

**VT Urban & Community Forestry Program Quarterly Report**  
**March 2023 - June 2023**

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

**Town Forests**

Since Kate Forrer's departure last October, VT UCF's engagement with Town Forests has been in flux. Just noting some things we are considering leading into the summer:

- Stepping up to support the Community Forests USFS Landscape Scale Restoration Project (Keith Thompson, Private Lands Program Manager is the PI) to develop a community forest volunteer leadership training curriculum. This would follow the general online format of the Town Forest Recreation Planning toolkit.
- Working with Cecilia Danks and her new graduate student on the Town Forest Census (NRCS-funded).
- Continuing to support the maintenance of the ourvtwoods.org website as the partners continue to consider which organization has the capacity and is most appropriate to manage this comprehensive online resource.

### **Environmental Leadership**

Staff has engaged in conversations with the Dept. of Fish & Wildlife's Community Wildlife Program about being more engaged and involved in the Environmental Leadership Program (formerly Natural Resources 1 & 2). The program focuses on Conservation Commission members and municipal staff and UCF will be looped into the planning for the fall program.

### **Regional Planning**

In April, VT UCF's Elise Schadler presented to the monthly meeting of the Regional Planning Commission Executive Directors (under the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies) on the influx of urban forestry funding both nationally and in Vermont for the next couple of years. The program sees RPCs as an important partner in ensuring municipalities are aware of the funding opportunities and supported in their implementation of urban and community forestry activities, both in the urban downtown areas and into more rural communities that may be engaging with our program for the first time thanks to this funding.

### **Branch Out Burlington Tree Sale**

VT UCF supports the Branch Out Burlington annual tree sale by providing support in sorting the 300+ trees to correspond with the submitted orders. This is always a very fun day and a great way for Elise to flex her tree identification muscles!

<b>Desired Future Condition 2: Forest Health &amp; Productivity</b>		
<b>Maintain and enhance forest ecosystem health and productivity.</b>		
<b>Strategies</b>		<b>Priorities</b>
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 2023, the towns of Vergennes, Marlboro, Braintree, and Vernon received assistance with inventory methodology and data management.
- 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 Hartford, Vergennes, Shrewsbury, Shelburne, Charlotte, Windsor, Lyndon and Morrisville with inventory of trees in public ways and places using our existing Public Tree Inventory tool.
- Ordinances and Policies: VT UCF continues to support shade tree preservation plan development, tree ordinance and tree policy review. Between March and June 2023, the towns of Brattleboro, Calais, East Montpelier, and Charlotte all received technical assistance regarding policy and ordinance updates.
- Municipal Training:
  - o We have submitted contract development documents to the Forests, Parks & Recreation business office to work with Adam McCullough, former Montpelier City Arborist, to host three rope-throwing/safely guiding felled trees to the ground workshops for road crew staff this late summer.

### **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 Garton and UCF intern Julia D'Alessio spent many field days this summer working 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,

urban tree inventory, tree care supplies and resources, and training for staff and citizens. Highlights this quarter include: planting four B&B trees in Lyndon's ROW, tree and species selection at Northern Nurseries with the Windsor tree warden, planting 11 B&B trees in Windsor's ROW, and updating digital tree inventories in Lyndon and Windsor.

### **Mapping & Vermont's Urban Forests**

- The last time we ran an analysis on statewide urban tree canopy coverage was in 2012. Last quarter, we worked 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 and impervious surface cover within the "Urban Landscape Zone". A census block layer is also visible. We hope to use this map to better inform priority areas for technical assistance, funding allocation, and prioritization of planting areas and funding.
- As we prepare to offer several categories of funding this summer, all with different eligibility criteria, we will be submitting a work order request for support from the ANR IT department to build an interactive funding eligibility mapping tool, as well as a dashboard to track funding to communities.

