

Media Working Group  
*Trees in Trouble: Saving America's Urban Forests*  
Media Grant Narrative

1. What do you plan to do?

**Project Description**

***Trees in Trouble*** (formerly *Take Root*), produced and directed by award-winning documentary filmmaker Andrea Torrice, is a half-hour public television documentary, website and community engagement project that examines the threats facing Southwest Ohio's urban trees and community forests due to invasive pests, and explores various community response strategies. A national story, ***Trees in Trouble*** is told from a regional perspective. The threat to the tree canopy extends well beyond the state boundaries of Ohio, with conservation and reforestation a growing concern to communities throughout the country. The emerald ash borer (EAB) was recently discovered in Denver and has spread to 25 states. U.S. Forest Service reports indicate that the entire country may be affected by EAB within the next 10 years.

The experience in Cincinnati, Ohio, with its history as a policy pioneer in the protection of natural resources and conservation and maintenance of its green canopy, will raise awareness of the current regional and national problem. ***Trees in Trouble*** places the story in the context of the state's distinctive history and portrays how communities are working together to mitigate infestations and implement successful reforestation projects.

The time for this project is now. The region's ash trees are already on a path to extinction due to the infestation by the EAB and resultant and pre-emptive municipal tree removals. A film tracing the history of this region's urban and community forests and examining the issues confronting them today has never been made: ***Trees in Trouble*** will fill a critical void in public and community education.

**Ohio Humanities: Past Planning Support, Requested Film Finishing Funds**

The ***Trees in Trouble*** project was initiated in 2013 with funding from an Ohio Humanities planning grant under the project's former title, *Take Root*. The planning grant resulted in the completion of story research; the addition of environmental historian David Stradling as a content advisor; and completion of preliminary interviews with urban forestry managers, scientists, historians, citizens and policymakers.

The OH planning grant catalyzed the awarding of production and outreach grants from several foundations, as well as in-kind contributions, resulting in the completion of a preliminary script, seven days of filming, editing of a 10-minute work in progress, the creation of a community engagement advisory board and the development of an initial community engagement plan.

This application requests finishing funds for the documentary, which is now in production. Renewed OH support at this final stage will be applied toward editing and post-production, readying the film for broadcast, exhibition and educational distribution as a necessary step for launching the community engagement plan and website. With funding for the website and community engagement largely in place, the finishing funds for the documentary remain the

most difficult to secure, especially as many grant makers are prohibited by their guidelines from funding film production, even if they are able to fund outreach campaigns and related educational activities. Therefore, this OH request addresses the project's most pressing fundraising priority.

## **The Story**

At the center of this project is the documentary, ***Trees in Trouble***. The film will provide an unprecedented vehicle for understanding the benefits of our trees, the threats they face and how communities can learn from the past in order to make more informed and appropriate responses to current threats. Following is a content synopsis:

### **The Threat to Urban Forests**

Southwest Ohio's urban and community forests are facing serious threats from new invasive pests, imported diseases and climate change. According to a recent study supported by the Cincinnati Parks Board, the region may lose over one-third of its green canopy in the next few years. While these threats are well known in environmental science circles, the public is only beginning to understand their severity.

The "green infrastructure" of the Southwest Ohio region—its parks, urban forests and street trees—helped shape the character of neighborhoods and became as fundamental to urban planning as roads, bridges and sewers. The documentary makes this connection visible and tangible through interviews with people working in the field, historical photographs and evocative images. It delineates the issues facing communities of the Cincinnati region and offers citizens and local officials the tools to engage the public in an informed dialogue toward supporting more effective public policy outcomes.

### **The Benefit of Trees**

Beyond the sheer beauty of trees and their role in urban planning, urban forests are integral parts of local ecosystems. They remove pollutants from the air, reduce soil erosion, reduce both energy use and thermal pollution through their shading and evaporative cooling functions, aid in water purification and mitigate climate change by acting as carbon sinks. Trees provide food and habitat for birds, animals and beneficial insects, directly connecting the city to the surrounding countryside. Trees also improve the values of houses and neighborhoods. In sum, they are essential to the quality of our daily life.

As one of the greenest cities in America, with more trees per neighborhood (40 percent) than almost any other city in the country, Cincinnati is an ideal focal point for the mounting local and national debate about the future of our street trees and urban forests.

