learning circles was funded.
  o Our funded USFS Landscape Scale Restoration project will begin this fall.
  o We will be hosting a training with American Farmland Trust on Learning Circles in October.
  o We will be hosting a bench building workshop, funded by Land Ethic VT, 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: Planning is underway for a winter webinar series to address some of the common challenges facing professionals in 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 conducted 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. The demonstration library is designed to highlight best practices in forest planning and management in town forests in Vermont.

Media/Communications:

- Social Media: Continue to support our social media account (Facebook); the team rotates posting responsibilities.

- Newsletters: Bimonthly TREEmail; monthly VolunTREEmail.

- Listservs: 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. We have been chipping away at the "discovery" process for our website rebuild, which will be kicking off this fall. The site will have a new look and a revamped architecture (organization).

- 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! All five episodes have been produced and will be released in September on distributed using Anchor to Spotify, iTunes and other podcast platforms.

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 still under contract with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns' Municipal Assistance Center to support tree warden resource development and training. VLCT has created a Tree Law webpage and a Tree Warden FAQ, and are still working on fact sheets by audience. We co-hosted a web training for municipal staff and tree wardens in June, with about 50 participants. The training was recorded.
- 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 150 towns have reported.

- Tree Warden School: UCF developed and ran a new self-guided online course called Tree Warden School twice this spring/summer. Over 45 Vermont tree wardens were enrolled in the course and weekly live facilitated web conversations offered participants the opportunity to learn from each other.

- Tree Warden Summit: We will be hosting a Tree Warden Summit in October in Middlebury. The event will be a half day, entirely outdoors, and will focus on creating connections between tree wardens and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

- 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, Joanne assisted Shrewsbury, Middlebury, Mount Holly, Charlotte, and East Montpelier with shade tree preservation plan drafts and public tree inventory training.

Financial Assistance to Communities

- 2020 Grants:
  - Caring for Canopy grants program funded projects were closed out in this quarter. See grant awardees here.
  - EAB Management grant projects partners (East Montpelier, Northfield, Essex/Essex Junction) were closed out in this quarter. 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; several of these projects have already closed out. See grant awardees here.
- 2022 Grants:
  - Growing Urban Forests in the Face of Emerald Ash Borer Grants: We have just released another grant opportunity, thanks to special USFS funding. $60,000 in grants ranging $3,000-$15,000 will be allocated to support tree planting and municipal tree nurseries, focused on US-Census designated urban areas and urban clusters statewide. Applications will be due at the end of October. More information 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 finalized, signed, and executed (in record time!).

US Forest Service:

- Our next Landscape Scale Restoration Grant to support the Women Owning Woodlands Network through demonstration projects, trainings, mentorship, and enhancing communications has been awarded and the funding if officially at FPR; we'll be kicking the project off this fall.
- We submitted two project proposals for a special Urban Forest Health & Resilience grant opportunity and were selected to partially receive both, for a combined total of $100,000 in additional funding. These funds will support our next grant program (see above) as well as our new Resilient Urban Forests for All program (more to come on this one!).
- We received 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.
- Elise has stepped down from the Northeast Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA) Urban Forest Assessment Committee and has stepped onto the Trees & Public Health Committee.

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 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.
- Utilizing input from all team members, the group drafted an 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. The group also drafted measurable goals for the program to approach over the short- and long-term.

Professional Development

- Kate continues her EdD program at UVM this fall, remotely.
- Joanne and Ginger are participating in an environmental justice training hosted by the Alliance for Community Trees (see above).
- Ginger is participating in a podcasting course through Berkeley Advanced Media Institute
- Joanne participated – off and on – in the annual ArcGIS Virtual Conference hosted by Agency of Natural Resources IT.
- Elise participated in a two-day virtual training coordinated by the Agency of Natural Resources titled *Turning Good Intentions into Great*

Results: Management Training as ANR Transitions into a New Telework Culture.

Program Staffing

- Maintaining weekly check-ins online.
- Our September quarterly staff meeting will be held outdoors and will focus on being together and level-setting for fall programming and our continued telework situations.
- All UCF staff continue to work from home; State of Vermont is transitioning into an official telework/hybrid work system as of 9/1.

Council

- Two new Council members were selected; Josh Behounek will fill the vacant Community seat, and Suzanne Kelley will represent the Department of Health.
- We are still seeking 2 members to sit on the leadership team.