



Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative

Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Vermont



Job Title: Forest Health Ash-Monitoring Field Technician – Crew Lead

The Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative (FEMC) is an environmental cooperative that seeks to serve the northeast temperate forest region through improved understanding of long-term trends, annual conditions, and interdisciplinary relationships of the physical, chemical, and biological components of forested ecosystems. Specifically, the FEMC's Forest Health Monitoring Program (FHM) acts as one of these long-term monitoring projects in the northeast. Other monitoring projects include Fee-for-service projects with other organizations such as: elm monitoring for The Nature Conservancy, and emerald ash borer monitoring with the Ecological Research Institute's MaMA project.

The Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative (FEMC) seeks to fill 1 Field Crew Lead position based out of Burlington, VT with field visits throughout New England and New York to help out with these three projects. The focus of this position will be to help with the Ash MaMA (Monitoring and Managing Ash) project to inventory, measure, and establish Ash monitoring plots as part of the Ecological Research Institute's MaMA Program. Secondary duties will include helping out with elm monitoring and FEMC's FHM plots in June.

With support from the FEMC staff and state coordinators, the technician crew leads will oversee and lead crews of 1-2 other crew members to travel to monitoring plots in each of the 7 states to collect data on lingering ash ([Lingering Ash Surveys – Monitoring and Managing Ash \(MaMA\)](#)), conducting [Ash/EAB Surveys – Monitoring and Managing Ash \(MaMA\)](#), and establishing [MaMA Monitoring Plots Network – Monitoring and Managing Ash \(MaMA\)](#). Focus will primarily be on Vermont, New York, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, but travel to CT, RI, and ME will also be possible. Crews will train with FEMC staff and ERI agency personnel to learn the data collection protocols, methods, and techniques. Following training, crew leaders will be responsible for planning trip logistics, maintaining equipment, traveling to and from field sites, conducting field work, and entering quality assured data while out in the field. In addition to these responsibilities, the crew lead will also be responsible for managing a safe and inclusive work environment, relaying consistent communications between supervisor and field crew, and making decisions in the field for the crew.

Field Work will include:

- Driving to designated states for multiple hours and some 4x4 driving on unmaintained roads
- Car camping during field stints to further locations, typically lasting 2-3 nights per week
- Locating and/or establishing plots while navigating off-trail to sampling sites
- Identifying and establishing new plots to monitor Ash mortality.
- Conducting rapid, Emerald Ash Borer surveys across the landscape. You will report on the approximate number of large ash trees at a site, whether EAB have infested any trees there, and whether any trees have died from EAB.
- There will be opportunity in June to assist in collecting forest health data for the Forest health monitoring program in a variety of forest ecosystems, including but not limited to tree heights, diameter at breast height (DBH) measurements, dieback, transparency, defoliation, discoloration, special damages, invasives, browse impact, seedling abundance, sapling survivorship, and prism
- Using a compass and/or GPS unit for off-trail navigation

- Maintaining communication with monitoring coordinator while out in the field
- Maintaining safety awareness while out in remote locations
- Potential opportunity to work on other projects such as Dutch Elm Disease Monitoring with TNC.

Required Qualifications

- Ability to identify common native and invasive trees/plants in the Northeast and familiarity with plants and ecosystems of the northeastern U.S. (this can be demonstrated by having completed a college-level dendrology or botany course, or other equivalent life experiences)
 - Specific ability to identify Ash trees as well as signs of EAB infestation preferred.
- Experience hiking and camping, and/or the willingness to do so for this position
- Capable of conducting daily field work safely in rough terrain in harsh environmental conditions (heat, rain, biting insects)
- Ability to hike up to 6 miles per day while carrying up to 20 lbs.
- Strong attention to detail and communication skills
- Demonstrate a high level of maturity, responsibility, attention to safety, and a willingness to raise questions or concerns when necessary
- Familiarity with navigation using a map and compass, and/or GPS unit
- An understanding of data collection and processing using software like Microsoft Excel at a basic level
- Degree, certification, coursework, or equivalent internship/volunteer experience within the field of natural resources

Desired Qualifications

- Experience leading a field crew in a remote setting
- Experience with gear/equipment coordination and organization
- Experience with forest inventory sampling techniques and protocols
- Wilderness first aid or other first aid safety training

Physical Demands

For field-based positions, data collection often occurs in remote locations, where cellular connection is unavailable or inconsistent. Field conditions can be challenging, from hot temperatures to heavy rainfall. Travel to and from field plots can be physically demanding, plots can sometimes require up to 8 hours of travel in a vehicle. Ability to hike up to 6 miles per day with 20lbs is required. Crews should expect to do several stints of camping for 3-4 nights at a time during the course of the season. Camping locations will vary from research facilities to state campgrounds based on accessibility. There may be days where, due to travel, Field Technicians will be expected to work 10+ hours (when daylight allows).

Position Details:

Supervision:

Field Technicians will work with their designated crew members, personnel from partnering state agencies, and with the FEMC Monitoring Coordinator (Ben Porter), Elissa Schuett (Program Manager), and Matt Rios (ECO AmeriCorps Member).

FEMC Home Base: 705 Spear St, South Burlington, VT 05403

Location of work:

Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine.

This position will primarily work out of Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Massachusetts, with occasional travel to New York and Maine.

Start Date: May 26th, 2025 (subject to change)

End date: August 22, 2025 (with possibility of additional work into September)

Total Anticipated Hours: 12 weeks, 40 hrs per week

Compensation: \$18-20/hr depending on experience (plus compensation for meals per diem while travelling overnight)

Highly recommended gear that is not provided:

- Camping equipment: sleeping bag, sleeping pad, tarps, cooking pans, eating utensils, and a tent (if you have trouble accessing this equipment please do not be discouraged from applying)
- Rain gear (jacket and bottom) and comfortable clothing for field work
- Waterproof hiking boots and a pair of rubber rain boots
- Backpack you are comfortable wearing for long periods of time (recommend a ~30L backpack)

How to apply: Send a resume and cover letter in a **single PDF**, along with contact information for two references, to Matthew.Rios@uvm.edu and CC: bporter5@uvm.edu

In the subject line please put **2024 ASH Field Technician Application**. If you would like to be considered for both the FHM and the Ash position, please indicate that in the email. FEMC Staff will begin reviewing applications in January 2025 on a rolling basis. The positions will remain open until filled. All interviews will be done remotely using Microsoft Teams.

All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, or any other category legally protected by federal or state law.