### **The Current Crisis: Ash Tree Extinction**

In 2011 a small and voracious invasive pest called the emerald ash borer (EAB) arrived from Asia and ever since has been devouring ash trees at a voracious rate. Originally identified in Michigan in 2003, EAB has spread to 25 states. Southwest Ohio is now ground zero for the pest: the region is in the process of losing all of its native ash trees, which comprise 10-20 percent of its forests.

But EAB is not the only threat to the region's green canopy. Other pests, including the Asian long-horned beetle (ALB), have infested neighboring Clermont County, attacking maple, hemlock, buckeye, willow, poplar, birch and elm trees, as well as the non-native ornamentals *katsura* and *mimosa*. Furthermore, new forms of fungus have recently invaded

the area. Canker disease has nearly wiped out the butternut species and threatens to do the same to walnut trees.

Finally, climate change additionally stresses forests in a variety of ways: higher overall temperatures lead to more frequent and violent storms, as well as increasing the possibility of both drought and torrential rains. Spring comes earlier every year, disrupting the reproductive cycles of not only trees and shrubs but also of the animal and insect populations that depend on them.

### **Community Response**

Forest restoration, management and stewardship have never been more important, but recent federal and municipal budget cuts have left fewer available resources than at any time in recent memory. Most communities are unprepared to respond to these new threats, many of them remaining unaware that their trees are infested and dying until the occurrence of an accident caused by an infested tree. While communities have gone into financial debt, one of the greatest assets lost is the future of their native trees.

An exploration of Cincinnati's urban forestry history, and how past residents responded to similar threats, provides a catalyst for residents to respond to the current tree threats.

Following is the documentary's script treatment.

# ***Trees In Trouble***

## **Script Treatment**

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***Trees in Trouble*** is shot in a traditional documentary style, using broadcast quality, high-definition video and incorporating interviews, archival and stock footage, text and graphics, and music. The story is told through real-life events and follows people as they respond to events “on the ground.” Three characters provide the through-line: an urban forestry manager, municipal politician and local resident. An introductory segment is followed by three acts, each interwoven with a historical thread, and a closing segment.

### **Opening Segment**

Through a montage of contrasting historical and present-day images and footage, the opening segment introduces the program’s themes of the importance of urban and community forests, the threats they now face and community strategies to protect them for future generations. Excerpts from interviews with the film’s three central characters—Dave Gamstetter, an urban forestry manager; Wendell Young, a municipal politician; and Kay Wolfley, a local resident—establish the urgency of the topic: we are losing our native trees at an alarming rate to invasive species and climate change. These excerpts pose a series of questions. What will the forest look like without our native trees? What is the value of trees to our communities? Who will pay the costs of eradicating these pests? A preview of a few possible solutions highlights strategies for mitigation, reforestation and community involvement, along with the revamping of policies to better respond to a new age of global invasives.

### **Act 1: The Green Canopy**

Using visually compelling images of trees lining streets and providing greenery in parks and forests, the first segment extols the environmental, economic and social benefits of trees. Dan Herms, Chair of Ohio State University’s Department of Etymology, and Jenny Gulick of the National Urban and Community Forests Council describe how trees clean our air and water, provide habitat for hundreds of species, and improve the value of our homes and the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

The program then shifts its focus to Cincinnati, Ohio, one of the “greenest” cities in America with nearly 41 percent green canopy. Aerials and a visual montage of the city’s trees attest to its greenery. But it wasn’t always that way.

A visual transition, using archival images, shows the city of Cincinnati as it was 120 years ago. Environmental historian David Stradling and Scott Burlein, an arborist and reforestation project manager, recount how in the late 1800s, like many other American industrial metropolises, the Cincinnati region was exploding with people and activity. Its lush forests were hastily logged in response to the rapid influx of people who relied on trees for fuel and timber and on cleared land for farming.

Contemporary local preservationists decried the devastation. “When Ohio came into the Union with forty-one thousand square miles of territory, she presented the grandest unbroken forest ever beheld on this continent,” wrote Dr. N.E. Jones in *The Journal of Cincinnati Society of Natural History* in 1890. By the end of the century, the hills of Cincinnati were bare. According to historians, nearly 95 percent of the trees in the city had been cut down.

