2026 Vermont Disease Ecology Conference

Thursday, July 30 at Norwich University ~ Mack Hall Room 005

Thank you to the VT Biomedical Research Network (VBRN) and the Laboratory of Medical Zoology at the University of Massachusetts and Dr. Stephen Rich for providing lunch!

9:30am - 10:00am	Arrive/Test Presentations/Coffee
10:00am - 12:00pm	**Welcome and Introductions** Allison Neal: VBRN Disease Ecology Working Group Everyone: Introduce Yourself! **Michelle Sama**: Antimicrobial Resistance Genes in Arctic Permafrost: Metagenomic Analyses of Ancient Microbial Communities **Brittany Mosher**: Understanding the potential for human-mediated spread of chronic wasting disease to Vermont **Elias Rosenblatt**: Landscape structure and animal movement shape the fate of SARS-CoV-2 spillover in white-tailed deer ***Break*** **Nasreen Broomand**: Invasion: Genomic Insights on Vermont Rodents, Pathogens, and Vectors **M. Elise Lauterbur**: Genomic Signals of Disease Adaptation Reflect Ecological Drivers of Pathogen Exposure **Gwen Ellis**: Opportunities for integrating genetic spatial effects on disease outbreak dynamics
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm – 3:00pm	**VBRN and NEWVEC** M. Elise Lauterbur: MAP2LE and Ticks Julie Dragon: Tick CURE Bill Landesman: NEWVEC Overview **Dave Allen**: A blacklegged tick population dynamics model validated against multiple, long-term data sets **Sam Troast**: Model simulating thermoregulatory behavior, movement, and pathogen dynamics of adult eastern newts (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) **Julie Dragon**: The sixth modality of disease, revisited ***Break*** **James Tsalah**: Quantifying Vegetation Associated with *Ixodes scapularis* Density at Long-Term Tick Surveillance Sites, Western Massachusetts **Marley Shepherd**: Surveillance of Tick-Borne Pathogens in New England Deer Ticks Using 16S Metabarcoding and qPCR **Andrew Swafford**: Mechanisms of Motility and Host Recognition in the Fungal Pathogen *Bd*
3:00pm	Conclude