### **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 Ginger and Joanne started exploring potential partner communities and organizations in southern Vermont.
- **Black Ash Field Naturalist Project:** UVM Graduate Student Charlotte Cadow wrapped up her year-long focus on 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:

- Presented an overview of the Black Ash Project at Forest Health Meeting, connecting to consulting and county foresters interested in harvesting or treating black ash, or creating outreach programs in targeted ecological communities now known to host abundant black ash.
  - The Urban & Community Forestry Program piloted its first black ash harvest on private land in Calais to connect basket makers to landowners with accessible basket-quality black ash. While Abenaki and non-Abenaki basket makers currently harvest select black ash through personal connections to long-standing harvest locations, this effort to connect private landowners to the basket making community offers another way to increase capacity and interest in securing black ash splints as cultural and ecological resources for the next generations of basket makers while black ash succumb to emerald ash borer. UCF's technical assistance coordinator Joanne Garton worked with the landowner and two basket makers (one Abenaki, one non-Abenaki) to select and harvest trees, check for emerald ash borer, and carry them from their low-lying wet home to an old logging trail where a pick-up truck could transport them the rest of the way to the basket makers workshops and storage ponds.
  - Completed research license to Tony D'Amato (UVM professor) for long-term black ash monitoring plots in select state forests and WMAs.
  - Charlotte trained Joanne on mapping techniques and GIS analysis necessary to create 7-10 more long-term monitoring plots in Vermont during the summer and fall of 2023.
- Program staff continue to notify town clerks and town managers/administrators when EAB has been confirmed for the first time in a municipality. This process corresponds with the uploading of updated Infested Area maps onto vtInvasives.org.
  - Forest Pest Outreach Program in collaboration with St Michael's biology department and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture gave a workshop on EAB to 13 members of Branch Out Burlington, members of various area Conservation and neighborhood committees and interested students. We also left interpretive signage and hung EAB traps in the ash near the visitor parking lot on the campus.

### **Pest Outreach**

- The Forest Pest Outreach Program (FPOP), had been primarily focused since 2018 on EAB and hemlock woolly 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. Our Forest Pest Education Coordinator, Ginger Nickerson, has been focusing programming efforts on spotted lanternfly, an invasive leaf hopper which is rapidly moving north. Highlights this quarter include:

- Webinar for the Nature Museum at Grafton on spotted lanternfly (SLF), beech leaf disease and oak wilt, webinar for municipalities on SLF;
- Two Forest Pest First Detectors staffed a booth at the Herricks Cove Festival, 136 visitors;
- Program supported FPDFs on various activities, including presenting to a fifth grade class, tabling at Farmers Markets in Middlebury & Cornwall, communicating with area conservation organizations about posting information in Newport, and sharing information at Garden Club plant sale and birding event;
- Collaborating with FPR & VAAFM on planning an SLF outreach campaign; and
- Fielding a lot of inquiries about the frost damage.

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.	
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### **Energy Saving Trees/Vermont Community Canopy**

- Funding: The next two years of the program (2023 and 2024) will be supported by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, as part of the Governor's 2022 budget and alignment with the Vermont Climate Action Plan. This quarter we sluggishly moved through the development of a 2-year subaward agreement with the Arbor Day Foundation that includes all the ARPA reporting requirements.
- Spring 2023 Free Tree Giveaway: This quarter 750 free trees were given away to residents of Burlington, St. Albans City, and Rockingham. We partnered with the Winooski Valley Park District, Bellows Falls Middle School and St. Albans City School. Students were involved in promotion, tree delivery and the pick-up event. We had the highest participation rate and lowest number of trees not claimed! Very successful community collaborations!

### **Fruit and Nut Tree Program**

Building off the success of the pilot program last year, we again entered into a subaward agreement with 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. Applications were accepted for the [2023 grant program](#) in the winter and UCF's Gwen and Elise were involved in the ranking and selection of this year's [11 grant recipients](#).

### **1t.org - Trillion Trees Pledge**

VT UCF is developing a pledge for the [Trillion Trees Initiative](#), a World Economic Forum initiative to accelerate nature-based solutions in support of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. Program staff met with the US-based coordinators from American Forests and is drafting a pledge in alignment with the 5,000 trees we are committed to planting in urban areas through the Governor's 2022 budget and in alignment with the Vermont Climate Action Plan.

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

- The 2023 Arbor Day Conference was held on Friday May 19th at Vermont Technical College in Randolph with 120 attendees. Thanks to so many council members who made the day a success! 9 workshops allowed for information sharing and collaboration. [Agenda available here.](#)
- The 2023 Growing Works of Art theme was: **Branching Out** and the winning entries and can viewed on [the webpage](#). Winners were highlighted on an episode of Across the Fence.
- Greening Schools on Arbor Day: [11 schools participated in this year's program.](#)

### **Recognition Programs:**

- We supported [Tree City USA, Tree Campus USA, and Tree Line USA](#) designees as needed as they submitted their annual designation information. This year we welcomed the Town of Essex as a new Tree City USA.
- The [2023 Tree Steward Awards](#) winners were recognized at the Arbor Day Conference.
  - Hamilton: Steve Lotspeich, Waterbury
  - Leader: Peter Hausermann
  - Unsung Hero: Little Tree
  - Volunteer Group: Old Stone House Museum & Historic Village Buildings and Grounds Committee
  - Arbor Day: Gary Salmon
- VT UCF supported the [2023 Public Places Awards](#). After many years of playing a coordinating role in this bi-annual recognition program, this year we took a step back. We will still be supporting the promotion of the program and hosting application materials on our website, and we will also continue to sit on the review committee to select award winners.

