



Wednesday, March 19, 2025

7:30a – 9:00a Early Bird Arboretum Tour

Arboretum tour with winter tree ID and native plant showcase

8:30a – 9:15a Registration, Continental breakfast and visit with exhibitors

9:15a – 9:30a Introductions and Welcome

- Annie Mixsell, CUFC Chair
- Danica Doroski, CT DEEP
- CTPA Leadership
- Bruce Villwock, TWAC Board of Directors

9:30a – 9:40a Land Acknowledgement

Sharon Maynard, Mohegan Tribe

9:40a – 10:25a Keynote Speaker – Eric Rains

High performance urban canopy projects, planning, and maintenance.

Eric's projects have embraced new technologies for tree planting, which has made a positive impact on the way many municipalities and investors view the urban forest. With his enthusiastic style of civic engagement, Eric will share his successes and challenges, as well as ideas for working through complex problems with locating, planting and maintaining urban canopies.

10:25a – 10:40a BREAK and visit with exhibitors

10:40a – 12:00p **Preparing for Oak Wilt**

- Dr. Nathan Westrick, CT Agricultural Experiment Station
- Dr. Elena Karlsen-Ayala, USFS
- Robert Cole, Oak Wilt Response Incident Commander, NYS DEC
- Municipal Management Considerations: Annie Mixsell, New Haven Tree Warden

12:00p – 1:15p Lunch

1:15p – 2:45p **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

A. Resilient Urban Forests

Resilient Communities: Storm Mitigation Planning for Your Community Forest – Matt Lee, Green Infrastructure Center

A Community Forest Storm Mitigation Plan is an essential part of a community's hazard mitigation and emergency management plans and systems. Such a plan should focus specifically on ways to avoid or mitigate the damage trees may cause during a storm or other catastrophic event. After a large event, which may result in a major federal disaster declaration, debris hauling and monitoring represent an enormous cost to impacted communities. There were six-times more billion-dollar severe storms during 2001–2022 (142 events) than prior 2 decades (25 events/1980–2000) so storms are increasing in events as well as in the amount of damages they cause. If a community isn't ready, then response and recovery will be much slower and less effective, not to mention more damaging and more costly. If FEMA rules are not followed, the community may not be able to be reimbursed for their costs. This talk will discuss GIC's tools to get ready for storms and training resources.

Trees as Stormwater Solutions: Options for Planting Trees in Limited Green Space - Al Key, Deep Root

A 2006 study by the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation found a 25% mortality rate for young street trees after two years. In 2010, the national tree cover average in major U.S. cities was 27.1%, while American Forests recommends 40% canopy coverage for most municipalities. Despite this, many cities have initiated widespread tree planting efforts, like the "million trees" initiative. With these investments, it's crucial to ensure tree survival, as trees must reach maturity to maximize urban forestry benefits.

In the 1980s, methods were developed to improve tree growing conditions under pavement, leading to two main approaches: structural systems, where paving bridges over loosely compacted soil, and structural soils, which support pavement and vehicular loads through compacted soil. This course will focus on common methods, including suspended pavement, load-bearing modules, and gravel and sand-based structural soils, each with varying productivity and design limitations.

B. Tree Risk Assessment – Moriah Day, Davey

All trees, regardless of size, health, or location, pose some level of risk to the people, structures, and services around them. At the same time, trees provide significant benefits, particularly when people are in close contact with them. How we balance the risk trees may pose with the benefits they provide is a complex challenge that is only increasing in importance as extreme weather

events intensify, urban density increases, and more focus is placed on adding trees to urban areas. This talk will dive into the reasons we conduct risk assessments, what we look for when assessing tree risk, and how a better understanding of tree risk can help inform management decisions, including those regarding tree removal and replacement. This talk does not constitute certification in tree risk assessment - to become a qualified tree risk assessor, please look into the International Society of Arboriculture's Tree Risk Assessment Qualification course.

