

Arkansas



Forest Health Highlights

2012

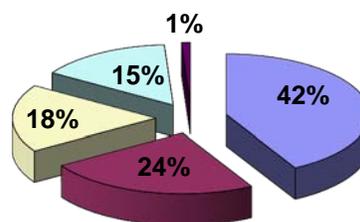
The Resource

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.



The majority of the state's forested acres are in national forests. their scenic beauty, supporting providing wildlife habitat from the the Mississippi River. Major forest types include hickory, loblolly-shortleaf pine,

Arkansas Forest Type Distribution



■ Oak-hickory ■ Loblolly-shortleaf pine ■ Oak-pine ■ Oak-gum-cypress ■ Other

Forest Health Influences and Programs

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Arkansas' most significant forest insect pest. However, in 2012 no SPB activity was reported, a trend that has lasted for more than 15 years. However, the sudden upsurge of SPB in Mississippi is cause for concern. The Arkansas Forestry Commission plans to expand the south wide pheromone trapping to SE Arkansas and to conduct spring or early summer aerial surveys in SE Arkansas in 2013. The AFC continues to offer cost-share incentives to landowners for thinning and restoration work as part of their comprehensive **SPB Prevention and Restoration**

Program (SPB PRP). 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. The 2012 SPB PRP Program will be entirely focused on thinning of stands with basal area of 120 or above. In addition to a landowner incentive, a logger incentive will be offered to thin small stands between 10 & 20 acres.

Ips and black turpentine beetle are often attracted to trees stressed by drought or damaged during harvest operations. Statewide, populations of these beetles were above normal late in the year due to a dry fall. Thinning of pines stands should be conducted to minimize damage to residual trees.

Oak decline and red oak borer; Isolated pockets of ROB still crop up, but nothing on the scale of 99-04. Conditions favorable for the development of future oak decline events persist over thousands of acres. Episodic drought, advanced age, overstocked stands and poor site quality of the state's oak forests create a serious and persistent problem. Hypoxylon Canker killed many red oaks in late 2012 due to drought stress.

Early Oak Defoliation due to sudden and extreme late summer and early fall drought resulted in many calls concerning white and post oaks. Most trees will resume growth in the spring. See Hypoxylon note above.

Eastern tent caterpillar infestations were high in most areas. Actual damage from this common defoliator was negligible.

Fall webworm, a common but noticeable pest, was normal in most areas of Arkansas this year.

Variable oak leaf caterpillar populations peaked in many areas of the state. Attempts to use the USFS DMP were more or less stymied by overlapping drought changes. It is impossible to determine the cause of greenness loss when both VOLC & drought occur concurrently.

Gypsy moth trapping is used to make early detections of gypsy moth introduced to the state. No moths were caught in 2012. This is the 7th year with no GM in Arkansas.

Invasive species Chinese privet is but one of a number of non-native, invasive insect and plants causing problems for foresters and land managers in Arkansas. Other species of interest are Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Long Horned Beetle, Thousand Cankers Disease of Black Walnut, Sirex wood wasp and Cogon grass.

Cooperative programs are addressing some high-value areas such as designated natural areas, forested urban parks and forest regeneration sites. The Arkansas Department of Natural Heritage initiated efforts to remove or reduce invasive species from Cove Creek, one of their exemplary natural areas.

The Arkansas Forestry Commission is cooperating in the Don't Move Firewood Program, a Region 8 project intended to educate the public on the dangers of moving firewood and related pests from area to area. Many invasive pests can be moved long distances in a matter of days in firewood.

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

Arkansas Forestry Commission
3821 W. Roosevelt Road
Little Rock, AR 72204
501-296-1940
<http://www.forestry.state.ar.us>
jim.northum@arkansas.gov

USDA Forest Service
Southern Region, State & Private Forestry
Forest Health Protection
2500 Shreveport Highway
Pineville, LA 71360
318-473-7286
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/foresthealth/>