### **Forest Pest First Detectors**

- The 2023 course ran this quarter; the focus audience of the course this spring was Conservation Commission members, Conservation District Staff, Tree Board members and Tree Wardens. 64 people registered for the self-paced course, that included four live webinars, including one on forests and climate change by Ali Kosiba.

### **Backyards Woods**

- [2023 Course](#): Planning for a fall 2023 course.

### **Forestry Education Programs**

- Professional On Demand Forestry Webinar Library: With Kate's departure from UCF, the future of the professional on-demand forestry webinar library is still in flux. More to come on this, hopefully soon!
- 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 met a couple of times at the end of last year, but momentum here has stalled.

- 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 are in place for partner organizations Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Woodlands Association, Vermont Coverts, UVM Extension, and VYCC.
  - With Kate's departure from the UCF team, the UVM Extension subaward is being modified and remaining funds (about \$78k) will be redistributed to the Vermont Land Trust, Vermont Woodlands Association and Vermont Coverts.
  - UCF's Joanne Garton has stepped onto the WOW Steering Committee in the new year to keep the program engaged with the project and the group.
  - WOW is hosting two learning circles this summer, the first regarding deer exclosure on June 13th, 2023 in Grand Isle and the second regarding land exploration for new landowners at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller Park on Aug 4th, 2023.
  - WOW is currently rebranding as Women & Our Woods and contracting with [nuwave](#).

#### **Youth Engagement**

- For the fifth year, UCF staff was asked to lead an "urban forestry day" for UVM's Forestry Camp. Elise and Joanne (and Council member VJ Comai!) spent the day with ~30 students in Burlington, introducing them to basic concepts of urban and community forestry in Vermont.
- Joanne spent one morning with Shelburne Community School 7th graders and teacher Lucy Allen to learn about ash tree ID, elm trees, ash tree lookalikes, invasive plant ID, and invasive insect ID. Joanne also provided technical assistance regarding tree species interplanting among Shelburne Community School's 30 planted green ash trees.

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

- Social Media: Continue to support our social media account (Facebook); the team rotates posting responsibilities. VT Forests, Parks & Recreation now has social media channels and a process to submit posts that the UCF team has taken advantage of.
- Newsletters: Bimonthly TREEmail; monthly VolunTREEmail, semi-monthly bulletin for Forest Pest First Detectors
- Website: Continue to maintain and improve the site - [www.vtcommunityforestry.org](http://www.vtcommunityforestry.org). While the site upgrade is mostly complete, we continue to work with Tamarack media on a few key features of the site (UCF Impact Map and Town Forest Stewardship Library).

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**

- Tree Warden School: This spring had low enrollment and participation in the course, so we will adjust to ensure this material is available on demand and offer additional live opportunities for tree wardens throughout the year.
- After Town Meeting Day, we sent a reminder to town clerks to certify/submit their appointed tree warden via our Tree Warden Reporting portal, supported by ANR IT. Subsequently, we submitted a work request for ANR IT to make some improvements to the database and reporting portal to better serve our ability to support tree wardens.

### **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 moving forward. Highlights this quarter include:

- Submitting paperwork to hire a 2-year limited-service position to support the project.
- Drafting an RFQ 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**

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 was passed last fall. \$1.6 billion went to the federal Washington office of the US Forest Service's Urban & Community Forestry Program to distribute through a competitive process nationwide, with a focus on providing funds to disadvantaged communities in line with the Biden Administration's Justice40 Initiative. Initially, the Forest Service released advice to state UCF programs requesting proposals from States with no cap on funding requests. VT UCF staff spent considerable time and effort meeting with existing and potential partners to develop and submit a comprehensive, 17-component, 5-year project proposal for \$7.1 million. In April, a (quite shocking at the time) press release announced that states would, in fact, be given an allocation, while \$1 billion would be made available to any applicant through a competitive grant process. **Vermont was allocated \$750,000** to distribute to disadvantaged communities through grants over the next five years. Instead of applying for more funds, VT UCF instead spent this quarter supporting several applications in development. Ultimately, on

June 1st (grant application deadline), two proposals were submitted from Vermont from the City of Rutland and the organization Newport City Downtown Development.