From that wreckage, a new appreciation of trees emerged. Cincinnati physician John Aston Warder was instrumental in starting the American Forestry Association, pioneering a national reforestation movement. In 1882 Cincinnati hosted the first national forestry congress to address conserving and renewing the nation's urban forests, spearheading the eventual establishment of the U.S. Forest Service. The same year Cincinnati's school children planted trees in an abandoned vineyard that became the city's treasured Eden Park.

Today the region is fortunate to have thousands of acres of parkland and thousands of street trees. Hamilton County's Great Parks preserves over 16,600 acres, Boone County manages over 2,000 acres, and in the City of Cincinnati alone, 85,000 street trees and over 5,000 acres of parks provide a green canopy. A very small portion of the tax money collected by most municipalities supports the planting, maintenance and care of their urban forests. Like many other American towns, the City of Cincinnati collects from property tax payers only \$0.18 per foot of property frontage.

Southwest Ohio's canopy is a testament to the foresight and commitment of past generations. But will this valuable asset be as vibrant across the next 100 years?

## **Act 2: The Crisis**

The film transitions to a visual montage of dead trees being cut down. Like bodies falling on a battlefield, these trees are the victims of a new invasive pest, the emerald ash borer (EAB). Local news station clips announce the arrival of EAB. Cincinnati's Urban Forestry Manager Dave Gamstetter leads us through the difficult challenge he and his colleagues are daily addressing: the loss of native species to exotic pests.

Entomologists Joe Chambers and Dan Herms recount how the invasives arrived on our shores. Over the past 20 years, globalization has changed the planet more dramatically than did the Industrial Revolution. Frequent cargo shipments from Asia and other parts of the world now enter the U.S. every day. With them migrate pests like EAB and the Asian long-horned Beetle (ALB).

Entomologists explain the harm the insects do, while photos and animation trace how these invasive insects and their eggs often survive in wooden packing crates and pallets that travel in cargo ships, and are then conveyed along U.S. highway routes. First infesting local trees, they are further spread when infested trees are cut and transported as firewood, a common practice that helps destructive insects establish themselves in new territories.

The most destructive insects in the Cincinnati region are the EAB, which are now in the process of killing virtually all of the native ash trees, and the ALB, which attacks multiple tree species. Native trees do not have the defense mechanisms to fight exotic threats effectively. "We lost the chestnut around 1900 and most of our elms in the 1950s," says Urban Forestry Manager Dave Gamstetter softly, "and our native tree species are vanishing quickly."

Once infested by EAB, a tree can die very quickly, within two years. Like many other cities, Cincinnati decided in 2011 to cut down all 13,000 of its municipally owned ash trees, which are now under federal quarantine. Homeowner Kay Wolfley explains that residents are required to remove their ash trees to prevent further infestation at their own cost. Kay recounts how she grew up with the ash trees in her backyard and how they shaped her neighborhood's character: "It's not just the amount of money we are spending. I feel like I have lost some old friends."

It is not simply the ash tree that is being lost but also the 43 animal and insect species that depend on ash for food and habitat. “Many cities planted ash trees to replace the elms that were lost 50 years ago from the Dutch elm disease,” explains Caryl Cooley Fullman, President of the Cincinnati Urban Forestry Board. “One of the lessons we are learning is we have to pay more attention to native varieties to improve the overall health of the ecosystem.”

Like most other cities, Cincinnati was unprepared for the rapacious appetite of the emerald ash borer and the rapid loss of its trees. Nor was it braced for the cost: removal of a mature ash tree costs between \$300 and \$1,000 dollars. Forestry manager Dave Gamstetter and City Council member Wendell Young describe how, in two years, Cincinnati exhausted its tree care and maintenance budget, as well as its emergency fund to remove hazardous dying trees. Tree removal equipment broke down and had to be replaced. Costs skyrocketed as crews had to work overtime to keep up with falling branches. EAB has cost the city an additional \$4 million in removal costs, with 5,000 ash trees still left to be cut down.

Cutbacks in the federal government’s invasive inspection programs have left Cincinnati and other cities to bear the brunt of the costs for the EAB. “Because we took such a beating from the EAB, we no longer have funds for replanting lost trees,” says the Urban Forestry Board’s Caryl Cooley Fullman. “It will be years before the canopy is recovered.”

