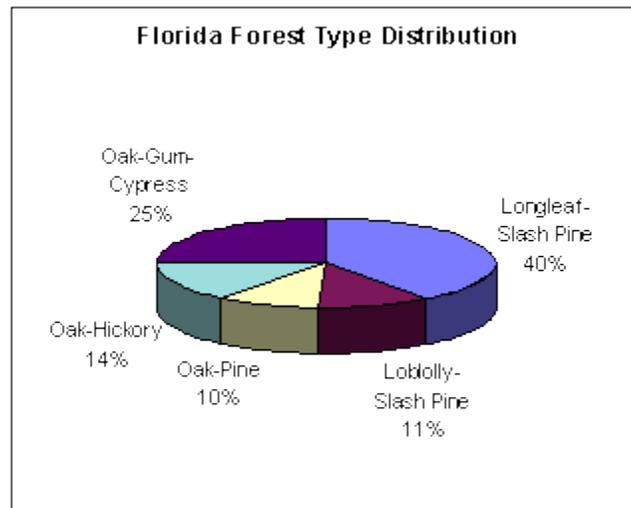


# Forest Health Highlights 1999

## Florida

The Florida Division of Forestry provides forest health protection assistance to state and private land managers within the State. The State and the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection unit fund this program cooperatively.



### **Florida Forest Facts**

- Over **40%** of Florida is **forested** (more than 14.6 million acres).
- Over **80%** of forested acreage in Florida is **privately owned**.
- The **National Forests in Florida** (1,029,500 acres) provide recreational and wildlife benefits as well as timber products and jobs for thousands of people.
- The Florida Division of Forestry acquired a trend analysis of **coastal forest change** from the Big Bend region of the state. Results revealed measurable, but very small changes, indicative of a slow process likely linked to the rising seas level.
- **Fusiform rust** remains an ongoing problem on slash and loblolly pines in Florida. **Pitch canker, annosum root disease, Phytophthora root rot of sand pines**, and **southern cone rust** are occasionally problematic in pine plantations and seed orchards.
- **Wildfires** ravaged much of Florida in 1998 and to or lesser extent in 1999. These fires resulted in secondary losses from opportunistic responders such as **wood borers, pine engravers, black turpentine beetles and regeneration weevils**. Ramifications could continue to be felt for several years, as mortality of weakened trees will continue.
- Following record-setting losses due to **southern pine beetle** (SPB) infestations in a 1997 and scant activity in 1998, notable and unprecedented SPB problems surfaced again in 1999. A late developing outbreak in Hernando County affecting predominantly residential and wildland/urban interface areas in Brooksville continues to be active in 2000. These infestations are new southern range records for SPB in Florida. Relatively high levels of activity also occurred along the Suwannee River in Hamilton, Madison, and Suwannee Counties.
- The Florida Division of Forestry is becoming more involved with investigations to develop integrated pest management strategies for **exotic weeds**. They are currently cooperating on a research project with the USDA Forest Service and University of Florida, targeting cogongrass in forested areas.

- For reasons more likely linked to the prolonged stretch of extreme weather, numerous observations and reports of **Kermes scale** causing various degrees of damage to ornamental and urban live oaks occurred in 1999. Flagging of branch tips, dieback and even mortality were associated with locally abundant scale populations ranging from Tallahassee to Tampa. In one case, approximately \$20,000 worth of nursery stock was destroyed due to infestations and damage. Reasonably successful control was achieved with multiple applications of insecticidal soap during periods when crawlers were present.

## The Florida Division of Forestry and the USDA Forest Service

In spite of the relatively good health of Florida's forests, a variety of insects and diseases (both native and introduced), and human-caused impacts such as changes in land use patterns, continue to threaten the State's resources. To deal with this constantly changing mix of challenges, the Division of Forestry and the Forest Health Protection unit of the USDA Forest Service cooperate to prevent, detect, suppress, and manage this multitude of threats. The partnership between the two agencies has worked for three decades to maintain and improve the health of Florida's forests.

***Forest Health Protection contributions (dollars) to Florida Division of Forestry Cooperative Forest Health program, cooperative pest suppression projects, and National Forests in Florida pest suppression projects, 1997-2000.***

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>
<b>Cooperative Forest Health Program</b>	63,525	63,525	69,000	69,000
<b>Cooperative suppression</b>				
southern pine beetle	0	0	0	25,000
<b>NFs in Florida -</b>				
southern pine beetle	67,000	30,000	10,000	0

**For additional information, contact:**

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