



Josh Arneson <jarneson@richmondvt.gov>

Emerald ash borer (EAB) CRF application recommendation and request from town for EAB management

Rosovsky, Judy <Judy.Rosovsky@vermont.gov>

Thu, Apr 13, 2023 at 8:19 AM

To: Josh Arneson <jarneson@richmondvt.gov>, Assistant to the Town Manager <dwardwell@richmondvt.gov>

Cc: Caitlin Littlefield <clittlef@gmail.com>, Bob Low <bob.low@uvm.edu>, Daniel Schmidt <schmidt.danielpaul@gmail.com>, Elizabeth Wright <ecwright1414@gmail.com>, "Emery, Kit" <kaemery@gmavt.net>, Kathryn Kreider <ktop211@gmail.com>, Max Krieger <max.krieger@gmail.com>

Hi Josh and Duncan,

Caitlin Littlefield has submitted an application for Conservation Reserve Funds for the treatment of ash trees with the bacterially derived insecticide emamectin benzoate, for an estimated cost of \$3750. The Richmond Conservation Commission (RCC) voted unanimously to recommend that the Selectboard approve this funding request. Please find attached the estimate from the arborist company Limbwalker, the Conservation Reserve Fund application, and the motion passed by the RCC.

This application engendered a conversation about ash tree management on town property and in the town. Caitlin has borne this burden and done a remarkable job with little recognition for her superlative efforts. At this point she does not have the capacity to continue to do this work, though she is running for tree warden, and as such may be willing to do some of the requisite work.

The town may wish to consider supporting more active management of ash trees now that we have EAB. Ash trees become brittle and can fall or be pushed over with little force when they are dead and dying, and as such present a tree hazard for hikers, walkers, cars and houses. People who remove ash trees need to exercise caution and it is best to take them down when they are alive and less prone to unpredictable breakage. There are many ash trees and this is a daunting task but the RCC can help with education and outreach efforts. We may be able to help with scouting for hazard trees too, or be able to solicit volunteers to do so.

It has been observed that the ash on Church Street are small and unlikely to live long due to the harder semi-urban conditions and could be slowly replaced with other tree species as the opportunity presents itself. Someone would need to be placed in charge of that tree replacement effort.

In addition to the above, the larger ash on town property should be treated with emamectin benzoate every 2-4 years. It has been 2 years since the last treatment, which was at a low dose. The planned treatment would be for a medium dose, which is why we recommend doing it now, as the infestation intensifies. The town may want to assign someone or some committee the task of ensuring that the town trees are treated every few years. The town may want to consider treating a few trees elsewhere in the town to preserve the genetic diversity of the ash in Richmond. If so, that effort may be eligible for CRF funds, as it is a conservation priority.

Another option is to do nothing, and end treatment. Ash mortality from EAB can be as high as 99% so if treatments are not regularly applied those trees will die.

Thank you for considering this suggestion. FYI, I am writing this with both my RCC chair and state entomologist hats on, as helping towns with invasive species is part of my job.

Judy Rosovsky

State Entomologist

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she/her pronouns

3 attachments



2023_EAB Treatment Estimate for RCC and SB.pdf
175K



2023_EAB-treatments_CRF-app_230408.pdf
168K



MOTION EAB RCC 041123_jr edits.docx
13K

April 8, 2023

Richmond Conservation Commission
c/o Judy Rosovsky, Chair

Re: Application for Conservation Reserve Funds to Support Bi-annual Treatment of Village Ash Trees

Dear Commissioners,

It has been two years since Richmond engaged an IAS-certified arborist to care for the most prominent and healthy ash trees within and around the village in the face of the emerald ash borer (EAB). Specifically, in May 2021, Limbwalker Tree Service injected the insecticide emamectin benzoate into four trees in front of the town Center; one on the corner of Bridge Street and Church Street, two along Depot Street Extension; eleven along Church Street; one multi-stemmed ash on Cochran Rd; one 40" tree on Baker Street; and one 36" tree at the entrance to the Andrews Community Forest. A total of 21 trees (approximately 300") were treated.¹