Experts point out that we should prepare for the arrival of more invasive insects. While improved quarantine practices have helped slow the flow of invasives, new waves are on their way. Are we ready for them? How should we respond? Being prepared and having response strategies in place is key.

### **Act 3: Lessons from the Past Help Future Generations**

While it appears likely that Ohio’s native ash tree will become functionally extinct, some hope remains for these native trees in the future. Three strategies can help communities and the nation mitigate the threats of invasive insects to our trees and forests: scientific interventions, updated policies and community activism through re-forestation projects.

At a lab at Ohio State University, scientist Joe Boggs and his colleagues are working on new pesticides that act as a form of “birth control” for the emerald ash borer. Like her colleagues, conservation scientist Jen Henrichs is gathering the seeds of ash trees in the hopes that, similar to the American chestnut, someday a new EAB-resistant hybrid ash tree will be developed.

In Eden Park, a once abandoned vineyard of 100 years ago that is now lush with mature trees and greenery, school children in period clothing from the 1800s are digging holes in which they will plant saplings. About 300 people gather around the children, cheering them on. The students are re-enacting the Arbor Day celebration of 1882, while also planting trees for future generations. “We did it before and we can do it again,” says Thane Maynard, Executive Director of the Cincinnati Zoo.

The re-enactment is the launch event of a new, region-wide reforestation campaign. Schools, businesses, municipal leaders, arborists and many others have joined the volunteer Taking Root Reforestation Campaign help restore lost canopy in response to the EAB and ALB crisis. “We are planting native species so that the forests have a fighting chance to regain some ground,” comments horticulturist Scott Burlein of the Taking Root Reforestation campaign, the goal of which is to plant two million trees by 2020. But planting trees is only part of the solution

to saving community forests.

“Cutbacks in federal programs have had an impact,” says Kevin Hariger of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection program. “One of the areas cut back was cargo inspections, just as globalization has accelerated the arrival of invasive pests. We need to speed up our quarantine and inspection process.”

Jenny Gulick of the National Urban and Community Forests Council explains that state and local policies that speed up inspections and mitigation responses can also be implemented with nominal cost implications. Other strategies, such as having a tree inventory in place for every city, maintaining tree planting budgets, and implementing native tree diversification programs, will help improve the resiliency of their urban forests.

### **Closing Montage**

The documentary ends with a recap montage of scientists working, of communities planting trees, of the old and new Eden Park. In the interior of Cincinnati’s City Hall, Mayor John Cranley and the City Council are meeting. Council Member Wendell Young asks, “Ultimately, we have to decide: how do we value our trees and forest? Many people still see trees as pretty objects like lampposts. Trees do so much for us. They are an integral part of our city and our infrastructure. We must do more to protect them.”

In the Spring Grove Cemetery, Dave Gamstetter examines a large and magnificent 90-year-old ash tree, one of the last ash trees remaining alive in the city. He touches its trunk: “This old ash tree has been through two world wars, several hurricanes, other pest infestations, the great recession, and many other national travesties. It has endured a lot and it is still standing because people in the community took care of it. Let it be an inspiration to us not to give up hope.”

Work in progress segments of this script can be seen at: <http://vimeo.com/113990615>

## **Work Plan**

The documentary is currently in production, with the planning phase concluded, advisors in place, research and shooting script completed, and filming and initial editing underway. The work plan for the next year (2015-2016) is to complete post-production and release the film for screenings and broadcasts. We will prepare all the shot material for final scripting and editing, including logging, technical assessment, transcription, sketches of maps and motion graphics. A complete script will be written and a rough cut completed.

The humanities scholars and community advisors will then review the rough cut and provide feedback, leading to script finalization and, if needed, up to two days of additional filming to supply missing information. As a second round of editing takes place, licenses will be obtained for the final music, stock footage and archival images.

Concurrently, about six months prior to the release of the film, the film's community engagement plan will be rolled out. A content-rich website will be designed and a beta version reviewed by the advisory board. The educator's guide for high school and college students will be written to comply with state curriculum standards. Publicity materials, such as a press release, postcard, press packets and photos will be created, as well as a press and community screenings list. Throughout this phase, the producer will also work closely with Bullfrog Films, the documentary's highly regarded distributor, to ensure that the film will continue to reach educational markets after its initial broadcasts through vigorous, ongoing national distribution.

