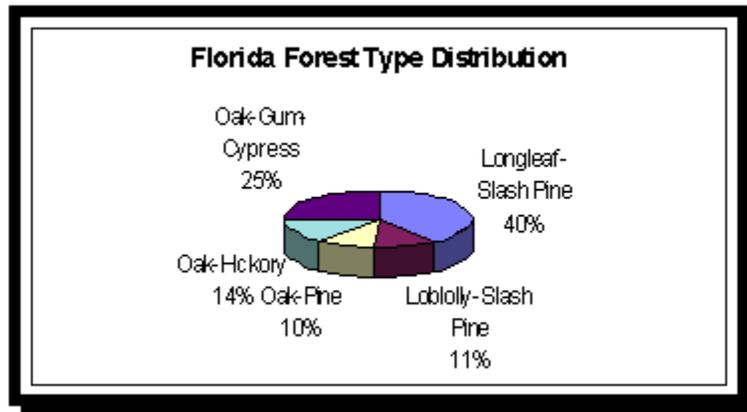


Forest Health Highlights 2000

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) provides 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.
- **Black turpentine beetle** and **lps pine engraver beetle** activity was exceptionally high throughout the state due to recurring, pronounced and widespread drought conditions. Infestations were more evident in trees and stands exhibiting additional symptoms of stress i.e. overstocking or fire scorch or lightning strike
- In 2000, **southern pine beetle** (SPB) activity reached record proportions. There were more spots (1,172), in more counties (21), causing more dead trees (1.2 million), at a greater cost (\$15.7 million presalvage stumpage value) than previously recorded. The outbreak in Hernando County, affecting predominantly residential and wildland/urban interface areas in Brooksville, worsened dramatically. The situation became so severe that the State's Commissioner of Agriculture declared an agricultural emergency, allowing state funds to be utilized to assist landowners in suppression activities.
- 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.

- Thousands of acres of laurel oaks were defoliated across portions of 5 counties during August by the **variable oak leaf caterpillar**. Interestingly, **puss moth caterpillars** were simultaneously abundant and contributed to the defoliation. No tree mortality has been observed yet.

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, 1998-2001.

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Cooperative Forest Health Program	63,525	69,000	69,000	61,921
Forest Health Monitoring	0	0	0	58,000
Cooperative suppression - southern pine beetle	0	0	128,000	250,000
NFs in Florida - southern pine beetle	67,000	10,000	0	0

For additional information, contact

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