

EAB Stories and Lessons Learned— Learning and Sharing How Communities Are Responding to Emerald Ash Borer



Part VIII: Replanting

“Start filling your open planting spaces NOW. Playing catch-up after EAB hits is impossible.” These wise words are from Toledo, Ohio’s, assistant city forester, Craig Schar. Toledo has removed about half its ash and has the other half left to go. They know just how difficult it is to find the funds and manpower to plant trees amidst dealing with all the dying ash. Getting ahead of the game on your replanting efforts has several advantages. The most obvious is a funding source. If you wait until EAB hits, your budget will be eaten up by removals, leaving nothing for replanting. Secondly, you’ll have more time and manpower available to plant the trees. Thirdly, if you begin planting now, you’ll be increasing the age diversity of your urban forest. If you are unable to replant until all your ash are removed, you’ll end up with an even-aged community forest which is more difficult to manage and more susceptible to insect and disease outbreaks than an uneven-aged community forest.

The issue of species diversity is very important in helping control future potential invasives. Westland, Michigan’s, new subdivisions are required to plant a different tree species for every third tree that is planted. Thus, if 30 trees are planted, this represents at least 10 different tree species overall. To help offset planting costs,

residents are required to pay \$75 for each terrace tree in front of their property. They are also allowed to plant terrace trees themselves. A no-fee permit system was implemented to help inventory the newly planted trees and to assure they are approved species and planted in the correct spots. A list of Westland’s acceptable tree species is maintained by the public works department.

Finding locations to replace lost ash is another challenge. Many times the best place to plant, given the surrounding greenscapes and hardscapes, is in the exact spot where an infested ash was removed. One community recommends specifications in your stump grinding contracts to go 16-18" deep, not just 6" deep. This gives you the option to plant in the exact spot where the ash was removed when there is no alternative planting space available.

- Start your replanting efforts now because when EAB hits, there won’t be any money left for replanting.
- Diversify the species being planted.
- Modify your ordinances to support increased diversity in planting.

Many Wisconsin communities have stopped planting ash on their terraces and in their parks. The City of Portage went one step further. They passed a moratorium banning the planting of any ash, public and private (not including mountain-ash) until further notice. The moratorium has been in effect since January 2007. The City of Portage strives to meet a replanting

ratio of 2:1 for every tree they remove.

The urban forestry management plans of many Wisconsin communities specifically state they will strive to meet current species diversification recommendations based on their current inventory.

The UW–Extension publication, *Alternatives to Ash Trees: Commercially Available Species and Cultivars*, <http://wihort.uwex.edu/landscape/AshAlternatives.doc> recommends planting no more than 30% of any one family, 20% of any one genus and 10% of any one species. Some communities are taking an even more conservative approach—having no more than 10% of their trees be from any one genus and 5% from any one species.

For a resource to help your community and residents with replanting options, visit the Emerald Ash Borer Toolkit link at <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/uf/eab/> (Chapter 7 – Control).

For a more detailed version of this story visit <http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/UF/eab/files/TOC.asp>, download the “NOTES – JOURNAL STYLE.doc” file at 11 e. and look at *Lessons Shared – Journal Entries 3, 4 & 11*.

Please share what your community is doing to prepare for EAB. Send ideas to Olivia Witthun, Urban Forestry Assistant, olivia.witthun@wi.gov.

The eighth entry of *EAB Stories and Lessons Learned* was compiled by Northeast Region Urban Forestry Assistant Olivia Witthun and South Central Region Urban Forestry Assistant Kathy Gonzalez.