

**A. Cover Sheet**

**1. Project Title:**

Selective removal of ash trees in response to the presence of Emerald Ash Borer in Onondaga County.

**2. Project Leader:**

(Eva Sztchmiler, Technician, Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District, 6680 Onondaga Lake Parkway, Liverpool, NY 13088, 315-457-0325, 315-457-0410, [esztchmiler@ocswcd.org](mailto:esztchmiler@ocswcd.org))

**3. Project Collaborators:**

(Mark Burger, Executive Director, Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District, 6680 Onondaga Lake Parkway, Liverpool, NY 13088, 315-457-0325, 315-457-0410, [mburger@ocswcd.org](mailto:mburger@ocswcd.org))

(David Coburn, Director, Onondaga County Office of the Environment, 421 Montgomery Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Syracuse, NY 13202, 315-435-2647, 315-435-8582, [DavidCoburn@ongov.net](mailto:DavidCoburn@ongov.net))

**4. Amount Requested:**

\$6,000.00 (Six Thousand Dollars)

**5. Institutional Signatures:**

*Mark E. Burger*  
*Executive Director*  
*Onon Cty SWCD*  
*9-12-14*

*esztchmiler*  
*Technician*  
*Onon Cty SWCD*  
*9-12-14*

## B. Proposal Description

### 1. Project Summary:

#### Focus:

This project will focus on mitigating the ecological and public safety impact of the Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*); an invasive insect which has been confirmed in Onondaga County as of 2013. Ash trees infested by the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) can be expected to die in a span of 2-4 years. The feeding behavior of EAB compromises the structural integrity of ash trees, and infested and dead trees are known to be unstable, unpredictable, and dangerous with eminent collapse hazards. The focus of this project will be to utilize the County's ash tree inventory data on public lands to prioritize the removal of ash trees from Onondaga County property. Our proposed project will cut and remove ash trees that are considered to be 'high risk' due to their proximity to known infestations and their potential to impact targets such as mower operators in parks, pedestrians (trails users), motorists, and critical infrastructure (911 communication towers, pump stations, etc.). By removing trees that are infested, we will effectively eliminate the larvae overwintering in said trees and eliminate a safety hazard. Infested ash tree material will be handled in compliance with USDA Department of Agriculture and Markets and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation standards for treatment of infested wood.

#### Goal:

Based on unit costs that we received in the spring of 2014, we estimate that we can cut and remove the following number of trees.

Size Class (DBH in inches)	Total number of trees*
0" to 12"	100
13" to 18"	18
19" to 24"	11
25" to 30"	7

\*The total number of trees for each size class demonstrates the total number of trees that can be cut if the cut is exclusive to this size class. Actual total number of trees cut may reflect a combination of size classes and may result in different numbers than shown.

The goal of this project is to mitigate the impact that EAB will have on public safety curtail the cost of removing ash trees on County land, and minimize environmental liabilities to the County. As discussed previously, infested trees create a hazardous environment for the public and for infrastructure. Removal of ash trees that are considered 'high risk' due to their potential for infestation and proximity to targets will eliminate the risk of tree failure. Removing these trees now is critical as it will enable Onondaga County to better manage the economic cost of tree removal. It is most cost effective to remove trees preemptively. As these infested trees continue to succumb, the

cost of removal increases because traditional tree take down options, such as climbing, are no longer available and the use of cranes and bucket trucks are required to keep work crews safe during the removal process. As the EAB population grows and expands its range, the number of trees requiring immediate removal will potentially increase costs to the public.

#### Scope of Work:

- Utilize the ash tree inventory that was created through collaboration between the Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District (OCSWCD) and the Onondaga County Office of the Environment to select trees for removal. Select ash trees to be removed based on their location, their proximity to known infestations, the risk they pose to targets, and budget allowances.
- Map out trees selected for removal using the aforementioned inventory and the GIS database. We will be removing trees that are likely to be infested due to proximity to known infestations and in doing so we will be eliminating the larvae overwintering in said trees.
- Measure DBH for each tree in field, categorize trees into size classes, and calculate an estimated cost for removals. Reassess budget and add or remove trees selected for removal accordingly.
- Trees selected for removal will be physically identified in the field and will be marked with forestry grade spray paint and an identification number.
- Draft a Request for Proposals (RFP), receive PRC Number/Prevailing Wage Schedule from NYS Department of Labor, and solicit bids from tree removal contractors.
- Oversee the bidding process, select the lowest responsible bid, and ensure that the selected contractor is reputable and in compliance with current labor and safety regulations and standards.
- Oversee tree removals and any necessary stump grinding, administrate the contract, and verify that the project has been completed to satisfaction.

#### Nature of Collaboration:

Under the guidance of the Onondaga County Office of the Environment, OCSWCD completed an inventory of ash trees found on or adjacent to County property. There are over 40,000 ash trees in the inventory database and all of these trees will require some degree of management. In 2013-2014, this inventory was used to select and remove over 500 ash trees from County property in two cuts. Trees that were removed were considered to be 'high risk' trees based on their current condition, potential to impact a target and proximity to highly populated or high-use areas and/or emergency evacuation routes. OCSWCD also collaborated with the Onondaga County Office of the Environment to propose a comprehensive ash tree management strategy which is currently under consideration by the County Legislature and County Executive. This

proposed project will also move forward as collaboration between OCSWCD and the Onondaga County Office of the Environment as an effort to accomplish the common goals of maintaining, public safety, reducing costs to the public, and implementing procedures which minimize environmental liabilities to the County.

