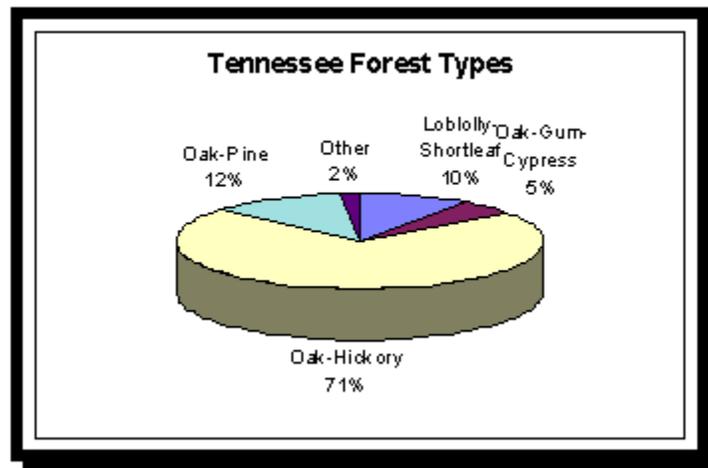


Forest Health Highlights 2003

Tennessee

The Resource

Tennessee's forests cover 14.4 million acres, more than half of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land, some 8.7 million acres, is in nonindustrial private ownership, while approximately 556,000 acres are in national forest. Tennessee's forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat from the Appalachian Mountains in the east to the Mississippi Valley in the west. Major forest types in the state include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, and mixed oak-pine. Oak-gum-cypress and other species comprise 7% of the state's forests.



Forest health monitoring (FHM) activities are cooperative efforts between the USDA Forest Service and the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry. The FHM program in Tennessee includes periodic measurement of fixed plots as well as regular aerial and ground surveys to detect forest damage.

Special Issues

Key issues which State and federal programs are addressing cooperatively include:

- Sustainable management of private forest lands
- Protection and development of urban and community forest resources
- Increasing participation by underserved citizens in forestry programs

Forest Influences

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Tennessee's most significant forest insect pest. In 2003, SPB activity remained at moderate levels, with 1,294 spots reported and 12 counties in outbreak status.

Gypsy moth is a threat to Tennessee's hardwood-dominated forests. The state works closely with the USDA Forest Service to monitor and quickly identify any accidental introductions of the moth; there have been several successful eradication projects covering as much as 40,000 acres in recent years. In 2003, 208 male moths were trapped in 18 counties, reflecting a decrease in the total number captured in 2003 (1,630). Three areas are currently infested in the state, and eradication efforts are ongoing.

Dogwood anthracnose is a disease of cool, moist areas in the higher elevation forests of the state. It is currently causing significant mortality to native dogwoods in 59 counties. No new areas of infection were reported in 2003.

Oak Decline impacts timber and recreation in Tennessee. It results in dieback and mortality of large, mature oaks. A complex of factors such as drought, frost, insect defoliation, and secondary agents including root and canker diseases and wood boring insects contribute to the condition. Forest surveys indicate that nearly 9% (738,000 acres) of oak forest is susceptible; oak decline will become more prevalent as forests mature. Eight counties reported increasing levels of oak decline in 2003, while 26 counties reported low to static levels. Hickories, as well as all species of oaks, are affected.

Forest Health Assistance in Tennessee

For further information or assistance, contact:

Tennessee Department of Agriculture

Division of Forestry
PO Box 40627
Nashville, TN 37204-0627
(615) 837-5176

USDA Forest Service

Forest Health Protection
200 WT Weaver Blvd.
Asheville, NC 28804
(828) 257-4320