Seeking collaborators and data for synthesis study on the impacts of rapid canopy loss on understory plant communities in Great Lakes woodlands.

Ash removal at Mary Mix McDonald Woods in Glencoe, IL Spring 2017

About the project:

We are seeking collaborators and data from around the Great Lakes to tackle questions of how rapid canopy loss impacts the vegetation of woodlands in the region. Specifically, we are interested in how rapid canopy loss events (canopy loss experienced over a period of about 1-3 years), such as those brought on by the advent of emerald ash borer, impact understory plant composition. Furthermore, we are interested in how these impacts are influenced by initial canopy structure, management interventions (e.g., prescribed burns, seed addition, canopy thinning), and the abundance of non-native species.

Examining how understory plant communities have responded to rapid canopy loss events is crucial to conserving and restoring this crucial component of the region's biodiversity. We will address these questions by compiling pre- and post-canopy loss vegetation data from sites across the Great Lakes region and identifying the magnitude and direction of compositional changes in understory plant communities. The results of this project will be directly disseminated to practitioners in the region and will facilitate a better understanding of what to expect after future losses to the canopy of dominant tree species. These results will highlight ways to anticipate and mediate negative changes in understory composition.

How to collaborate:

Do you have data that may help inform this work? Or do you have management questions that you would like to try to address once we have compiled data from across the region? If so, we want to hear from you. Please email **score@nipcsa.com** and we will schedule time to chat with you.

Types of data we are looking for:

- We are seeking vegetation data for woodlands and forests in the Great Lakes region (including WI, IL, MI, MN, and IN) with known management and land use history.
- Specifically we are seeking pre- and post-canopy loss understory vegetation composition data.
- More details on data qualifications can be found at **score.nipcsa.com**

Collaborating with sCORE:

- Individuals/institutions that collaborate with sCORE will be listed as sCORE partners and will have the opportunity to be included as co-authors on resulting scientific publications.
- Sharing data with sCORE will ensure data archiving and will provide a platform for data and results to be made publicly available.

Learn more at score.nipcsa.com

sCORE
A project of the Chicago Botanic Garden

sCORE is the Synthesis Center for Conservation and Restoration, a part of the Negaunee Institute for Plant Conservation Science and Action at the Chicago Botanic Garden. We bring diverse perspectives together to enable analysis, synthesis, and collaboration aimed at addressing key needs in plant conservation and restoration science, practice, and policy.