**VT Urban & Community Forestry Program Quarterly Report**

**December 2022 - March 2023**

| 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**: This 5-year US Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration Project wrapped up last summer and the project has closed. The Act 171 Forest Planning website houses all of the information about this project.  VT Fish & Wildlife's Community Wildlife program has incorporated the 6-part Forests Matter video series into its regular webinar series about forest planning in municipalities.  This quarter VT UCF Program staff met with staff from the Community Wildlife Program to discuss and begin planning for better alignment and more integration of our technical assistance to conservation commissions in the future.

| Desired Future Condition 2: Forest Health & Productivity | | |
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| 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 December 2022 and March 2023, the towns of East Montpelier, Marlboro, Vernon, Stowe (Stowe Electric), Vergennes received assistance with inventory methodology and data management. Additionally, we continued to work with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission and Lamoille COunty Regional Planning Commission to provide EAB-related outreach and technical assistance for ash tree inventory.

- Public Tree Inventory: Our public tree inventory tool was first launched back in 2014; we have now modernized the tool, added new fields, and integrated with ArcGIS Field Maps and Survey 123 to replace the outgoing Collector app. This quarter we assisted the towns of Williston, Putney, Shrewsbury, Essex Junction, and Vergennes with inventory of trees in public ways and places using our existing Public Tree Inventory tool.

- Ordinances and Policies: In this quarter, we continued to provide outreach to tree wardens and tree committee or board members regarding shade tree preservation plans and tree ordinance and policy updates. We hosted a virtual roundtable for tree wardens that was attended by 22 tree wardens from around the state.

- Municipal Training: We have started planning for 2023 municipal/professional trainings and are hoping to offer:

  o   Another rope throwing/safely guiding felled trees to the ground workshop for road crew staff

  o   An aerial rescue course for professional arborists

  o   A duo of tree nursery tour/workshops for tree wardens, municipal staff, and volunteers

**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. The **Town of Windsor** and the **Village of Lyndonville** are the partner communities. These municipalities will receive a package valued at over $20,000 that includes funding for strategic planting or tree maintenance, urban tree inventory, tree care supplies and resources, and training for staff and citizens.  Highlights this quarter include: tree selection and planning for spring pruning and planting.

**New Vermont Urban Tree Canopy Map**
The last time we ran an analysis on statewide urban tree canopy coverage was in 2012.  This quarter, we continued to work with our ANR GIS team to update the map.  Using E911 data to define densely populated areas in the state, the map shows tree canopy coverage within the "Urban Landscape Zone".  A census block layer is also visible.  We will use this map to better inform priority areas for technical assistance, funding allocation, and tree equity initiatives.

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

- VTinvasives E-News: 1 produced.
- Continued to support 'Report It' submissions.

**EAB Response & Planning**

- UCF received funding from the USFS for a ***Sustainable Urban Forests Resilience*** project. Part of this project will involve strategic planning for EAB in Vermont. This quarter, VT UCF staff conducted a GIS analysis of data on existing street tree inventories and ash prevalence, existing EAB preparedness efforts, urban tree canopy coverage and socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to aid in identification of priority regions or municipalities on which to focus for the technical EAB planning assistance portion of this project. This assistance will focus on integration of EAB preparedness with other essential and required municipal and regional planning efforts, including for hazard mitigation, flood resiliency, forest integrity, and climate change. VT UCF will soon begin reaching out to (at least 6) non-traditional partners to offer EAB planning assistance to support vulnerable and underserved urban populations in the state, including school districts, affordable housing and community development organizations, faith-based institutions, and new municipal partners.

- **Black Ash Field Naturalist Project**: UVM Graduate Student Charlotte Cadow continues to work on her 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: updates to the network of black ash basket makers and private landowners willing to harvest and share black ash trees with basketmakers, partner meetings with topic collaborators at the University of Maine, planning for long-term monitoring plot set up in 7-10 more locations in Vermont this summer, and continued work to advocate for funding for basketmakers, black ash pounders, and other people interested in harvesting, preparing, and storing black ash splints.

