**PROJECT MANAGER QUALIFICATIONS AND ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION**

**Project Manager:** Matthew B. Russell

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**Qualifications:** Matthew Russell has a Ph.D. in forest resources from the University of Maine, an M.S. in forestry from Virginia Tech, and a B.S. in forestry from Paul Smith’s College. He specializes in forest ecosystem health and is the team lead for the Forest Ecosystem Health program in the University of Minnesota’s Extension Center for Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. His research and Extension interests focus on managing natural resources in the face of environmental changes. From 2008-2012, he was Forest Data Manager for the US Forest Service Penobscot Experimental Forest, a long-term experiment focused on evaluating the ecological and environmental impacts of varying forest management techniques. From 2008-2009 he was Forest Data Manager for the Cooperative Forestry Research Unit, a forest industry-university research cooperative established at the University of Maine. He has led the Assessing Vegetation Impacts from Deer citizen science program in UMN Extension since 2017 ([avid.umn.edu](http://avid.umn.edu/))

**Organizations:** The University of Minnesota Extension integrates research and education in a way that is unique to Extension’s role in the land-grant university system, bringing University science-based solutions into Extension education to strengthen Minnesota. Extension fulfills its mission to make a difference in every county, by connecting community needs with the University resources that address critical issues in Minnesota. A number of citizen science programs exist through Extension: <https://extension.umn.edu/natural-resources#citizenscience>. Through its Driven to Discover initiative, the University of Minnesota Extension has established a model citizen science program that is applied across its programs.

The mission of the Department of Forest Resources located at the University of Minnesota is to advance the science and management of forests and related natural resources, develop future leaders in forest and natural resource management through undergraduate and graduate education, and to serve citizens through outreach.