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Tuesday, July 6, 2010

# Film tells of beetle fighting

## Documentary by Fitchburg native

By Martin Luttrell TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

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Shortly after earning her economics degree at George Washington University, Fitchburg native Emily V. Driscoll set her sights on science journalism, getting a master's degree and setting to work as a documentary film maker.

And after producing a number of short-form documentaries as a member of a production company, she returned to Central Massachusetts to document the efforts to eradicate the Asian longhorned beetle.

"Bugged: The Race to Eradicate the Asian Longhorned Beetle," is the first science documentary Ms. Driscoll has directed. It will be shown in Worcester and Fitchburg next month.

Ms. Driscoll, 29, said she began interviewing sources for the project in September and finished editing the 24-minute piece in June.

"I want to spread awareness of the Asian longhorned beetle in America, and the extraordinary efforts at eradication," she said in a telephone interview from her home in New York City. "I want people to understand the gravity of the situation, and the efforts that go into containing it."

The Asian longhorned beetle destroys trees by boring holes through them, and some officials are concerned that they are endangering trees and forests throughout New England. The infestation area in and around Worcester now covers 74 square miles, where more than 25,600 trees have been cut down.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has put up \$41.5 million to expand the eradication project this year, and officials with that government department have said they are optimistic that eradication should succeed over the next 10 years.



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Ms. Driscoll, who moved from Fitchburg to New York City while in elementary school, received her economics degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., in 2002, and her master's degree in science journalism from New York University in 2007. She is now working toward a master's in science documentary production at the Gallatin School, a school of individual study within NYU.

"I had known about it when the Asian longhorned beetle infested New York City," she said. "I was always interested in it, but there was not much information on it.

"I didn't hear much about Worcester's problem. I did my own research and found out more about Worcester's problem. It's an interesting story affecting other areas."

"Bugged" will be shown at the Worcester Public Library at 2 and 6 p.m. Aug. 4. Ms. Driscoll will not be present for those screenings, but will be on Aug. 6 in Fitchburg. That screening will take place at Riverfront Park, at a time to be announced.

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Ms. Driscoll  
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**“ I want people to understand the gravity of the situation. ”**

-- EMILY V. DRISCOLL, FILMMAKER

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