**The Forest Pest Outreach Program (FPOP)**
In the past, this arm of our programming had been primarily focused since 2018 on EAB and hemlock wooly adelgid. The program has more recently broadened its education and outreach to include other invasive pests, such as jumping worms, and ones that are likely to be established in Vermont soon, such as beech leaf disease and spotted lanternfly and common vectors, such as moving firewood. FPOP highlights this quarter include:
- Over 730 visitors to the UCF booth at the Flower Show engaged with Forest Pest First Detector Volunteers about invasive forest pests
- Spotted lanternfly webinar with 23 live participants and 76 views as of 3/7/23. SLF is a risk for southern VT, vineyards and hops growers as well as the nursery industry
- Collaborating with FPR and VAAFM on a series of posters and handouts on spotted lanternfly and firewood that will be posted at State Parks, Visitors Centers and other high-risk areas
- Planning an SLF trapping project with FPFDs and VT vineyards and orchards
- Received full amount of funding requested for the Forest Pest Outreach Program from USDA- APHIS for 2023 -2024 grant cycle.
- Supported a workshop at The Nature Museum of Grafton on how to identify and survey for Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

- Two FPFD Bulletins have been sent to volunteers

| Desired Future Condition 3: Forest Products & Ecosystem Services | | Priorities |
|---|---|---|
| **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. | |

**Vermont Community Canopy**

The Governor's 2022 budget included $1 million for UCF for tree planting in urban areas, funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This quarter the stars finally aligned, and program staff finally received the thumbs up to access this funding; over the next two years (2023-2024), **at least 3,000 free trees** will be given to residents of identified and partnering Qualified Census Tract communities through the Vermont Community Canopy Program. VT UCF staff have initiated the process of entering into a two-year subaward with the Arbor Day Foundation to implement this project. For the spring round of the program, UCF staff are exploring partnerships in Burlington, St. Albans, and Rockingham.

**Fruit and Nut Tree Program**

Building upon the success of the pilot partnership with the Vermont Garden Network (VGN) in 2022 to support fruit and nut tree plantings at community gardens statewide, VT UCF entered into another subaward with the organization this quarter. The VGN's 2023 grant program accepted applications through January, VT UCF staff assisted in grant application review and selection, and 11 recipients were selected to receive funding to purchase and plant fruit and nut trees this spring and fall.

**UVM Climate Adaptation White Oak Study**

Considerable effort is being placed into understanding ways to best steward forests and trees to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change, particularly how climate-adaptive tree planting can be used as part of the solution. Professor Tony D'Amato and Peter Clark from the University of Vermont along with partners from the US Forest Service, Northeast Climate Adaptation Science Center, and Vermont Forest Parks and Recreation have approached VT UCF regarding a series of long-term experiments to assess how adaptive forest management strategies can be applied to urban forested areas in Vermont. This project is part of a regional experiment applied throughout the Northeastern US that leverages a latitudinal gradient of cities to test adaptive forest management strategies that use urban and climate-adapted tree species to accelerate the urban forest restoration and promote resilience against future biological invasion and climate change driven canopy loss. Program staff are assisting the research team in identifying partner municipalities and sites to install climate adaptive tree planting plots, .1 to .25-acre each, in Vermont's urban areas, at which to plant and monitor growth of white oak (*Quercus alba*) seedlings obtained from various southern seed zones.

**Regional Urban Forest Economic Study**

Funded through a US Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration Grant, VT UCF has been involved in a comprehensive analysis of urban and community forestry economic contributions across the Northwest-Midwest region, which includes 20 states and Washington DC. The project was led by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the study includes economic impact numbers, employment numbers, industry outlook, and a resource valuation. The final products include regional- and state-level reports, accompanying factsheets and a methodology report.

- **Regional Research Highlights**

- Urban forestry activities in the Northeast-Midwest region of the U.S. had a total contribution of **$34.7 billion** to the regional economy, employing more than 357,200 people with a payroll of about $16.05 billion.
  - Every dollar generated in urban forestry contributed an additional $0.97 to the regional economy.
  - Trees cover about 28% of the region's urban areas, resulting in an annual savings of $3.06 billion a year across three broad categories of ecosystem service.
- **Vermont Research Highlights**
  - In 2018, urban forestry in Vermont directly contributed $128 million in industry output and $81 million in value-added by supporting about 1,780 full- and part-time jobs in various businesses and activities.
  - We estimated that every dollar generated in urban forestry by the private sector contributed an additional $0.53 to the state economy.
  - Community tree canopy, estimated to cover 38% in our most urban areas, saved an estimated $3.3 million from the removal of air pollutants, $3.5 million from the reduction of stormwater and $7.7 million from the sequestration of carbon.

Staff continue to consider how to best communicate and utilize the findings of the study.

| Desired Future Condition 4: Land Ethic | | |
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| **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. | |

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| 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**

- The VT Arbor Day Conference will be held on Friday, May 19th on Vermont Technical College's Randolph campus. The agenda has been drafted, potential speakers are being contacted, and registration will soon be open.

- The 2023 Growing Works of Art contest is live. The theme this year is: ***Branching Out*** and entries are due 3/10/23. More information on the webpage here.

