

Virginia



Forest Health Highlights

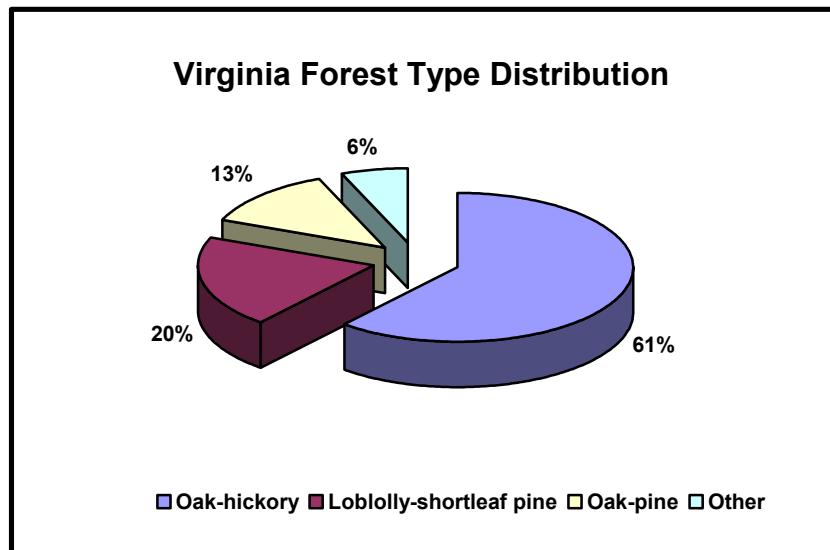
2007

The Resource

Virginia's forests cover 15.4 million acres, about two thirds of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land, some 10 million acres, is in non-industrial private ownership, while approximately 1.4 million acres are in national forests. Virginia's forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat from the Appalachian Mountains to the lowlands of the Atlantic Coastal Plain. Major forest types in the state include oak-hickory, loblolly-shortleaf pine, and mixed oak-pine. Other minor types account for 6% of the acreage.



USDA Forest Service



Forest Influences and Programs

Gypsy Moth defoliation was moderate to heavy on over 73,400 acres in western counties down the Appalachian Mountains and some in the Blue Ridge. One 7,600 acre block of severe defoliation occurred on Poor Mountain southwest of Roanoke in a relatively populated area causing a good deal of concern. This was the second year of defoliation in this area and some tree mortality is likely to follow.

Southern pine beetle (SPB) activity remained low in Virginia in 2007 with only 64 spots detected in 7 counties. About 820 acres were killed. Most of the activity was in Chesterfield and Mecklenburg Counties. The Virginia Department of Forestry has implemented a **Southern Pine Beetle Prevention Program** with federal funding and support which focuses on thinning pine stands to reduce hazard and provides cost-share assistance to landowners.



John H. Ghent, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

The hemlock wooly adelgid range in Virginia was expanded to include one additional county in 2007 – Scott County in the southwestern part of the state. Significant decline continues although some trees that have been infested for many years are still hanging on. The release of predators of the adelgid is on-going in Virginia and other states and offers some long-term hope of reducing the impacts of the adelgid on the hemlock resource.

A widespread outbreak of the **tulip tree scale** appeared on tulip poplar trees on the eastern slopes of the Blue Ridge in Nelson County. This native insect becomes epidemic from time to time and can cause sparse foliage, dead branches, and distorted trunks. Trees can be weakened and mortality is possible, especially for seedling and saplings.

A **late spring freeze** hit much of the state in early April following warm March weather and a number of tree species—black locust, tulip poplar, maple, blackgum and hickory—which had begun to leaf out were damaged. Most of the oaks had not flowered or leafed out yet so damage to them was averted. Re-foliation occurred following the freeze, but using stored energy to do so puts stress on trees and can contribute to decline events.

Forest Health Assistance in Virginia

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