Upon completion of the fine cut, the film will be presented to local public television programmers for technical review and scheduling. The final mix, color correction and other technical broadcast and legal requirements will be completed.

The projected completion date of the editing is fall 2015, with community screening and broadcast events taking place from Fall 2015 through spring 2016.

## **Use of Ohio Humanities Funds**

Requested Ohio Humanities funds of \$17,000 are needed to complete the project's documentary post-production component:

- Write final script and complete final filming.
- Hire editor Matt Dibble to complete rough cut and fine cut edit.
- Distribute rough cut to humanities scholars and community advisory board for feedback.
- Edit final broadcast program and promotional and radio spots.
- Purchase hard drives for program master and duplication.
- Clear rights: stock and archival materials (c. 100 high-resolution digital images).
- License music.
- Complete color correction.
- Complete sound mix.
- Complete PBS required closed captioning, technical evaluation, legal review, and Errors and Omissions insurance).

*(See Appendices, Additional Funding Sources and Budget Explanation attached.)*





## 2. How do the humanities inform this project?

Throughout their history, Ohio and the Cincinnati region have played a seminal role in advancing a national consciousness about forest conservation. *Trees in Trouble* will portray the history of the environmental stewardship that has protected Ohio's natural resources and link that history to the present.

As both a documentary and community engagement project, *Trees in Trouble* explores important humanities content by examining the history of forestry in Ohio and the Cincinnati region, and how this history has influenced ideas, practices and policies within the region and beyond. The project will make extensive use of Ohio history and environmental history, and consider other humanities areas of study including environmental ethics, urban planning, public policy, law and landscape architecture.

Cincinnati has been a pioneer in advancing a national consciousness about forest conservation. Historian Henry Clapper went so far as to suggest that the American Forestry Association, established in 1875 by Cincinnati physician and horticulturist John Aston Warder, "inaugurated the conservation movement." The documentary shows how current-day residents have drawn upon their history to create new community reforestation projects. In one scene, school children reenact historic events as they plant trees in Eden Park, the once-barren vineyard that is now the crown jewel of the regional park system as a result of community reforestation.

*Trees in Trouble* investigates the relationship between community and "green infrastructure" by tracing how trees and forests have been valued throughout history. The project concentrates on several humanities questions, among them:

- What historical and current cultural values shape our views of nature and trees?
- What role has forestry played in this region and how does this history influence forestry policies and practices today?
- What can we learn from the response of urban foresters, public officials and citizens to past epidemics, such as Dutch elm disease, which led to the devastation of the American elm?
- How are the standards by which citizens and public officials evaluate nature in an urban environment influencing our response to the current emerald ash borer crisis?
- What kinds of reforestation and pest eradication programs should be implemented to support urban forests for future generations—and who will pay?

## 3. Who are the humanities professionals and what are their roles on the project?

### Humanities Professionals

Historian **David Stradling**, the project's first humanities scholar, worked closely with the producer during the OH-funded planning stage in developing and reviewing research, including the identification of key documents, records and sources. With his assistance under the OH planning grant, producer Andrea Torrice was able to locate rare historical urban forestry photographs, never seen before on film, for inclusion in the documentary. In addition, as one of the most authoritative environmental history scholars in the region, Professor Stradling also briefly appears in the documentary. While the humanities content research is now complete, in the project's final phase he will review and critique the documentary's rough cut and fine cut and the evaluation survey.

Professor Stradling received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where both his thesis and dissertation addressed the history of environmental movements

dealing with clean air. Before moving to Cincinnati, he taught for two years at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark. Since 2000 Stradling has taught interrelated courses on urban and environmental history at the University of Cincinnati. His recent article, "Mt. Airy Forest: 100 Years of Conservation in the City," is notably relevant to **Trees in Trouble**. He has written and edited numerous books, such as *The Nature of New York: An Environmental History of the Empire State* (Cornell University Press, 2010), *Making Mountains: New York City and the Catskills* (University of Washington Press, 2007) and *Cincinnati: From River City to Highway Metropolis* (Arcadia Publishing, 2003). His articles have appeared in *Environmental History*, *Journal of Urban History* and *Ohio Valley History*.

