

## Louisiana Forest Health Highlights 2014

### **The Resource**

Louisiana's forests cover 13.8 million acres, nearly half of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land, some 10 million acres, is in non-industrial private ownership, while approximately 603,500 acres are in national forests. Louisiana's forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat throughout the state. Major forest types in Louisiana include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, longleaf and slash pine, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress. Other minor types account for approximately 3% of the forest.

### **Forest Influences and Programs**

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Louisiana's most significant forest insect pest. However, SPB activity in the state has been insignificant in recent years, a trend that has lasted for about 15 years. No serious population buildup is in sight. Louisiana is currently offering cost-share incentives to landowners for SPB prevention practices such as thinning stands to reduce the hazard to SPB infestation.

Pine engraver beetles (Ips spp.) and black turpentine beetle remain at relatively normal levels. Because Ips infestations tend to be relatively small and scattered, they usually cannot be effectively controlled or salvaged, but their economic costs may exceed those caused by SPB.

Forest tent caterpillar caused defoliation this spring on about 380,000 acres of tupelo gum wetlands in South Louisiana. Much of the defoliated area was also affected by defoliation due to baldcypress leafroller (see Figure 1).

Baldcypress leafroller also caused defoliation on about 275,000 acres of mixed baldcypress stands in southeastern Parishes, mostly associated with forest tent caterpillar defoliated areas.

A Tornado touched down in Caddo and Bossier Parishes and continued on a 3.5 mile path consisting mostly of timberland. It caused moderate damage and will continue to be monitored.

**Gypsy Moth** survey was conducted using 191 traps across the state and none were captured.

**Laurel Wilt Disease and the Redbay Ambrosia Beetle** has made its introduction into Union Parish, Louisiana. The beetle has also been confirmed in Claiborne and Lincoln Parishes. The tree tissue samples are pending for confirmation of Laurel wilt disease in these two parishes.

**Cogongrass** infestations in southeastern Louisiana, that have been sprayed, are being monitored through a newly created spatial geodatabase.

**Needle Cast** was observed in Morehouse Parish in six locations. It is believed that the loblolly pine is declining due to being planted on an unfit site for loblolly pine.

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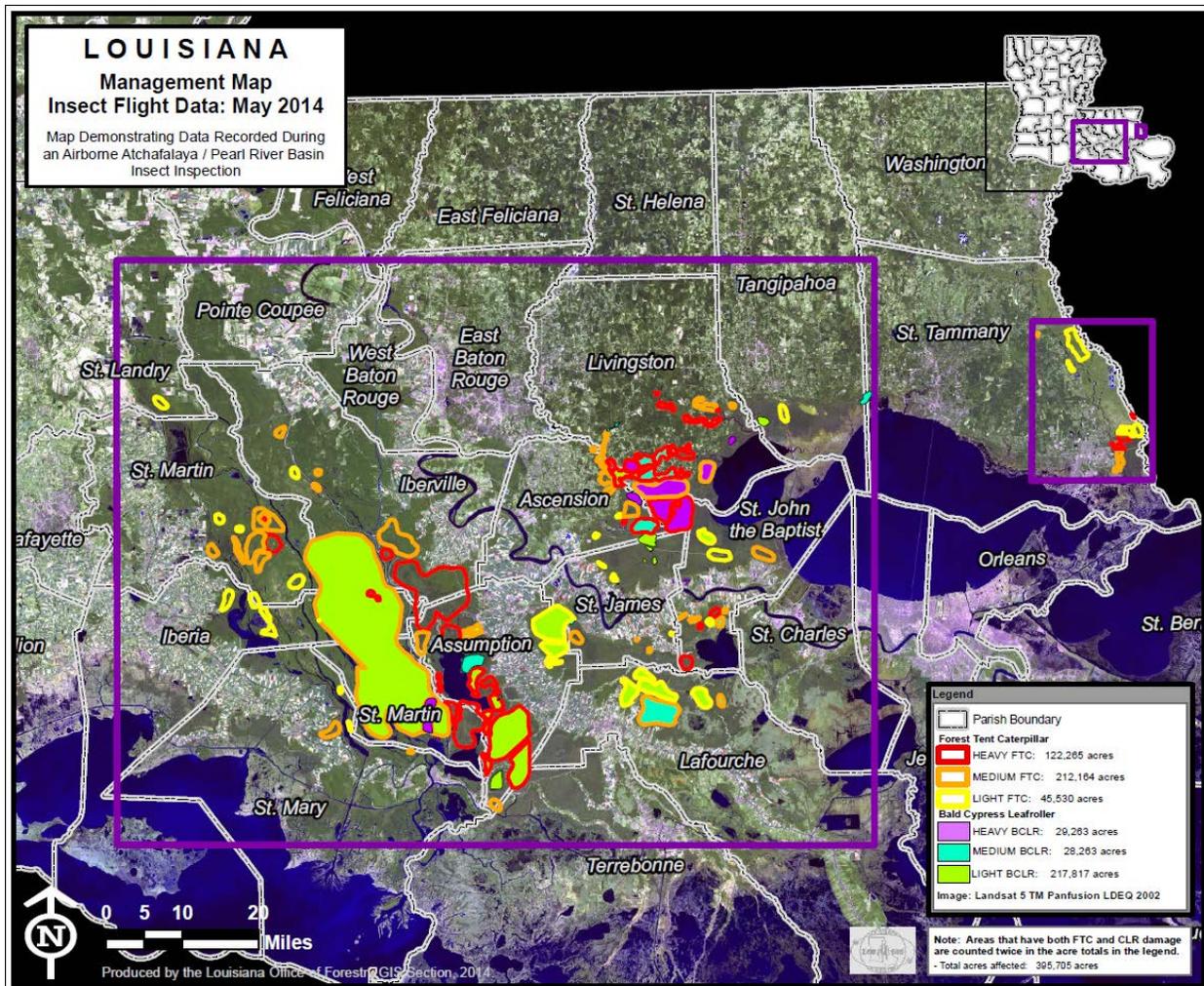


Figure 1. Balcypress Leafroller and Forest Tent Caterpillar Defoliation in Southeast LA, Spring 2014. Damage mapped using Digital Aerial Sketchmapping System.