



FORESTS, PARKS & RECREATION
VERMONT



AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**SPOTLIGHT ON BLACK ASH COMMUNITIES IN
VERMONT: OUTREACH, TREATMENT, AND SEED
COLLECTION ON STATE LAND**

2025 FEMC Conference

November 20, 2025

WELCOME



WHY FOCUS ON BLACK ASH?



- Important component of natural communities
 - Red Maple–Black Ash Seepage Swamp
 - Hemlock–Balsam Fir–Black Ash Seepage Swamp
- Highly susceptible to decline and mortality by emerald ash borer (EAB)
- Culturally significant – important to indigenous communities throughout its range
 - History, basket-making and artwork
- Least abundant of all ash species in Vermont

ORIGIN OF PROJECT

- Former Grand Isle and Franklin County Forester, Nancy Patch, presented the need
 - Recognized the threat EAB poses to the species, and the importance of its loss
- Funding opportunity arose
 - Interested staff from multiple programs and departments came together
 - Forest Health, Urban and Community Forestry, Fish and Wildlife
- Developed grant proposal to address key aspects of species conservation in Vermont



GOALS OF STATEWIDE EFFORT



- Engage in consistent and thoughtful outreach, information sharing, and listening
 - Support (and lean on!) students, researchers, and regional partnerships
 - Raise awareness about ecological and cultural importance of species
- Identify candidate trees for harvest and use in pounding workshops
 - Work with basket makers and Abenaki partners to identify suitable trees
- Identify sites with healthy black ash for injections of emamectin benzoate (4%)
 - Male and female trees
 - Low dieback
 - Possible demonstration forests
- Identify areas where black ash seed may be collected
 - Mix of male and female trees
 - Capitalize on years of heavy seed

SPLINT POUNDING WORKSHOPS



PROGRESS SO FAR

- As State Parks cut ash trees, we've worked with partners to find trees from harvests for pounding (splint making)
 - Lake Carmi SP harvested in 2024
 - Bomoseen SP harvested in 2025
- Coordinated single tree harvest on private lands for workshops or community splint pounding events



