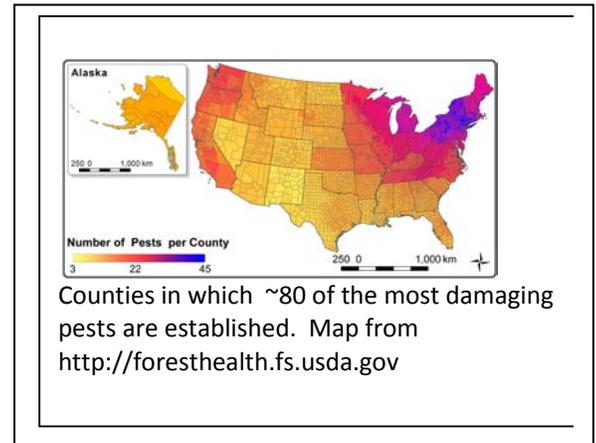


The Role of the USDA Forest Service in Combatting Non-native, Tree-killing Pests

The Threat

Approximately 500 species of non-native pests have invaded the United States and are damaging wildland and urban forests. Two USDA agencies are responsible for protecting our forests – including National forests – from these pests. The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is responsible for preventing introduction of additional tree-killing pests and containing and eradicating newly introduced species. The USDA Forest Service is responsible for managing longer-established and more widespread pests as well as assisting APHIS in developing and implementing effective programs to counter invading pests and the pathways by which they enter the U.S. or spread once in the country.



Examples of Non-Native Forest Pests & Locations Where Introduced

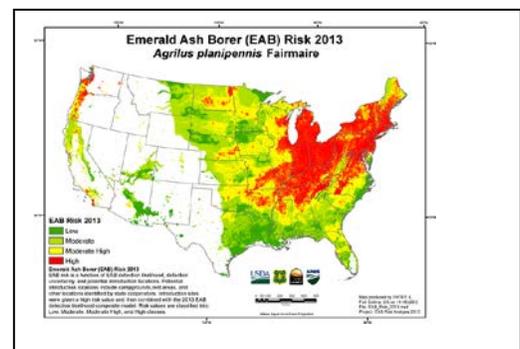
Chestnut blight	New York City
Gypsy moth	Boston (deliberately introduced)
White pine blister rust	National forests
Asian longhorned beetle	New York & other metro areas
Emerald ash borer	Detroit
Sudden oak death	nursery in Santa Clara, California
Polyphagous shot hole borer	Los Angeles

With only a few exceptions, non-native forest pests first invade the country in cities and suburbs, not in the wildland forests managed under the National Forest System. This is because non-native forest pests are brought to America by riding on certain types of imports:

- Crates, pallets, and other types of packaging made from wood
- Living plants imported by nurseries for sale to us
- Decorative items made from raw wood, such as baskets, boxes, wood carvings, and garden furniture

Gypsy moth eggs can be located on the ships themselves, or on the exterior of shipping containers.

Once introduced to a particular place, the most significant of these pests threaten trees across the country. Consequently, a national-level response is required; piece-meal efforts by a few states would leave our forests vulnerable.



How the Forest Service Combats Non-Native Pests

How does the Forest Service work to combat non-native pests and protect our forests? The agency carries out a comprehensive program that includes the following components:

- USFS Research & Development scientists analyze the pathways by which additional harmful species enter the country and spread and measures to exclude pests from those pathways Preventing harmful new invasions is the most effective—and cost-effective—method for protecting the nation from the growing threat posed by invasive species.
- USFS Research & Development scientists assist APHIS in increasing our understanding of each new pest’s life cycle and behavior. This information is critical to developing effective measures to detect and control the pest.
- USFS Research & Development scientists work with colleagues in APHIS, Agriculture Research Service, other sections of the Forest Service, states, and universities to develop and test technologies to control the pests or reduce their impacts (e.g., through biocontrol).
- USFS Forest Health Protection experts in the Forest Health Technology Enterprise Team and eastern and western Threat Centers evaluate the level and source of pest threats to America’s forests.
- USFS Forest Health Protection experts assist in the detection and delimitation of pest outbreaks.
- USFS Forest Health Protection experts advise managers in the National Forest System, National Park Service and other federal agencies, states, cities, and private lands on the most effective measures to minimize damage to forests across the country.
- Scientists in the National Forest System work with colleagues in other sections of the Forest Service, Agriculture Research Service, other sections of the Forest Service, states, and universities to breed trees that are resistant to pests and to restore these trees to the forest.
- All Forest Service units contribute to public support for and compliance with pest-identification and management programs through education of stakeholders ranging from professional foresters and tree-care companies to volunteer tree-planting groups in cities.

Forest Health Protection also supports State forestry departments with funding and technical assistance for various forest health activities, including

- Core Funding to conduct ground-based and aerial surveys, training, and public outreach;
- funding and technical assistance to suppress or eradicate forest pests occupying large areas (acreage greater than 640 acres);
- special project funding through a competitive grants program.

These state programs are critical to realizing US Forest Service pest management goals.

By necessity, protecting our forests from invasive pests requires a perpetual effort. International trade continues to grow – and with it, introduction of tree-killing pests. Agencies working to identify and interdict the pathways of invasion and spread need to be strengthened. Reducing the damage caused by any particular pest also requires a concerted and long-term effort. These activities operate most efficiently when buttressed by stable long-term funding, guided by solid research and expert staff, and coordination among the many agencies and interlocking networks of non-governmental experts.



USFS smokejumper searches for Asian longhorned beetle in maple tree in New Jersey

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