This insecticide treatment is highly effective and targeted, especially when injected into tree trunks (versus, for example, foliar sprays).² Treatments must be carried out every two years to ensure ongoing ash tree resistance to EAB and ought to occur in the spring when trees' vascular tissue is particularly active in transporting water and nutrients – and the insecticide – into the canopy for leaf-out. Doses are based on tree diameter and the advised amount may vary depending on EAB pressures. Indeed, Limbwalker applied a low dose in 2021 when EAB was just emerging in the area; they are now recommending a medium dose in light of EAB's unfortunate prevalence.

I therefore write to request Conservation Reserve Funds (CRF) for the ongoing treatment of the ash trees we have already invested in protecting. Specifically, Limbwalker has quoted \$3,600 to carry out treatments this spring, and I am requesting an amount not to exceed \$3,750 to engage them in doing so (minor buffer included). Limbwalker has been an outstanding partner throughout this multi-year EAB management process and they track which trees they have treated; I advise that we continue this ongoing relationship. This application of CRF funds meet multiple CRF criteria:

- *Contributes toward the protection of natural resources in and of importance to Richmond.*
- *Yields a clear, sustainable benefit to Richmond residents in the form of preserving scenic and environmental values (e.g., beauty, shade, habitat).*
- *Is directed at threatened resources.*
- *Preserves biodiversity.*

Note that this will likely be a bi-annual request for CRF funds unless the town incorporates these tree care expenses into the operating budget.

If this request is approved by the Richmond Conservation Commission, I will attend a Selectboard meeting to keep members apprised, carry out all coordination with Limbwalker, directly alert relevant landowners of this work, and post an update to Front Porch Forum.

Many thanks for your consideration.



Caitlin Littlefield
333 Cochran Rd. #2
Richmond, VT 05477
978-807-1494
clittlef@gmail.com

¹ This work was supported by Richmond's Conservation Reserve Fund as well as a grant from Vermont's Urban and Community Forestry Program and was carried out in conjunction with select ash removals, diverse plantings, and utilization of the wood for local purposes (see appended report).

² For more information on EAB treatments see <https://vtinvasives.org/sites/default/files/images/EABTreatment.pdf> and http://www.emeraldashborer.info/documents/multistate_eab_insecticide_fact_sheet.pdf



Limbwalker

Tree Service

P. O. Box 733 Shelburne VT 05482 800-559-0422

Date: 11/2/2022 10:27 AM
Richmond Conservation Commission
Caitlin. Littlefield
203 Bridge St
Richmond, VT 05477

Job Name: Richmond Conservation Commiss
Work Site: 203 Bridge St
Richmond, VT 05477

: (978) 807-1494 (Caitlin)

Proposed By: Mike Fallis
Customer Code: 1003099

#	Item	Description	Qty	Cost
1		Treatment	0	\$3,600.00
		Treat selected ash trees with Emamectin Benzoate for Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Approximately 300" dbh total.		
		Cost for low dose treatment: \$3000.00		
		Cost for medium dose treatment (recommended): \$3600.00		

Notes: Subtotal: \$3,600.00

Tax: \$0.00

Total: \$3,600.00

Customer Signature

Date

MOTION EAB RCC 04 11/23

The Richmond Conservation Commission unanimously approves recommending that the Selectboard approve Conservation Reserve funding in an amount not to exceed \$3,750 to cover the costs of ongoing ash tree EAB treatment involving treatment with emamectin benzoate, as described in the application dated 4/8/23, to be expended within the current calendar year. The request is in full accord with CRF guidelines and priorities as described in the application.

Appropriate EAB remediation will require treatments every 2-4 years. There should be discussion by the Selectboard regarding the appropriate source of funding for such a recurring expense should it remain justified.