**John Tallmadge**, nature writer and independent scholar, is the project's second humanities scholar. Joining the team during the final phase, he will review and edit the educators' guide and provide feedback on the documentary's rough cut and fine cut. Based in Cincinnati, Dr. Tallmadge earned an A.B. from Dartmouth University and Ph.D. from Yale University. He taught in the English departments at the University of Utah and Carleton College before joining the Union Institute in 1987 as Associate Dean of the Graduate School, working with adult professionals on individualized Ph.D. programs. He left Union in 2005 to enter private practice.

Dr. Tallmadge is the author of two memoirs, *Meeting the Tree of Life: A Teacher's Path* (University of Utah Press, 1997) and *The Cincinnati Arch: Learning from Nature in the City* (University of Georgia Press, 2004), as well as an edited volume of ecocritical essays, *Reading Under the Sign of Nature* (University of Utah Press, 2000). He is a series editor for "Under the Sign of Nature: Explorations in Ecocriticism," published by the University of Virginia Press. A pioneer in the emerging fields of ecocriticism and outdoor pedagogy for the humanities, he has served as President of the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) and as a founding director of both the Natural History Network and the Orion Society. His work has been featured on NPR and PBS and in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

The project's **community advisory board** is comprised of leaders of key nature and conservation organizations in the Southwest Ohio area, as well as scholars in the field of environmental sustainability, philanthropy and community engagement. The board will review the film's rough cut and fine cut and advise on community engagement and engagement evaluation.

See *Appendices, Project Advisory Board, attached*.

## **Project Personnel**

### **Project Director (Producer/Director)**

Andrea Torrice is a documentary and public television producer whose work spans a range of contemporary issues. Her recent national public television production, *The New Metropolis*, explores the revitalization challenges and opportunities facing America's older first suburbs. She is now overseeing the related civic engagement dialogues being hosted by public television affiliated stations and community organizations. Over 120 community dialogs have been held around the country.

Her public television documentary *Rising Waters*, which examines the global warming debate through personal stories of Pacific Islanders, was also featured at the United Nation's Earth Summit in 2004 and broadcast in 110 countries and on National Geographic TV. She was the segment producer for the national PBS series *Arab American Stories*, which profiles a Jordanian family from Ohio. Among her other award-winning films are *Bad Chemistry*, which

discloses the hazards of low-level chemical exposures on human health; *Large Dams, False Promises*, which investigates the impacts of dam projects in Brazil and China; and *Forsaken Cries: The Story of Rwanda*, which examines the historical factors contributing to the 1994 genocide. Her most recent film, *Art As Action*, tells the story of women abstract expressionist painters through the story of her mother.

Andrea Torrice's work has been supported by the Ford, Annie E. Casey, Surdna, William Penn, Stephen H. Wilder and other foundations; the Corporation for Public Broadcasting; and the Independent Television Service. The recipient of a CPB Gold Award in Community Programming, she is a frequent guest speaker on the issues related to her films, including global warming, sustainability and urban revitalization. She has produced a range of award-winning video programs for museums, universities, educational institutions, municipal governments and nonprofit organizations. She is the owner of the Cincinnati-based company, Torrice Media.

### **Video Editor**

Matt Dibble has been a documentary editor and filmmaker for over 25 years with an emphasis on issues of human rights, diverse cultures, the arts and the environment. He has worked as an editor on many award-winning PBS national projects, among them Andrea Torrice's films *The New Metropolis*, *Rising Waters* and *Forsaken Cries*. Other public television documentaries include *The Mystery of Chaco Canyon* (co-writer, editor), about the history and cultural constructions of the ancient Pueblo peoples; *Not In Our Town* (editor), a series on communities responding to hate crimes; *Livelihood* (editor), a series on how globalization is transforming the way we work; *Expedition Alerce: Lost Forest of the Andes* (camera, editor); and *The National Symphony Orchestra in Alaska* (camera). *Koryo Saram: The Unreliable People* (co-director, camera, editor), about Koreans deported in 1937 to Kazakhstan, won the Best Documentary Award from the National Film Board of Canada in 2007. Dibble created the exhibition videos for the new Holocaust and Human Rights Center in Augusta, Maine, and shot and edited the introductory film on the photographic legacy of lynching for the "Without Sanctuary" exhibition at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Site in Atlanta.

