

# Verification Report

## Advancing Tree Equity in Providence - 2021

City Forest Credits Project Number 22

August 29, 2022

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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Dan Hintz (a Validation and Verification Body (VVB) acting as a third-party verifier) was engaged to verify the Advancing Tree Equity in Providence, Rhode Island (Project), for the period April 18, 2020 to November 10, 2021. The goal of the verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion is materially correct, and that the assertions made by the project are well documented.

## 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Between April 2020 and November 2021, the Providence Neighborhood Planting Program (PNPP) planted 1,120 trees across the city of Providence, Rhode Island. Trees were planted using the single tree planting design and quantification method including: 1,039 trees planted along the city right-of-way (sidewalks, lawn strips, and medians and 81 trees planted on other city-owned and managed properties (schools, fire stations, and parks).

PNPP and the City of Providence used American Forests' Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA) to identify priority areas for tree planting. Rhode Island is the first state in the nation to receive a TESA, a state-of-the-art tool that combines demographic, health, urban heat island and tree canopy data and displays it on an interactive map that identifies priority locations for planting and protecting trees. PNPP used TESA to assess where trees were most needed ensuring that this tree planting project will improve Tree Equity Scores and bring the many co-benefits of urban tree canopy to those most in need.

Project partners achieved this through their community-driven tree planting model, working with residents and community groups to identify planting sites and working with neighborhood volunteers to plant the trees. Neighborhoods with lower Tree Equity Scores were prioritized to receive new trees in order to cool neighborhoods and improve air quality that disproportionately impacts Providence's lowest canopy neighborhoods. Many of these sites are in formerly redlined neighborhoods where there are larger populations of people of color and people in poverty, and where the public health and social burdens correlated with tree inequity and other forms of environmental racism are most present.

American Forests is the Project Operator for this project and has agreements with the City of Providence and PNPP for monitoring and tree maintenance for the 25-year Project Duration.

## 1.2 CONTACT INFORMATION

### Project Operator

American Forests

1220 L Street, NW, Suite 750

Washington, DC, 02860

Contact: Ian Leahy, Vice President of Urban Forestry

[ileahy@americanforests.org](mailto:ileahy@americanforests.org)

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### Verifier

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## 1.3 OBJECTIVE

The goal of this GHG emission removal verification is to ensure that the GHG assertion made by the Project is materially correct, that the assertions and assumptions used in the offset calculations are appropriate, that the offset calculations conform to the City Forest Credits (CFC) Protocol, and that the Project is in compliance with all CFC requirements relating to eligibility, accounting, and documentation.

## 2 VERIFICATION CRITERIA

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### 2.1 GENERAL

The Registry will accredit VVBs to act as third-party verifiers who meet the Registry's qualifications and complete training. Those accredited VVBs can then act to verify compliance with this Tree Planting Protocol per International Standards Organization 14064-3. Specifically, the Registry adopts and utilizes the following standards from ISO 14064-3:

- Upon receiving a Project Design Document with data on eligibility, quantification of carbon and co-benefits, and a request for credits, the Registry will conduct a validation. If it validates the project at that stage, the Registry will retain a VVB to act as third-party verifier to verify compliance with this Protocol.
- The Registry requires a reasonable level of assurance in the accuracy the asserted GHG removals to a reasonable level.
- The verification items identified in Tables C.1 and C.2 are all material elements, and any asserted GHG removals must be free of errors, misstatements, or omissions regarding those elements.
- The Registry will record, store, and track all quantification and verification data and either display it for public review or make it available for public review upon request.

### 2.2 PROTOCOL

The verification was conducted to the City Forest Credits Tree Planting Protocol, version 9, February 7, 2021.

### 2.3 LEVEL OF ASSURANCE

This verification was conducted to a reasonable level of assurance. The Verification Report accurately reflects the documentation contained in the Project Design Document and supporting documents.

### 3 SCOPE OF VERIFICATION

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- The Project is located in Providence, Rhode Island, specifically described in the Project Design Document.
- Period is April 18, 2020 to November 10, 2021.
- The verification includes review of documents, data, imagery, and other evidence provided by the Project Operator; independent checking of selected data; checking of calculations for accuracy and conformance with the Protocol.

### 4 VERIFICATION PROCESS

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#### 4.1 VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES

The verification process consisted of the following activities:

- Verifier checked all requirements in the Protocol, confirmed that documentation satisfies the requirements of the Protocol, and that values extracted from the documents and conclusions drawn from the document are accurate and appropriate
- Verifier checked mapping, tree data, and attestations
- Verifier reviewed the accuracy of the carbon quantification and City Forest Carbon+ calculations
- Verifier submitted to the Project Operator request for clarifications on the name of the person signing as the Project Operator, dates of signatures in the Agreement to Transfer Credits, non-profit status of PNPP and their affiliation with the City of Providence, and documentation for the Attestation of Planting Affirmation. All issues raised were clarified by the Project Operator.

