



Waldo County Soil and Water Conservation District

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March 18, 2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for the “Forest of the Future” project, a joint effort between Viles Arboretum and the Waldo and Kennebec Soil and Water Conservation Districts. I look forward to collaborating with the Arboretum and provide technical assistance with the Assisted Migration Research Grove; sourcing plants, collecting data, and assisting with other functions as needed.

The Assisted Migration Research Grove (one of three planting sites featured in this project) offers a unique opportunity to educate the public on the latest practices and technologies in forestry management, including the use of assisted migration to combat the impacts of climate change. As a project coordinator, I am excited to work with the Arboretum to gather valuable information and insights that will help shape the future of forest management in Maine. This research will mirror other projects in Maine, New Hampshire, and New York to provide a broad data set of growth and survival of potential new tree species that might be grown in Maine to support resilient ecosystems, urban canopy and the forest economy. The research planting will actively engage the public in learning about potential pathways to adapt Maine’s forests to changing conditions, with interpretive materials and educational activities including community science for schools, families and individuals throughout the region, in addition to collaborative formal research.

I strongly believe that this project has the potential to serve as a model for other organizations and communities looking to implement sustainable land management practices. I am proud to support Viles Arboretum in this important endeavor and look forward to seeing the positive impact that the “Forest of the Future” project will have on the environment and the community.

Sincerely,

Aleta McKeage
Technical Director, Assisted Migration Research Grove
Waldo County Soil and Water Conservation District