**Recognition Programs:**

- VT UCF supports the Arbor Day Foundation's many recognition programs. Program staff monitor and review all annual designation applications for the Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA, and Tree Line USA programs in February each year.

- VT UCF's annual Vermont Tree Stewards Awards program is now accepting nominations. 5 categories include: Hamilton (tree wardens only), practitioner, unsung hero, volunteer group/community. Nominations are due March 31 and more information here.

**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.

- Planning is underway for the next Forest Pest First Detectors Course; this year the course will be designed and targeted towards Conservation Commission members.

**Forestry Education Programs and Youth Engagement**

- Professional On Demand Forestry Webinar Library:  With Kate's departure from UCF, the future of the professional on-demand forestry webinar library is a topic of hot discussion.  We continue to communicate with partners, including UVM Extension, VT Coverts, and Vermont Woodlands Association to discuss the most appropriate, and sustainable home for this resource.

- ourVTwoods.org 2.0: With Kate's departure from UCF, plans are currently on hold for the redesign of the ourVTwoods website.  Partners from UVM Extension, FPR, VT Coverts, and Vermont Woodlands Association continue to consider the best path forward.   The funding that Kate had secured from the Vermont Community Foundation will likely be allocated to a contractor to lead and facilitate a scale-down and revisioning process to make the ourVTwoods site easier to manage and a sustainable resource, given the lack of ownership for the site.   Ali Kosiba, UVM Extension's Forester, is leading this effort.

- 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 continues, with grant agreements in place with Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Woodlands Association, Vermont Coverts, UVM Extension, and VYCC.
  - With Kate's departure from the UCF team, the UVM Extension subaward will be revisited, edited, and likely the WOW funding for that award will be pulled and redistributed to VWA and VT Coverts.
  - VT UCF's Joanne Garton has stepped onto the WOW Steering Committee to the program engaged with the project and the group.
  - WOW has a vibrant 2023 schedule of events including two learning circle (peer-to-peer learning events) in April: Getting to Know Your Land on April 5th in Richmond, VT and Forest Management Plan Review on April 29th is Belvidere, VT.

- This quarter VT UCF's Elise Schadler led two lectures for UVM's Ecosystem Restoration course on urban forestry and urban restoration efforts; this is her 12th year participating in this class, taught by Bill Keeton.

**Town Forests Stewardship Demonstration and Leadership Training**

With Kate's departure in October, UCF's involvement with this project has stalled. 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.  Kate was working on *a demonstration project library*, as well as a *community forest stewardship toolkit*.  As soon as the existing

UVM Extension subaward is amended to pull these components out (also known as "relinquishing the funds"), program staff will support Keith Thompson at FPR (the lead of the project) to hire a consultant through FPR to finish these project components.

**Media/Communications:**

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

- Newsletters: Bimonthly TREEmail and monthly VolunTREEmail have been sent.

- Website: Finally, finally, finally our upgraded and redesigned website has launched: www.vtcommunityforestry.org! Endless accolades to VT UCF's Gwen Kozlowski for leading the charge, updating nearly all of the pages, and working patiently with our web designer and developer to make this happen.

| Desired Future Condition 5: Legal, Institutional, & Economic Framework | | |
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| 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. | ✔ |

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| 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. | ✓ |

**Urban Tree Planting Funding: FY22 Governor's Budget**

The 2022 Governor's budget included **$1 million for UCF** to plant 5,000 trees in urban areas to support Vermont's Climate Action Plan, funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).  Navigating the process to accessing these funds proved to be the process but we are now approved and ready to move.  The next steps will be:

- Hiring a 2-year limited-service position to support the project.
- Developing an RFP for a block grant program to allocate the ~$700,000 in grants for tree planting, with a goal of 2,000 trees planted in urban areas.
- Scaling up the Vermont Community Canopy Program (see DFC 3 above) to plant 3,000 trees on private property in 2023 and 2024.

**Inflation Reduction Act Funding**

In late 2022 the national Washington office of the US Forest Service's Urban & Community Forestry Program released advice to state UCF programs regarding applications for Inflation Reduction Act funding.  The federal program received $1.6 billion and states are anticipated to access several hundreds of millions to scale up programming nationwide.  This quarter, VT UCF staff spent considerable time and effort meeting with existing and potential partners and developing a comprehensive, 17-component, 5-year project proposal for $7.1 million.  Highlights of this proposal include establishing 4 new grant categories/programs to be administered by VT UCF, supporting the hiring of 4 new program staff at FPR and UVM

Extension, and supporting extensive arboricultural workforce development in the state.  We anticipate notification about funding allocations in April.