### **Financial Assistance to Communities**

- 2022 Grants: All but 3 of our 2022 grants have wrapped up; the 3 remaining projects have been extended.
- 2023 Grants:
  - 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.
  - After some fumbling and bringing FPR's new Grants Administrator (Lora Marchand) up to speed on processes, all 16 subaward agreements have now been executed and projects are underway.
- 2024 Grants: We will have an unprecedented amount of funding to grant out for 2024 projects. This quarter we've really just wrapped our heads around and finalized the amounts that will be available and changes that we will need to make to feasibly manage this amount of funding internally. We head into the summer with a commitment to make the grant application process (and our website materials) as clear as possible. We hope to launch all categories in the coming quarter, with applications due in early January 2024. Summary of available funds:
  - ~\$70,000 will be available for Caring for Canopy Grants (1:1 match)
  - \$125,000 will be available for Growing Urban Forests in the Face of EAB (1:1 match)
  - \$300,000 will be available for Inflation Reduction Act State Allocation grants (no match, only "disadvantaged communities" are eligible) See section above.

### **Financial and Programming Partnerships**

#### UVM Extension:

- Gwen has taken over as the PI on the UVM Extension grant.
- Gwen and Elise have been working this quarter on drafting out the 2023/2024 UVM Extension subaward agreement.
- Ginger is seeking an Americorps member to serve with UVM Extension and support the Forest Pest First Detectors Program.

#### US Forest Service:

- Elise attended the Northeast Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA) May meeting in Annapolis, MD in early May. At the meeting, she coordinated a process to write a response from the 20 state coordinators regarding how the Inflation Reduction Act funding rolled out.
- Elise is serving on the Northeast Midwest State Foresters Alliance (NMSFA) Trees & Public Health Committee.

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

- Our program team continues to meet monthly to discuss topics of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Topics this quarter have included land acknowledgements and identifying/mapping “disadvantaged communities” in alignment with the Inflation Reduction Act state allocation and funding opportunities.
- The Agency of Natural Resources has hired two new Environmental Justice Coordinators; this quarter Elise met with them to introduce them to the UCF program and they will be attending our next monthly meeting to meet the rest of the team.
- Pride Tree: We partnered with the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation and the LGBTQIA2S+ & Allies of Windsor, VT to plant a flowering cherry (*Prunus accolade*) at the Old Constitution House in Windsor. A dedication ceremony was held on June 1 to celebrate the accomplishment and kick off Pride month.

### **Professional Development**

- Joanne and Elise attended a Land Ethic Vermont train-the-trainer workshop at the North Branch Nature Center in May.
- Joanne and Elise attended the Vermont Forest Health meeting in April.
- After participating in the Green Communities Leadership Institute as a cohort member this spring, Elise was asked to join the Core Leadership Team for the Institute and is now engaged in planning for the 2024 program.
- Gwen attended UVM Extension’s annual EPIC conference in Killington.
- Ginger took a UVM course this spring as part of a training to become a Certified Trainer in Mindfulness Stress Reduction and an Integrative Health and Wellness Coach.

### **Program Staffing**

- Maintaining weekly check-ins online.
- We held our March quarterly staff spent time with Joanne in Middlebury and Essex Town researching and writing ash management case studies to benefit other municipalities looking for guidance regarding grant-funded EAB and ash management projects.

- Our UVM Field Naturalist graduate student, **Charlotte Cadow**, wrapped up her year-long black ash project. We will miss her!
- The program will be hiring a new limited service Urban Forester (with ARPA funds) position; hopefully the posting and recruitment will go live this month.

### **Council**

- We welcomed **VJ Comai**, Burlington City Arborist, to Council in March.
- There remains one at-large vacant Council seat.
- Tim Smith and Scott Wunderle are serving as the Leadership Committee for the 2023 calendar year.
- We want to thank the UCF Council members that presented at the Arbor Day Conference: **Richard Amore, Chris Campany, Savannah Ferriera, Darren Schibler, Tim Smith, and Tim Parsons**. And thanks as well to **Scott Wunderle** for attending the conference!
- Bi-annual Council recommitment letters will be sent out in June.