



## State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Vermont 2023



### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2022 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$1,151,520
Forest Legacy	\$540,000
Forest Stewardship	\$172,958
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$468,119
State Fire Assistance	\$187,846
Urban and Community Forestry	\$353,130
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$117,647
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,991,220</b>

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

State, private, and other non-Federal forests make up 92 percent of the 176 million acres of forests across the 20 states of the Northeast and Midwest. The U.S. Forest Service and state forestry agencies collaborate with other partners on shared stewardship goals, which also support each State Forest Action Plan. The State, Private, and Tribal Forestry programs promote the health, resilience, and productivity of trees and forests across all ownerships for the benefit of people and wildlife; establish and manage urban and community forests; empower private landowners with information and technical assistance to sustainably manage their forests; and protect critically important rural forests and watersheds.

### Program Goals

- Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses.
- Protect forests from threats.
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

### Key Issues

- Conserve native biological diversity across all landscapes.
- Maintain and enhance forest ecosystem health and ecological productivity.
- Maintain and enhance forest contribution to ecosystem services.
- Maintain and enhance an ethic of respect for the land, sustainable use, and exemplary management.
- Legal, institutional, and economic framework in place for forest conservation and sustainability.

### Forest Facts and Accomplishments

<b>Selected Facts</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>FY 2022 Accomplishments</b>	<b>Value</b>
Population	643,077	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	1,581
Acres of Forest Land	4,522,889	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	33,225
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	3,044,069	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	26,676
Number of NIPF Landowners	40,887	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	124
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	0
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	4,700,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	0
Number of Rural Fire Departments	222	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	6,639
Cities and Towns	284	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	102
Forest Based Employment	5,332	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	452,946
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	2	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	10,249
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	3,768,904		

## Program Highlights

### **Community Forestry and Open Space**

The city of Montpelier acquired two tracts of forest land totaling 77 acres adding to the city's Hubbard Park. The park and the new community forest lands have a network of trails with a trailhead immediately behind the Vermont State House in the city center. In addition to providing public with access to this property for recreation, the city plans on using the forest for education purposes through the Montpelier Youth Conservation Corps. The city was awarded a grant of \$258,000 from the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program for the purchase of the land.

### **Conservation Education**

Interpreter guides were hired to work on State lands adjacent to the Green Mountain National Forest. The guides provided much-needed programming in hiker education, Leave No Trace, and other trail ethics on State and national forests lands to 2,000 people. Other programs included the geology, ecology, and rich history of the area.

### **Cooperative Fire Protection**

Vermont supported 50 volunteer fire departments with grant funds and trained 618 firefighters through cooperative fire funds. Vermont hosted the Northeast Forest Fire Supervisor's meeting in person after two years of cancellation due to the pandemic. The State is working with the National Weather Service to change the forecast zones to align with the new fire danger rating zones and has adopted National Fire Danger Rating System V4. After two years of drought, the State is collaborating with the Vermont Drought Task Force to add fire weather data into the drought outlook. Also in the preparedness category, the Vermont Army National Guard Blackhawk pilots and crew have been recertified for long-line and bucket work, and the State has launched a new wildfire training webpage.

### **Forest Health Protection**

Emerald ash borer has been detected in 42 Vermont communities. In 2022, all three emerald ash borer biocontrol parasitoids continued to be released in the State. Vermont experienced significant defoliation from spongy moth caterpillars for the second year in a row in 2022. The current outbreak began with more than 50,000 acres of defoliation in 2021, followed by defoliation of 42,797 acres in 2022. The outbreak is expected to continue in 2023 based on egg mass counts. Hemlock woolly adelgid continues to threaten hemlock in southern Vermont, especially in combination with drought and elongate hemlock scale. Biocontrol efforts continued in 2022 with 1,000 wildlings of the predatory beetle *Laricobius nigrinus* released at Fort Dummer State Park in the fall.

### **Forest Legacy**

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation continued to protect important forests in northern Vermont through the Forest Legacy Program with the purchase of conservation easements on the two final tracts comprising the Worcester Woods I project. Using \$4,879,307 of Forest Legacy Program funds, the two purchases collectively protect 6,639 acres of newly conserved forestland in Vermont for a project total of 7,659 acres permanently conserved.

### **Forest Stewardship**

The Vermont Forest Stewardship Program reported 209 new or revised stewardship plans for 33,225 acres, of which 26,676 acres were in Important Forest Areas per the State's Strategic Forest Action Plan. In 2022, 968 landowners were provided forestry technical assistance and 613 landowners participated in education programs.

The State of Vermont does not operate a nursery. Through the Forest Stewardship program and National Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetics Resource program, the state receives financial assistance to support nursery, genetics, and seed programs.

### **Landscape Scale Restoration**

Grantee: Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

- Federal investment: \$278,094
- Non-federal match: \$278,094
- Project Title: Climate Adaptation for Vermont's Forests and Forest Products Supply Chain
- Project Description: Vermont's forests and forest economy are vulnerable to climate change. Climate-adaptive planning and management can increase the resilience of both. Using a collaborative group of stakeholders, we will create management plan templates, planning guides and trainings to help landowners, foresters, loggers, mills and producers identify climate change vulnerabilities and appropriate adaptation actions. We will deploy silvicultural and operational adaptation demonstrations across different forest conditions.

Grantee: Vermont Natural Resources Council, Inc.

- Federal investment: \$149,004
- Non-federal match: \$149,004
- Project Title: Engaging New Landowners in Vermont to Maintain Healthy Forests
- Project Description: This project will employ a creative and collaborative approach to engage new private forest landowners in Vermont. Specifically, we will identify new forest landowners and map their location in priority areas in the state. We will then develop effective educational materials and offer direct technical assistance to ensure that new landowners make informed stewardship decisions to maintain the health and functions of forests. This project will target outreach to engage socially vulnerable communities and work with the Agency of Natural Resources Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator to further identify and engage underserved landowners.

### **Urban and Community Forestry**

The Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program's (VT UCF) vision is as follows: "Vermont's forests and trees are integral to the health and well-being of our communities and are valued as critical community infrastructure. Community members, government, and businesses collaborate in planning for, investing in, and maintaining these resources and the ecosystem services they provide, for this and future generations." This vision recognizes that urban forests are an essential feature of the urban ecosystem that provides valuable services. To achieve this long-range vision, VT UCF identified its role this way: "To lead community members, businesses, and governments in understanding the value of urban and community forests and promote public responsibility for and participation in the stewardship of these resources for this and future generations." Strategies in place focus heavily on providing technical assistance, financial assistance through grants, along with education, and outreach. Program highlights include: the Forest Pest First Detector program that engages birders to identify and report signs and symptoms of invasive forest pests; the continued partnership with the Vermont Department of Libraries to provide local opportunities for community members and families to engage in Arbor Day; piloting the Resilient Urban Forests for All assistance package; a reboot of the Vermont Big Trees program; and recruiting and funding a graduate student to focus on a community science data collection project related to black ash.

### **Urban Connections**

In FY 2022, \$151,000 of Forest Service funding supported four Urban Connections projects in Vermont with a partner match of \$74,136. This included partnerships with Vermont Forest Parks and Recreation, CorpsTHAT, and Chill Foundation. In addition, \$190,088 of Forest Service funding went to five Urban Connections projects that supported the greater Eastern Region with a partner match of about \$99,361. This included partnerships with Go Find Outdoors Natural Inquirer, Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, Outdoor Afro, Outdoors Empowered Network, and the Bus for Outdoor Access and Teaching.

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## Contact Information



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