## Tree Wardens

- On February 7th VT UCF held a webinar for tree wardens. 22 tree wardens participated in a lively discussion, expertly facilitated by Joanne.

- **Shade Tree Preservation Plans**: In this quarter, the town of Calais shared their adopted shade tree preservation plan, the second such adopted plan in the state.

## Financial Assistance to Communities

- UCF staff continue to consider 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.

- 2023 Grants: Applications for our two grant categories were due at the end of 2022:

  - We received 8 applications in the **Growing Urban Forests in the Face of EAB** category; all 8 applications were funded at either full or partial levels, for a total award amount of just over $80,000

  - We received 16 applications in our traditional **Communities Caring for Canopy** category; 8 applications were selected to be funded at either full or partial levels, for a total award amount of just over $30,000.

  - Thanks to **Anne Hazelrigg** and **Bob McCullough** for sitting on the grants review committee.

  - VT UCF program staff have been working with FPR's new grants program manager and our administrative services team to improve the grant agreement development process.  We will now be using mail merge and all 2023 subawards are now in process in the FPR business office.

## Financial and Programming Partnerships

UVM Extension:

- Our 2022/2023 grant agreement to support our UCF staff at Extension has been executed, though we continue to be in the process of amending the scope and budget based on Kate's departure.
- Gwen has taken over as the PI on the UVM Extension grant, and Ali Kosiba (UVM Extension Forester) has taken over as the PI on Ginger's Forest Pest Outreach grant (from APHIS) and is also now supervising both Gwen and Ginger.

US Forest Service:

- Elise is serving on the Northeast Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA) Trees & Public Health Committee.
- Base funding from the Forest Service will be increased to $300,000 for FY23.
- The USDA Farm Bill is up for renewal this year and UCF programs have been involved in reviewing potential changes and additions to the bill.

**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. It was approved by ANR leadership and now lives on the UCF website.
- The group also updated measurable goals for the program to approach over the short- and long-term. We continue 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. Staff have recurring monthly meeting to focus on this work.
- This quarter, the team has supported working with group in Windsor to get a tree planted and dedicated to the Pride community. Staff have encountered many administrative barriers, but there is positive progress and we are planning a June planting event.
- As part of the application for Inflation Reduction Act funding to the US Forest Service, VT UCF program staff were required to define "disadvantaged communities" in Vermont. Using existing data analysis and maps from the Social Vulnerability Index assembled by the Vermont Department of Health, the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool from the federal Council on Enivornmental Quality, and presence/absence data from VT UCF's ash tree and urban tree inventory database, we created a draft map of municipalities state wide that qualify as disadvantaged at present. IRA funding requests further resources to update and refin this map based on metrics available from census data, the Department of Health, and other tree equity tools utilized nationwide.

**Professional Development**

- Joanne attended the Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative's conference at UVM in December.
- Elise attended a Society of American Foresters Legislative Breakfast in Montpelier in February.
- Elise applied for and was accepted into the 2023 cohort of the Green Communities Leadership Institute and has been engaged in curriculum throughout January and February.  In early March, she spent a week in Knoxville at the Institute's in-person intensive.

**Program Staffing**

- VT UCF staff maintain weekly virtual check-in meetings.
- We held our quarterly staff meeting in Essex and focused on planning in anticipation of substantial increased in program funding in the coming years.
- All UCF staff continue to work primarily from home.
- Our UVM Field Naturalist graduate student, **Charlotte Cadow**, has continued to work on her year-long black ash-focused project.  See more under DCF 2 above.
- We welcomed **Max Hertz**, UVM senior and forestry major, as our spring semester intern.  Max will be working with Joanne to develop several new EAB Municipal Management case studies to contribute to the program's online collection.
- We congratulate **Gwen** in successfully being reclassified as an Outreach Professional Senior at UVM Extension.  Much deserved!
- Ali Kosiba, Extension Forester, is now Gwen and Ginger's supervisor; annual performance reviews for both staff were held this quarter.
- We are approved to hire a new 2-year limited-service Forester II position through the ARPA funding and will soon initiate this process.

## Council

- In December we welcomed **Darren Schibler,** Senior Planner with the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission to Council as our new at-large member.
- **Suzanne Kelley** with the VT Department of Health stepped down from the Council in late 2022; she filled an At-large seat and her replacement will be discussed at the March meeting.
- The March meeting will be **Warren Spinner's** last, after several decades on the Council.  Burlington City Arborist **VJ Comai** will be replacing Warren to fill the municipal tree warden seat.
- We have initiated our new leadership rotation; **Tim Smith** and **Scott Wunderle** will serve for the 2023 calendar year.