

FOREST PESTS OF CONCERN TO PENNSYLVANIA

Forest Pest Threat to Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania's valuable forest resources are at risk from the introduction of damaging insects and diseases not native to the Commonwealth, which can cause billions of dollars in destruction and alter the forest ecosystem. In the case of several recent and serious threats, the forest pest species either have already been detected in Pennsylvania, or they are right on our doorstep. In order to prevent the spread of these insects and pathogens into or within the Commonwealth, prompt action is needed.

The Emerald Ash Borer (confirmed in Pennsylvania), Asian Longhorned Beetle, Sudden Oak Death pathogen, and *Sirex* Woodwasp (confirmed in Pennsylvania) are foreign and invasive species that threaten trees in our nation's forests and communities, and related economic values worth hundreds of billions of dollars.

Emerald Ash Borer: The Emerald Ash Borer threatens twelve species of ash across the continent. At risk is the \$25 billion ash timber industry in the Northeast, street trees across the nation valued at \$20 to \$60 billion, and myriad trees found in our neighborhoods and parks.

Pennsylvania forests contain approximately 1.6 billion cubic feet of white ash trees (5% of state's total forest volume), making it one of the more prominent species in the state. **Ash is a common commercial timber species in Pennsylvania**, prized for its beauty and workability in furniture and flooring. The quality of ash grown in northern Pennsylvania and southern New York has made it well-suited for use in baseball bats (Louisville Slugger) and tool handles. **Emerald Ash Borer was detected in 2007 in western Pennsylvania**, a discovery which led to the imposition of a quarantine on ash materials affecting the counties of Allegheny, Butler, Beaver and Lawrence and a statewide quarantine banning the importation of out-of-state firewood.

Asian Longhorned Beetle: The Asian Longhorned Beetle poses an alarming threat to hardwood forests reaching from New England into Minnesota and in the West, and to the hardwood timber, maple syrup, and autumn foliage tourism industries dependent on these forests. Also at risk are street trees across the nation valued at more than \$600 billion. **The maple, poplar and ash trees endangered by the Asian Longhorned Beetle are valuable commercial hardwood species, which are prevalent in Pennsylvania.** Eradication has been successful in Chicago, proving the efficacy of this approach. The populations in New York and New Jersey persist, and it is essential to provide sufficient funding now and in coming years to complete eradication in these areas.

Sudden Oak Death: The Sudden Oak Death pathogen (also called the Phytophthora leaf and stem blight pathogen) is a major threat to the nation's nursery industry as it readily attacks species such as rhododendron, camellias and a long list of other common ornamentals. In addition, if Sudden Oak Death does escape confinement, it threatens oaks in forests in Oregon and Washington as well as throughout the Appalachians, Ozarks, and

even into southern New England. **Northern Red Oak is the third most abundant tree species in Pennsylvania forests, accounting for roughly ten percent of forest volume.** It is also the backbone of the state's forest products industry and a critical source of mast for many forest species. Funding is needed to update the existing quarantine, increase sampling and testing, and support a pilot project involving nursery regulation and inspection.

Sirex Woodwasp: The *Sirex* Woodwasp is **now found** across much of New York State and **four counties in Pennsylvania**, as well as in Ontario, Canada. The Woodwasp threatens valuable pine timber resources, especially those of the Southeast. Programs are needed to prevent movement of infested wood and other vectors and implement biological control programs using a parasitic nematode.

Value of Pest Threat to Pennsylvania: **Pennsylvania's landscape and nursery industry accounts for more than \$5 billion in annual sales.** Each year, **Pennsylvania's forest products industry generates \$11 billion in sales and has an economic impact of \$17.5 billion.** The industry **employs an estimated 64,000 people with an annual payroll of \$2.4 billion.** Pennsylvania's forests also support a multi-billion dollar recreation and tourism industry. In addition, they provide a diverse array of important environmental and quality-of-life benefits, such as the maintenance of biological diversity, carbon sequestration, high quality water resources, and an aesthetically-pleasing landscape.