#### 4.2 CFC TREE PLANTING PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS

Verifier reviewed the Project against all CFC Tree Planting Protocol requirements and confirmed the following:

- Project Operator Identity (Section 1.1): Verifier confirmed identity by reviewing Project Operator website or state/local records.
- Project Design Document (Section 13, Appendix A): Verifier reviewed and confirmed Project Design Document is complete and accurate.
- Project Implementation Agreement (Section 1.2, Appendix A): Verifier confirmed fully executed Project Implementation Agreement on file.
- Location (Section 1.3): Verifier reviewed mapping and location data.
- Land Ownership or Right to Receive Credits (Section 2): Verifier confirmed either a signed Attestation of Land Ownership or Agreement to Transfer Credits.
- Commencement (Appendix A): Verifier reviewed Approval of Application Letter.

- Project Documentation (Appendix A and Appendix C): Verifier confirmed all required project documentation present.
- Additionality (Section 4): Verifier reviewed for additionality as follows:
  - Legal requirements test – no law or ordinance for Project Operator to plant trees. (Section 4.1)
  - Performance Standards Baseline (Appendix D) – per the program wide performance standard baseline showing net tree loss, these trees are additional. The performance standard baseline is attached to the Project Design Document.
  - The Project did not plant trees on sites that were forested and then cleared of healthy trees within the prior ten years (Section 4.2)
  - Project Operator signed a Project Implementation Agreement with City Forest Credits for 25 years. (Section 1.2, Appendix A)
  - The 25-year Project Duration commitment is additional to and longer than any commitment the Project Operator makes to non-carbon project tree plantings.
  - Project Operator completed and signed the Attestation of Additionality
- Permanence (Section 1.2, 5, and 10): Verifier confirmed Project Implementation Agreement imposes a legal obligation to Project Operator to conduct this project for 25 years, including a reversal obligation.
- Quantification (Section 12 and Appendix B):
  - Verifier confirmed Project Operator utilized the Single Tree CFC quantification methodology described in Appendix B.
  - Verifier reviewed the accuracy of the data integrity in the quantification methodology.
  - Verifier reviewed spreadsheet with tree data for carbon quantification which included season planted, street address, tree species, and latitude and longitude for each tree planted. American Forests (PO) also provided a map visually displaying locations of tree plantings across the City of Providence.
  - Verifier reviewed the completed and signed Attestation of Planting and Attestation of Planting Affirmation.
- Co-Benefits (Appendix B): Verifier confirmed the calculation of ecosystem co-benefits as set forth in the CFC- developed quantification tool.
- Attestation of No Double Counting of Credits and No Net Harm
  - Verifier reviewed the completed and signed Attestation of No Double Counting of Credits and No Net Harm.

## 5 VERIFICATION FINDINGS

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All issues raised by Verifier were clarified or corrected by the Project Operator and all issues were closed by appropriate responses by American Forests.

## 6 VERIFICATION RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This verification of the Advancing Tree Equity in Providence for the period April 18, 2020 to November 10, 2021 was completed in a manner consistent with ISO 14064-3 and in conformance with relevant CFC standards and guidelines.

The table below is a summary of the verified GHG emissions removals for the Project for initial credit issuance. These City Forest Carbon+ Credits are ex-ante credits based on forecasted removals and subject to multiple safeguards, including sampling, and which convert to ex-post after Year 25.

Project Name	GHG Removals Attributed to the Project (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e)	GHG Removals After Deductions for Mortality (20%) (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e)	GHG Removals After Deductions for Reversal Pool Account (5%) (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e)	City Forest Carbon+ Credits to be Issued to Project (mtCO <sub>2</sub> e)
Advancing Tree Equity in Providence	1,022.3	817.8	776.9	78
Cumulative	1,022.3	817.8	776.9	78

**Table 7. Co-Benefits per year after 25 years (all live trees, includes tree losses)**

Ecosystem Services	Resource Units Totals	Resource Unit/site	Total \$	\$/site
Rainfall Interception (m <sup>3</sup> /yr)	7,142.36	6.38	\$15,094.51	\$13.477
Air Quality (t/yr)				
O <sub>3</sub>	0.2422	0.0002	\$2,451.02	\$2.188
NO <sub>x</sub>	0.1025	0.0001	\$1,037.36	\$0.926
PM <sub>10</sub>	0.1177	0.0001	\$2,156.04	\$1.925
Net VOCs	0.0140	0.0000	\$71.44	\$0.064
Air Quality Total	0.4764	0.0004	\$5,715.86	\$5.10
Energy (kWh/yr & kBtu/yr)				
Cooling - Electricity	93,201.26	83.22	\$13,057.50	\$11.66
Heating - Natural Gas	3,467,234.39	3,095.74	\$48,493.53	\$43.30
Energy Total (\$/yr)			\$61,551.02	\$54.96
Grand Total (\$/yr)			\$82,361.39	\$73.54

**Verifier Signature**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "ASJ" followed by a stylized flourish.

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**Dan Hintz**