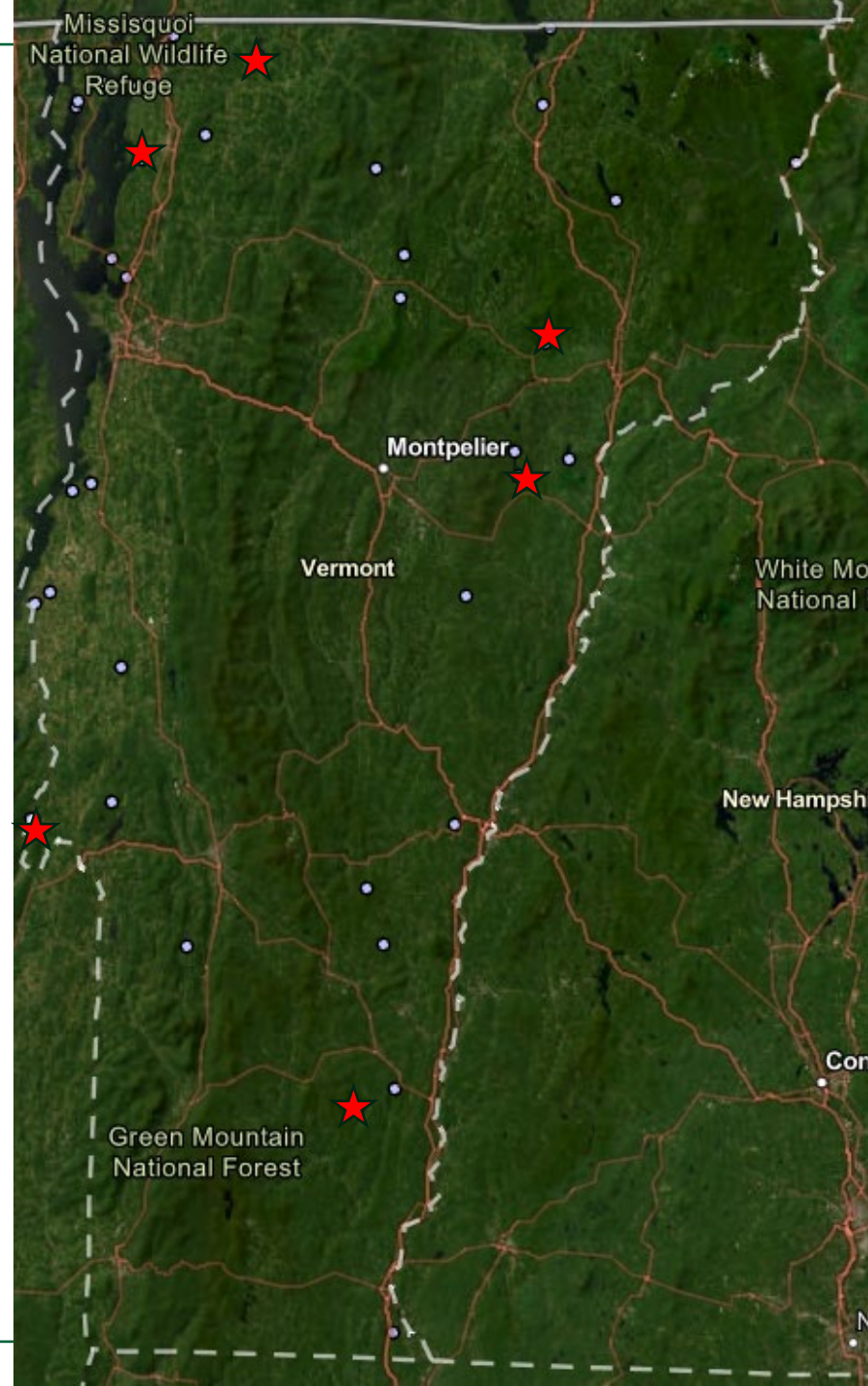
PROGRESS SO FAR

- Splint pounding workshops
 - 2022:** With County Foresters in South Hero
 - 2024:** Two days at Lake Carmi State Park
 - 2025:** One day at Lake Bomoseen State Park and one day near Tinmouth Channel WMA
 - 2026:** Taking shape for Groton, Hardwick, Essex, or Calais



TREATING BLACK ASH

- A total of 44 sites worth investigating
 - Have visited 40 so far
 - Some require multiple visits to assess
- Sites assessed by how they meet certain criteria



SITE CRITERIA FOR TREATMENT

- Diversity of size classes present
- Rare or threatened natural community
- Site quality for black ash
- Access to site
- EAB present?
- Seed bearing trees present



INSECTICIDE TREATMENTS AND MONITORING

- Treatment of 10-20 trees at each location
- Goal of a 3:1 ratio of female trees to male trees
- Trees are treated in groups of 3-4 trees each spread out across site
- Insecticides are injected directly into tree
- Tree health will be assessed at time of treatments and annually after treatments occur



BLACK ASH: LOOKING AHEAD...

