

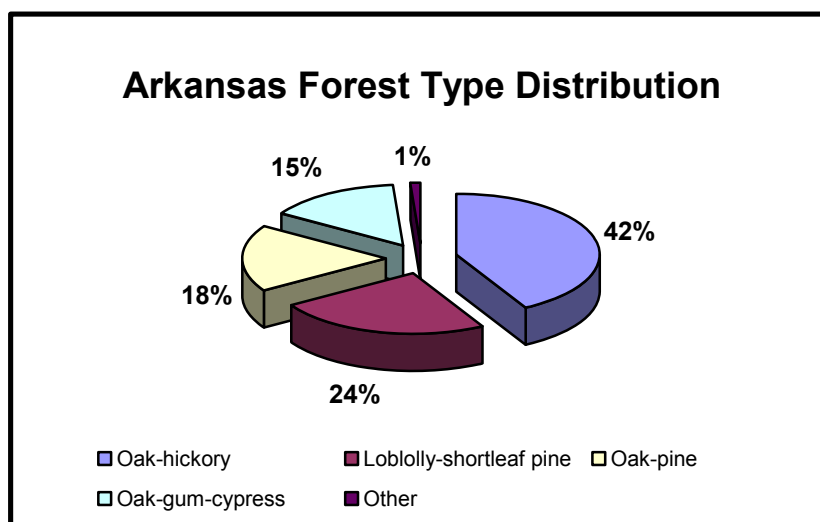
Arkansas



Forest Health Highlights 2008

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 non-industrial 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-shortleaf pine, oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress.



Forest Health Influences and Programs

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Arkansas' most significant forest insect pest. However, in 2008 no SPB activity was reported, a trend that has persisted for approximately 12 years. As part of their comprehensive **SPB Prevention Program**, the Arkansas Forestry Commission is offering cost-share incentives to landowners for thinning pine stands that are high hazard for beetle attack. This program is eagerly sought and well received by landowners. The state is also making special effort to reach out to minority and underserved landowners.

Ips and black turpentine beetle are often attracted to trees stressed by drought or damaged during harvest operations. Statewide, populations of these beetles in rural forest areas and urban trees were very low with only minor damage occurring during 2008.

Oak decline and red oak borer have diminished and more normal rainfall patterns have returned, resulting in a reduction in dieback and mortality. However, damaged trees that do survive are extensively riddled by borer tunnels and decay fungi so the results of the decline will persist until the damaged trees are eventually harvested. 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.



Oak mortality; USDA Forest Service photo

Gypsy moth trapping is used to make early detections of gypsy moth introduced to the state. No moths were trapped in 2008 for a 3-year period of no catches.

Chinese privet is but one of a number of non-native, invasive plants causing problems for foresters and land managers in Arkansas.

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.

Forest Health Assistance in Arkansas

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