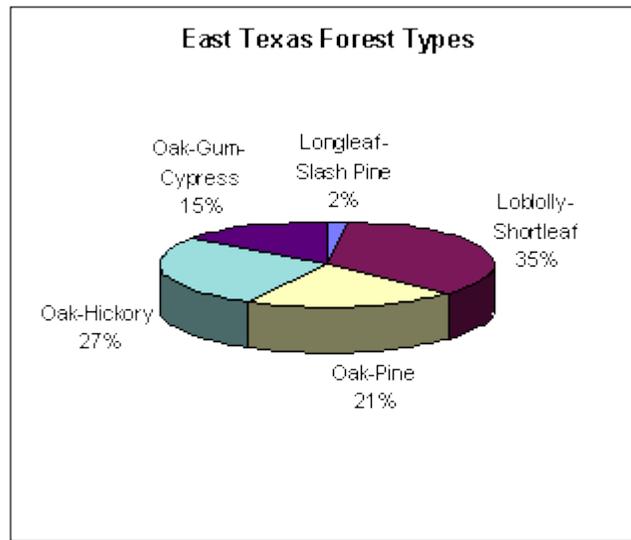


Forest Health Highlights 1999

Texas

The Texas Forest Service 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.



Texas Forest Facts

- Over **50%** of the eastern section of Texas is **forested** (more than 12 million acres).
- Almost **90%** of the forested acreage in Texas is **privately owned**.
- There are four **National Forests (576,000 acres)** in east **Texas**. They provide recreational and wildlife benefits as well as forest products and jobs for thousands of people.
- The **southern pine beetle** (SPB) is Texas' most important forest insect pest. Historically, this state has had the most severe SPB problems in the South. However, since 1994, SPB populations have been very low. There were no SPB infestations reported on state, private, or federal lands in 1999. A cooperative project between the Texas Forest Service, University of Georgia, Virginia Tech and the USDA Forest Service resulted in EPA registration of the SPB inhibitor, verbenone, as new suppression technique. A trapping system developed by the Texas Forest Service and has been implemented in 12 southern states to annually forecast SPB infestation trends.
- A new control for the **Texas leaf-cutting ant** was given a state registration in 1999. A single application of Volcano Leafcutter Ant Bait will completely eliminate the ant colony in as little as 4 weeks.
- Personnel from the Texas Forest Service, National Forests in Texas, and Forest Health Protection have worked together to develop some unique **remote sensing applications** to assist in the detection and monitoring of forest pest problems. One of the latest systems is called "electronic sketch mapping". A notebook computer connected to touch screen monitor and GPS unit are used in the airplane. The system has great potential to aid in SPB detection procedures.

- **Oak wilt** is currently affecting live oak in 60 counties in central Texas, mostly in the area between Dallas and San Antonio. Urban and rural oaks are affected. Live oak, the premier tree species in the region and highly valued for beauty, shade, and wildlife benefits, is severely affected by this disease. A cooperatively funded suppression project will be in its 13th year during 2000. Since the project's inception, more than 2.4 million feet (>450 miles) of barrier trenches have been installed around 1,600 oak wilt infection centers to halt the spread of the disease.
- For the second consecutive year (and three of the last four), Texas has experienced severe **drought**. Seedling mortality was high on most tracts planted during the winter of 1998-1999 and **pine engraver beetle** activity was higher than normal across all of east Texas.

The Texas Forest Service and USDA Forest Service

The relative health of Texas' forests is good. However, a variety of insects and diseases and human-cause localized and sporadic concerns. The only exception to this is oak wilt, which has become a persistent problem in central Texas. To deal with this constantly changing mix of challenges, the Texas Forest Service 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 forests in Texas.

Forest Health Protection contributions (dollars) to the Texas Forest Service Cooperative Forest Health Program, cooperative pest suppression projects, and National Forests in Texas pest suppression projects, 1997-2000.

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>
Cooperative Forest Health Program	90,984	97,525	97,525	97,525
Cooperative Suppression				
southern pine beetle	0	0	0	0
oak wilt	481,200	450,000	558,000	350,000
National Forests in Texas				
southern pine beetle	104,779	120,000	75,000	25,000

For additional information, contact:

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