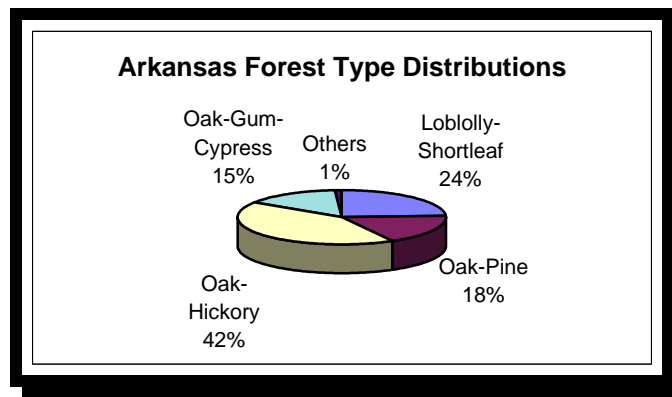


The Resource

Arkansas' forests cover 18.8 million acres, more than 50% of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land, some 10.6 million acres, is in nonindustrial private ownership, while approximately 2.3 million acres are in national forests. Arkansas' forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat from the Ozark and Ouachita Mountains to the Mississippi River. Major forest types in the state include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress.



Forest health monitoring (FHM) activities are cooperative efforts between the USDA Forest Service and the Arkansas Forestry Commission. The FHM program in Arkansas includes periodic measurement of fixed plots as well as regular aerial and ground surveys to detect forest damage.

Special Issues

Key issues which State and federal programs are addressing cooperatively include:

- Sustainable management of private forest lands
- Protection and development of urban and community forest resources
- Increasing participation by underserved citizens in forestry programs

Forest Influences

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Arkansas' most significant forest insect pest. However, in 2006 no SPB activity was reported, a trend that has lasted for more than 10 years. The Arkansas Forestry Commission is offering cost-share incentives to landowners for thinning and restoration work as part of their comprehensive SPB Prevention Program. The state is also making special effort to reach out to minority and underserved landowners.

Gypsy moth No new outbreaks were detected in 2006.

Oak decline and red oak borer induced mortality that was severe from 1999-2004, but has substantially subsided over most of northern and northwestern Arkansas. Populations of the borer have diminished and more normal rainfall patterns have returned, resulting in a reduction in dieback and mortality. However, conditions favorable for the development of future oak decline events persist over thousands of acres. Episodic drought, advanced age, and poor site quality of the state's oak forests indicate make this a serious and persistent problem.

Sudden Oak Death surveys were initiated in Arkansas in 2004 and continued in 2006.

The surveys focused on the perimeters of horticultural nurseries that received potentially infected stock from shippers in California. No sites infected with the *Phytophthora ramorum* pathogen were detected.

Forest Health Assistance in Arkansas

For further information or assistance, contact:

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