Onondaga County, the Office of the Environment, and OCSWCD have also benefited from the greater collaborative efforts of the EAB Task Force. The Task Force, led by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County, has worked to educate and engage local municipal leaders, tree service companies, the public, and other stakeholders as to the presence and expected impacts of EAB. The partnership is comprised of, but not limited to, representatives from municipal leadership, government agencies such as the DEC, industry leaders such as National Grid, and local universities such as SUNY-ESF, among many others. It is also worth noting that funding for this project will support the mission of the SLow Ash Mortality (SLAM) campaign initiated by the USDA Forest Service, APHIS, and Michigan partners which aims to reduce EAB populations in infested areas.

Significance to mission of FL-PRISM:

The mission of the Finger Lakes-Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management is to reduce the introduction, spread, and impact of invasive species within the Finger Lakes region. This project will take place exclusively in Onondaga County on the eastern end of the Finger Lakes region. This project will reduce the impact of the Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive species.

**2. Scope of Work:**

Goals:

Remove ash trees from County owned land in order to reduce risk to the public from infested and hazardous trees, reduce costs, and minimize County liability.

Methods:

Use the GIS inventory database to map out target trees

Ground truth the location and size of trees

Mark out trees with spray paint and identification numbers

Solicit bids via RFP, select lowest responsible bid from tree removal contractor

Administer contract; oversee tree removals and stump grinding

Reporting:

Submit report to FL-PRISM 30 days after commencing project and a final report on February 28, 2015.

**3. Timeframe:**

September – October

Use the GIS inventory database to map out target trees, meet with the Onondaga County Office of the Environment to ensure strategies are aligned with goals, measure and mark out the trees to be removed, calculate a cost estimate, reassess the budget and add or remove trees as necessary.

November

Submit an RFP notice to local tree contractors, open bidding, select lowest responsible bidder, award contract, and allow work to begin.

December-February 16, 2015

Administer the contract, oversee the tree removal process, oversee any necessary stump grinding, verify that work is completed by deadline, and draft final report to FL-PRISM.

**4. Personnel and Collaboration:**

Eva Sztchemiler, Technician, Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District, 6680 Onondaga Lake Parkway, Liverpool, NY 13088, 315-457-0325, 315-457-0410, [esztchemiler@ocswcd.org](mailto:esztchemiler@ocswcd.org)

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**5. Project Location:** Onondaga County, New York State

### **C. Personnel and Partners**

Eva Sztchmiller, Technician, Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District, 6680 Onondaga Lake Parkway, Liverpool, NY 13088, 315-457-0325, 315-457-0410, [esztchmiller@ocswcd.org](mailto:esztchmiller@ocswcd.org)

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Project will be completed in collaboration with the Onondaga County Office of the Environment. The role of the Office of the Environment will be to provide guidance to OCSWCD in regards to strategy due to the liability associated with carrying this work out on County property. The role of OCSWCD will be to implement the project and to report back to the Office of the Environment as well as FL-PRISM.

David Coburn, Director, Onondaga County Office of the Environment, 421 Montgomery Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Syracuse, NY 13202, 315-435-2647, 315-435-8582, [DavidCoburn@ongov.net](mailto:DavidCoburn@ongov.net)

### **D. Letters of Support**

This proposed project will take place on public property. If the proposal is funded, a letter of support from the relevant municipal government will be provided.

### **E. Timeline**

#### September – October

Use the GIS inventory database to map out target trees, meet with the Onondaga County Office of the Environment to ensure strategies are aligned with goals, measure and mark out the trees to be removed, calculate a cost estimate, reassess the budget and add or remove trees as necessary.

#### November

Submit an RFP notice to local tree contractors, open bidding, select lowest responsible bidder, award contract, and allow work to begin.

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**F. Budget and Justification**

<b>Proposal Budget</b>	
Project Title:	Selective removal of ash trees in response to the presence of Emerald Ash Borer in Onondaga County.
Sponsor/Institution:	Onondaga County Soil and Water Conservation District
PI:	
Period of Performance for Project: (add columns for additional years as needed)	September 2014 – February 16, 2015
<b>BUDGET</b>	
<b>LABOR COSTS</b>	\$6,000 (Contractual to tree company)
<b>Personnel</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Salaries</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Fringe on salaries</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Total Salaries, Wages + Fringe</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Expendable Supplies*</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Travel</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Office Support and Miscellaneous</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Equipment**</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Total Direct Cost</b>	\$6,000
<b>Indirect Costs</b>	Paid for by Onondaga County
<b>Total Request to Sponsor</b>	\$6,000

\* Food is not eligible for reimbursement under this subcontract award

\*\* Equipment purchased under this subcontract award becomes property of the State of New York at the end of the award period. The equipment will be made available for use by FL-PRISM and its partners.