### **Production Assistant**

A production assistant will be added to the documentary support team to assist director Andrea Torrice and editor Matt Dibble on location and in studio. This entry-level position will be filled through a professional network developed by Torrice Media, including past employees and volunteers and students at local colleges.

## **4. How will you publicize the project?**

The comprehensive community outreach and publicity strategy will be carried out through public broadcasting, education and community partners, traditional and social media.

### **Public Broadcasting**

The documentary, intended for public television audiences and complying with PBS broadcast guidelines, will initially air on Cincinnati/Dayton affiliate CET, as well as other station affiliates across the state. Producer Andrea Torrice will work with stations several months prior to broadcast in order to coordinate publicity efforts (e.g., written materials for calendars, newsletters and membership notices) and ensure a dynamic media footprint. Local radio spots for corresponding public radio partners will be produced and aired prior to the airdate and radio interviews will be scheduled as feasible. The stations and producer will join forces to build the broadcast audience through traditional media outlets, such as local dailies and weeklies, and online publications. Advance stories will be sent to local and regional history publications and

environmental news outlets, such as *Cincinnati Magazine*, *Ohio Valley History*, *Timeline*, *Urban Forestry*, *GreenCityBlueLake.com blog* and *Ohio Magazine*. A sneak preview for local media, public officials, educators and community organizations will be scheduled prior to broadcast.

### **Education Partners**

**Bullfrog Films** ([www.bullfrogfilms.com](http://www.bullfrogfilms.com)), a nationally recognized film distributor with over 40 years' experience distributing media to educational and non-theatrical markets, has been selected to distribute the film. Bullfrog Films reaches over 40,000 educational and cultural institutions, including secondary and post-secondary schools, libraries, museums, festivals and community groups, and is the distributor of three films previously produced by Andrea Torrice. Bullfrog Films will promote and distribute ***Trees in Trouble***, along with an educators' guide, to schools for use in courses on history, environmental sciences, urban planning, law, public policy and architecture.

*See Appendices, Letters of Support, attached.*

### **Community Partners**

In conjunction with the project's community advisory board, the project director has already engaged a range of community organizations to publicize the film and host screening events and town hall meetings. Planning for a Cincinnati area premiere is underway and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is planning to host several screening events across the state. Organizers of the Great Tree Summit have invited the producer to screen the film at its next annual conference, to be held at the Cincinnati Zoo, where it typically draws over 400 leaders from around the state from the fields of urban forestry, environmental science, biology, public policy, planning, architecture, parks management and sustainability.

*See Appendices, Outreach Partners, attached.*

### **Social Media**

The project will be promoted through social media streams targeting the online networks of organizational partners and advisors, as well as those of city planners, citizen groups, and environmental and conservation organizations. Prior to the public television broadcasts, publicity e-materials will be distributed for posting on the websites and other social media outlets of urban forest, urban planning, horticulture and forest science organizations.

The project' staff will interact with social media users, share video clips and monitor posts through outlets such as Facebook, YouTube and Ello. Google Analytics will be used to measure the number of visitor-users, with the results shared on the project website and with engagement partners, as well as at social media conferences and workshops.

## **5. Who is the intended audience?**

The intended audiences are all Ohio residents, age 16+, as well as communities throughout the country who will be affected by the threats to trees in their own regions. For example, the Continental Dialog on Invasive Species, a national organization that examines invasive threats to trees, has expressed interest in screening and distributing the program to its members. Screening events will reach a range of audiences, including municipal leaders, scientists, historians, educators and students, forestry personnel, nonprofit organizations, businesses, government officials, urban planners and homeowner associations. Bullfrog Films will distribute

the documentary nationally to secondary and post-secondary schools for use in courses ranging from environmental sciences to public policy.

*See Appendices, Letters of Support, attached.*

## 6. What are the goals and outcomes of the project and how will it be evaluated?

### Goals

The goals of the ***Trees in Trouble*** project are: 1) to raise understanding of the historical and present importance and benefits of trees in urban environments; 2). to heighten awareness of current threats to community and urban forests; 3) to catalyze informed public discussions about policy related to the future of urban forests; 4) to demonstrate how reforestation is an important part of Ohio's history and future; and 5) to support the activities of stakeholders working on forest conservation efforts. These goals will be achieved through public television broadcasts, community screening events, a multiplatform social media campaign, and distribution to secondary and post-secondary educational institutions.

