

SPB Outbreak Preparedness Guide

PREPAREDNESS (latent SPB populations)

General

1. Establish and maintain an SPB coordinator on each District and at each Supervisor's Office.
2. Establish access to information on adjacent landowner location and contact data.
3. Maintain list of FS certified pilots and aircraft. If numbers are low, take steps to certify additional planes and pilots.
4. Make sure SPB Environmental Assessments (EA) are up-to-date. Examine need for EA revision when existing EA has been in place 3 years.
5. If a SPB outbreak erupts suddenly, operate under and amend existing EA as needed while a new EA is prepared. Utilize categorical exclusions when possible, (particularly Limited Timber Harvest CEs 12, 13, and 14).
6. Maintain maps of Management Areas in which SPB suppression may be restricted. Indicate what restrictions are in place.
7. Keep a current list of contractors available for cut-and-remove and cut-and-leave operations.
8. When possible, have stewardship contracts in place to expedite suppression activities.
9. Keep a current list of local wood utilization facilities/industries and associated contact information.
10. Identify potential storage and disposal sites for infested logs throughout the Forest/District.
11. Maintain a current list of approved pesticides and suppliers.

Training

1. Have certified pesticide applicators and chainsaw operators on staff, or contracts in place for this work.
2. Maintain trained aerial surveyors on staff, or have contracts in place to conduct detection surveys.

Prediction

1. Participate in annual spring SPB trapping survey.
2. Keep SPB hazard maps up-to-date. Revise annually, or every 3 years at a minimum.
3. Based on the number of susceptible acres of host type, each spring calculate the minimum number of infestations equal to the outbreak level (number of infestations equal to 1 per 1000 acres susceptible host type), or have Forest Health Protection calculate the proposed outbreak level.

Prevention

1. Reduce high hazard stands to less than 10% of total susceptible host type acreage.
2. Maintain low SPB hazard stands: a) on boundaries of Management Areas in which SPB suppression is restricted (e.g. wilderness) and b) adjacent to non-FS lands with a significant pine component.
3. Restore longleaf pines on sites where appropriate.
4. Remove off-site pine whenever possible.

RESPONSE (intermediate and outbreak SPB populations)

General.

1. Consider instituting an Incident Command System (ICS) when the number of new infestations detected reaches 80% of outbreak level. If an ICS is not instituted at that time, revisit the need for an ICS system following every detection flight as long as SPB populations remain near or above outbreak levels.
2. Develop system to ensure that all required staff (wildlife biologists, archaeologists, etc.) can evaluate and sign-off on proposed treatments promptly.

Training.

1. Annual training on SPB detection, evaluation, sketch-mapping, and database (SPBIS) management during outbreaks. Additional training sessions for new detailers as needed.
2. Periodic training on new technology beneficial in SPB IPM when such technology becomes operational.

Prevention.

1. Continue with SPB hazard reduction treatments as resources permit and if such treatments do not compromise necessary suppression activities. Avoid treatments in susceptible stands during SPB dispersal phases of spring (late Feb. thru May) and fall (Oct. thru Nov.). Curtail all such treatments in areas with high SPB activity.

Detection.

1. Schedule an initial detection flight during mid May-early June, or as early as late April if in outbreak phase the previous year or spring trapping survey predicts increasing or significant SPB activity.

2. Schedule monthly detection flights through October-November if 10 or more active infestations are discovered during initial detection flight. Otherwise, schedule additional flights based on observed SPB activity.
3. During outbreaks, fly twice a month from June-October if resources allow.
4. Utilize Digital Aerial Sketch Mapping systems to accurately record and transfer SPB spot information.
5. Field personnel should be trained to look for and report SPB infestations while driving or working in the forest.
6. Classify all suspect infestations by size and apparent activity to assist in prioritizing ground evaluations.

Evaluation.

1. Ground-check all active infestations within 7 days of detection.
2. To increase efficiency, utilize computerized mapping systems to assign infestations to ground crews.
3. Obtain accurate GPS coordinates for all infestations, and use GIS/GPS and portable data recorders (PDR) to collect data when available.
4. Annually establish a standardized system of infestation numbering and a color-coded method of flagging into and around infestations.
5. Flag the perimeter of all infestations and access routes to roads on the initial ground-check. When possible, identify and flag expanding spot heads.
6. Tag each infestation with spot number, suggested treatment, estimated numbers of red and green trees, surveyor initials, date, and any other appropriate information at the access point and the spot head.
7. Enter ground-check data into the SPBIS database within 5 days of the evaluation.

Treatment.

1. All infestations scheduled for cut-and-leave should be treated within 15 days of detection.
2. All infestations scheduled for cut-and-remove should be treated within 25 days of detection.
3. If 25 % of cut-and-remove infestations do not meet the treatment deadline listed above, switch to only cut-and-leave or cut-and-return for salvage treatments for all infestations requiring suppression.
4. In wilderness or areas where SPB suppression is limited, treat infestations as soon as allowed if susceptible hosts are present on and between adjacent private land.
5. Procure pesticides appropriately labeled for use against bark beetles on forested sites when cut-and-hand-spray or prevention treatments are anticipated.
6. When infestations occur on roadsides or property lines, fell potential hazard trees before SPB brood has emerged when practical.