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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

March 17, 2017

Putnam Blodgett,
President, Hanover, NH

Chuck Ross, Director of Extension
23 Mansfield Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401-3323

Paul Harwood, Vice
President, Tunbridge, VT

Via email to: Chuck.Ross@uvm.edu

Trevor Evans, Treasurer,
Newport, VT

Dear Director Ross,

Alan Robertson,
Secretary, Sheffield, VT

The board of directors for Vermont Woodlands Association (VWA) would like to take this opportunity to inform you of our support for a proposal that seeks to re-establish UVM Extension Forestry as the leader in forestry education and outreach and ask that you engage us in the process to determine forestry's future within the Extension program.

Marli Rabinowitz,
Secretary, Guilford, VT

John Buck, Waterbury
Center, VT

VWA is a non-profit organization representing nearly one thousand private woodland owners, foresters, and forest and wood products businesses statewide. Our membership relies on us to be a *Voice for Healthy Forests*, to provide educational and networking opportunities, to increase awareness of forests' benefits for all Vermonters, to represent landowner' interests at the local, state, and federal level, to encourage sound forest management, and to develop strong partnerships with like-minded organizations and institutions.

Mark Doty, Madison, ME

Steve Handfield,
Poultney, VT

Leo Laferriere,
Waitsfield, VT

We have been a partner in several UVM Extension Forestry programs and have enjoyed a very productive relationship with UVM's Extension Forester Mary Sisock and with Urban and Community Forestry. We are concerned about a potential loss of services when the Extension Forester position does not renew and ask that you carefully consider how to provide these services through innovation, collaboration, expanded public-private partnerships, cross pollination within existing programs, and new revenue streams. In a state with nearly 75% forest cover and a myriad of issues that potentially impact the health of the forest, we believe that UVM must take leadership in creating a viable and sustainable Extension Forestry Program.

David Paganelli,
Strafford, VT

William Sayre, Bristol, VT

David Wilcox, Berlin, VT

Allan Thompson,
Waterbury, VT

Our work with UVM's Extension Forester has filled critical needs for our landowner members, in particular, succession planning workshops provided by Mary Sisock. She is an expert in this field and has helped us introduce about 75

landowners to the planning process. She has also brought together a network of service providers who can navigate family, financial, and legal issues with landowners. This has been an invaluable service that VWA is committed to continuing but needs broader buy-in to ensure ongoing success. Sisock has also led our Women Owning Woodlands effort based on a national model of service to a growing population of women woodland owners; and served on the Tree Farm Committee, helping us develop a comprehensive communications plan along our path to full third-party certification for Vermont Tree Farmers.

In addition to our work with the Extension Forester, VWA has been a committee member for Backyard Woods, OurVTWoods.org, and Town Forest Recreation planning, all projects of Urban and Community Forestry. We were pleased to be invited to participate in these projects and anticipate continuing to serve.

As the administrative organization for consulting foresters, we supported forester licensing and have been providing continuing forestry education opportunities to licensed foresters. VWA's education committee works to develop programs that are eligible for credit and we work with SAF to secure these credits. We would welcome an opportunity to partner more effectively with UVM Extension Forestry in the planning and implementation of future programs that satisfy educational requirements of licensed foresters.

During the last several years, VWA has emerged as a leader for woodland owners in the private sector. We would welcome an opportunity to further discuss our significant capabilities that can add value to your process and again request an invitation to bring our experience and expertise to the establishment of a UVM Extension Forestry program.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Putnam Blodgett, President



Kathleen Wanner, Executive Director

CC via email: Thomas.Vogelmann@uvm.edu
Dan.Lerner@uvm.edu
Robin.Smith@uvm.edu
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