Workshops and
Education

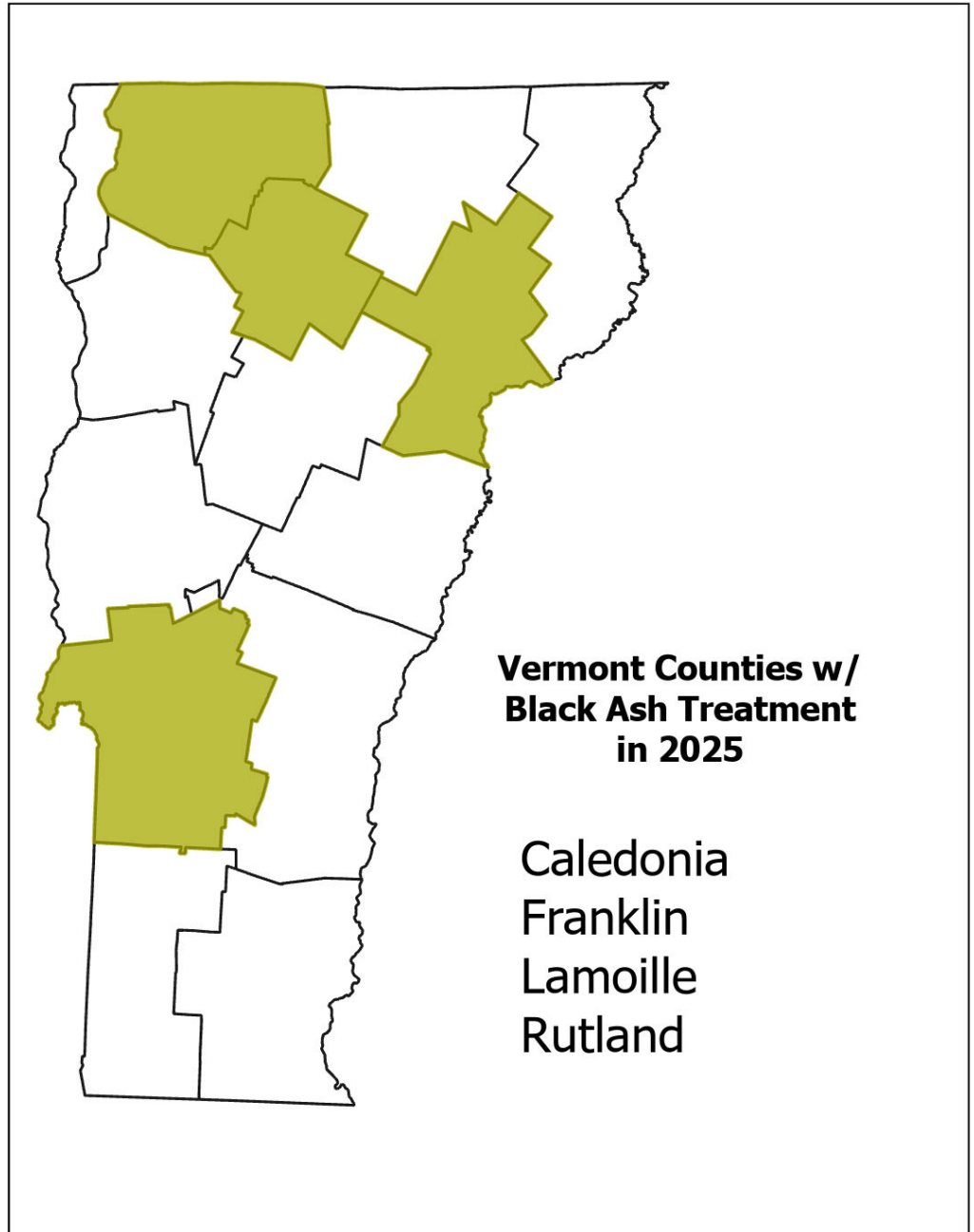
Treatment

Seed Collection



BLACK ASH TREATMENT...

- Funding for treating 14 sites statewide, 10-20 trees per site
- 6 sites in 4 counties this year
- 2026 plans: 8 more sites, selection depends on EAB and tree health factors



BLACK ASH SEED COLLECTION...

- 2022 was the last highly productive mast year
- Plan to revisit identified sites in 2026 and beyond, including treated trees
 - Collected seeds can be used for ongoing research to identify ash trees with partial genetic resistance to EAB, which can be eventually grown and bred in long-term progeny studies.



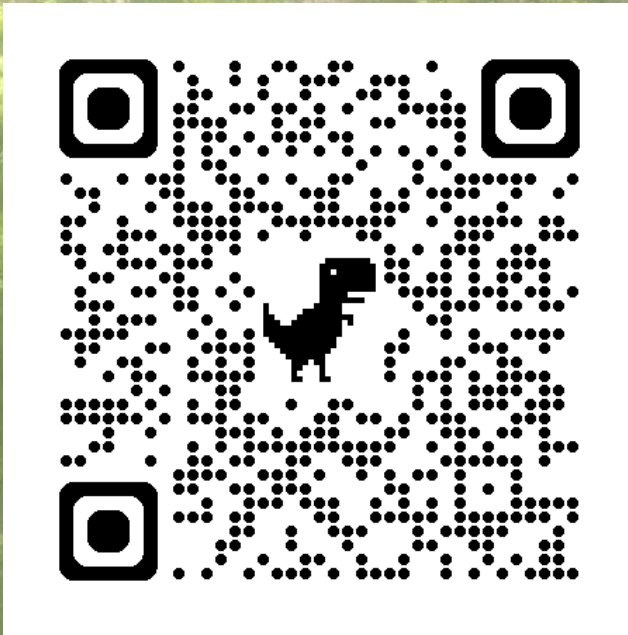
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NORTHWOODS
STEWARDSHIP CENTER



QUESTIONS?

Link to the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program's black ash webpage:



Acknowledgements:

- Kerry and Aaron Wood
- Lorry Martinez – PIP Intern
- Jess Colby
- Brooke Fleischman

- US Forest Service
- Sustaining Ash Partners Network (SAP-Ne)



CONTINUING THE WORK

- Continued workshops, presentations, and active partnerships
- Two black ash pounding workshops in 2026
- Systemic insecticide treatment at ## sites on State lands
- Refining seed collection methods and partnership statewide, hoping for more black ash seed in 2026



TREATING BLACK ASH

