Symposium on the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid In Eastern North America

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Preface

The eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis* Carriere) is prized for its unique aesthetic and ecological qualities that are unrivaled by any other tree species in eastern North America. One has only to walk through a mature hemlock forest to appreciate the "cathedral"-like sense offered by these majestic trees. Throughout the eastern United States, these centuries old trees are revered as a significant component of eastern "old growth" forests, and numerous parks and recreation areas have become established in their honor. As devastating as the chestnut blight and Dutch elm diseases were in the 20th century, the ecological impact of the hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae* Annand) is likely to be far more reaching.

First observed in the East in 1951, the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) was initially viewed as an occasional pest on ornamental hemlocks and was controlled using a variety of insecticides. However, these insecticides would prove to be unsuitable for use in the forest environment. By the late 1980s, isolated infestations were discovered in forests in Virginia, eastern Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New Jersey where the abundance of host trees and lack of effective natural enemies contributed to its rapid buildup and spread. Today, HWA infestations have spread to portions of 15 states from Georgia to New Hampshire, where tree decline and mortality have been significant in many areas.

The purpose of this symposium was to facilitate the exchange of information regarding the impacts, research activities, and evolving management strategies for the hemlock woolly adelgid. Approximately 150 individuals representing federal, state, university and private industry attended this 3-day symposium that included 42 oral presentations and 22 poster displays. Since the first meeting of this nature in 1995 (First Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Review, Charlottesville, Virginia), we have seen a tremendous increase in HWA research and development activities as well as in our understanding of hemlock ecology and the impact on hemlocks. Recent advances in insecticide formulations and application methodologies provide new opportunities to control HWA on trees, and the more long-term control strategy of establishing a complex of natural enemies is becoming a reality.