C. Trees and Tech

- iTree, TreeCanopy.us, Healthy Trees, Healthy Cities – Michelle Johnson, USFS
- Software, Devices, and Spatial Data – Matthew Verry, CT DOT
- Technology for Arborists and Urban Foresters - Josh Behounek, Davey

2:45p – 3:00p BREAK and visit with exhibitors

3:00p – 4:30p **Community Forestry**

Implementing a Citizen Pruner Program – Marissa Nolan, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Marissa Nolan is the Horticulture Team Lead at Cornell Cooperative Extension and coordinates Ithaca's Citizen Pruner training program. Citizen Pruners volunteers help maintain street trees and shrubs in a town or city. The Citizen Pruner program started in Ithaca, NY more than 30 years ago as a collaboration between the City of Ithaca's Parks & Forestry department and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County. This presentation will go into how the program and partnership works, aspects of volunteer training and management, and community perception of the program.

Grant Roundtable – Danica Doroski and Les Walker

CT DEEP Urban Forest Coordinator, Danica Doroski and Les Walker, Grant Coordinator, will highlight successes from recent urban forestry grant projects and provide resources for current and upcoming grant opportunities.

PhotoVoice Project – Teresa Verellen, UConn

Photovoice is a visual research methodology with the intention to foster social change. Photovoice has been used to investigate change in empowerment in communities. Teresa, a will present on the Photovoice project around urban and community forestry as a lead into the exhibit during the social hour. Teresa is a graduate student of Urban Forestry at University of Connecticut.

4:30p Adjournment and CEUs

4:30p - 6:00p **Social Hour with PhotoVoice Project Art Exhibit**

Thursday, March 20, 2025

8:30a – 9:15a Registration, Continental breakfast and visit with exhibitors

8:30a – 9:15a CT Urban Forest Council Meeting and welcome over breakfast

9:15a – 9:20a Introductions and Welcome

9:20a – 9:30a Arboretum Welcome, Maggie Redfern

9:30a – 10:30a **Choosing the Right Tree – Darryl Newman, Planter’s Choice**

- *Stock selection, species selection, site selection*

10:30a – 10:45a BREAK and visit with exhibitors

10:45a – 11:30a **Tree Planting Science and Best Practices – Susanna Keriö , CAES**

- *Foundational science, soil amendments, best practices, B&B vs container, water, bracing*

11:30a – 12:15p **Post-care Recommendations – Jeff Thrasher, Almstead**

- *Pruning, plant health care, watering, removal of bracing*

12:15p – 1:30p Lunch

1:30p – 3:30p **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

A. Tree Planting Lab

- *Hands-on planting demonstration stations that will instruct proper bare root, container, and ball & burlap tree planting practices.*
- *Location, tree size, hole, soil, watering, bracing, questions*

B. Arboretum Tour

- *Arboretum tour with winter tree ID and native plant showcase*

C. Downtown New London Urban Forestry Tour

This tour will take participants by bus to historic New London to visit two sites featuring high performance tree plantings by Kent+Frost:

In July 2016, the City of New London embarked on a project to redesign and construct two municipal parking lots along Eugene O’Neill Drive. The design features center islands serving as storm water collection & filtration bays, and the use of “Silva cells” (sub-grade plastic tree pit supports) below sidewalks and parking areas to support the hardscapes above, maximize root volumes and avoid soil compaction.

Hygienic Art Park is central to the city’s cultural events, hosting festivals of up to 300 people. A grove of Linden trees provides shady seating for moveable furniture and open views to the theater. The lush canopy was developed using CU Structural Soil™, which was a huge success, but also requires attention due to heavy foot traffic. The Project was awarded the 2010 Award of Excellence from the CT Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

3:30p – 3:45p BREAK and transition

3:45p – 4:15p **Miyawaki Forest Method – Caseylee Bastien, RLA, CPSI**

Miyawaki forests (honoring the late Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki), are forested pocket parks that accelerate ecosystem function through urban reforestation and creation of healthy forest soil. When individuals share direct action, a story can change how they see their role in the environment. This is how we create human/forest communities where people are invested in their land, especially those where biodiversity has become distant and abstract. We will discuss a methodology for site selection; ecological benefits/ constraints; specific implementation, and strategies for communications and public engagement including events, group tours, GIS mapping, StoryMaps, signage, and self-guided tours. With lessons learned from decades of shared experience by subject matter experts performing restoration/ replication of many types. We will provide links to references for why and how to get started and how to maintain a young forest. As well as guides for Municipal Maintenance staff and leaders to speed their journey to a more forested community.

4:15p Adjournment and CEUs