Critical to achieving these goals will be successful partnerships with local, regional and statewide organizations to host screening events and discussions customized to targeted outcomes.

### Outcomes

- Better urban and community forest polices will be implemented to help retain and maintain tree canopy throughout the state.
- Increased public awareness will lead to increased reporting of invasive threats so they can be more quickly and effectively mitigated.
- Increased public awareness will cause local policy makers to make more informed decisions about municipal tree reforestation projects and to budget accordingly.
- Increased public awareness of the benefits of trees will also lead to increased reforestation efforts to help replenish the lost canopy.
- Community audiences will have a greater appreciation of the historic role the state has played in creating urban forests in Ohio and across the country, and will have the opportunity to study historical strategies and learn from their success.

### Evaluation

The documentary film's outside evaluator is **Russ Johnson**, Professor of Theatre Arts and coordinator of the Motion Pictures Program at Wright State University. Professor Johnson will be responsible for evaluating the documentary's success as a stand-alone film: its clarity of purpose and message, structure and flow, use of visual and audio elements, and overall use of techniques appropriate to the film's purpose and intended audience. Along with the humanities scholars and community advisory board, Professor Johnson will review and critique the film's rough cut and fine cut.

Professor Johnson has taught film theory, history and production at Wright State since 1990. Prior to this, he taught at the Ohio University School of Film in Athens and Weber State College in Ogden, Utah. Having received both his undergraduate degree and M.F.A. in Filmmaking from the University of Utah, he has worked extensively since 1980 in all aspects of film production. His films have been aired by PBS member stations and screened at domestic and international festivals, he has served as panelist or judge for festival and grant competitions, and he has received state and national fellowships and grants for his own work.

The outcomes related to content and community engagement will be evaluated by the project's two humanities advisors, historian David Stradling and nature writer John Tallmadge, and the community advisory board, applying the following evaluation metrics:

1. A survey evaluating the effectiveness of the community screenings will be distributed to screening organizers to assess the efficacy of the film in increasing public understanding of tree conservation issues and measuring achievement of anticipated outcomes.
2. An online survey will collect information and feedback about the use and utility of the project's website, video clips, and educator's guide;
3. The surveys will be qualitative, designed to be interactive and to engage users, and to inform project personnel of possible improvements needed in the film presentations, engagement materials and website.

Pending sufficient funding, the engagement plan could include hosting a Google HangOut with the community advisory board for a live discussion about how to use the film and materials. Results will be shared on the web site, Twitter, Facebook and Ello. Facebook and Google analytics will track the date, time and number of times viewers visit the sites and number of downloads for the educators' guide.

## **7. Who is the sponsoring organization?**

The sponsoring organization, Media Working Group, Inc. (MWG), was founded in 1985 and received its IRS 501(c)(3) determination in 1987. It is the oldest media arts organization in the region serving the needs of Ohio's independent filmmakers and media educators.

Since the mid-1980s MWG has supported independent filmmakers who are producing media that raises awareness of the environmental impact of toxins, garbage, nuclear energy and climate change on the Ohio landscape. More than 15 completed projects have addressed the human impact on the environment.

Andrea Torrice is a Producer Member of MWG, which provides its sponsored projects a business platform and administers project grants and charitable donations received on behalf of its sponsored projects. MWG's agreement with Producer Members outlines such MWG responsibilities as grant management, financial services, IRS reporting and a hosted web page, while assigning intellectual property rights to the Producer Member.

Jean Donohue is President of Media Working Group, the website of which is [www.mwg.org](http://www.mwg.org).

### **Funding Sources and Budget Explanation**

Of the project's total budget of \$37,000 to date \$20,000 have been raised from local, regional and national foundations, sponsors and an online Kickstarter fundraising event. Continued fundraising targets foundation grants and corporate sponsors, as well as funders of public television programs. Grant proposals for community engagement are currently pending with foundations that do not fund production.

*(See Appendices, Additional Funding Sources and Budget Explanation attached.)*