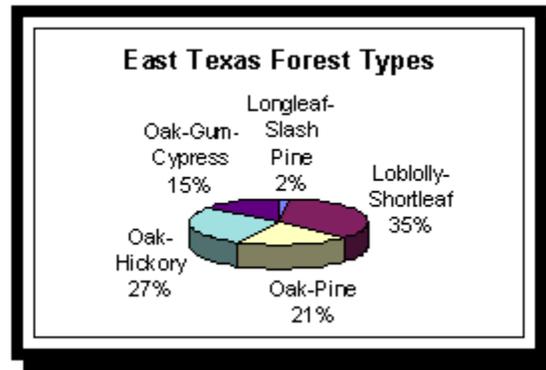


# Forest Health Highlights 2001

## 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 the most important forest health insect pest in Texas. Historically, the most severe SPB problems in the South have occurred in Texas. However, since 1994, SPB populations in Texas have been very low. No SPB infestations were reported on state, private, or federal lands in Texas in 1999 through 2001. This is the first time in almost 50 years that no southern pine beetle activity was reported in Texas for more than two consecutive years.
- In 2001, Texas found relief from the **severe drought** of the past five years. As a result, *lps* (pine engraver) beetles activity declined dramatically from 2000 levels.
- The **Texas leaf-cutting ant** continues to defoliate young pines in East Texas. Applications of Volcano™ Leafcutter Ant Bait were used in 2001 to eliminate ant colonies in as little as four weeks. The bait has replaced methyl bromide, a highly toxic, environmentally harmful, and more costly treatment for the ants.
- **Oak wilt** continues to devastate over 60 counties in Texas, mostly 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 impacted by the disease. The Texas Forest Service began its 15<sup>th</sup> year of a cooperative suppression project in October 2001. Since the Project's inception, more than 2.7 million feet (>525 miles) of barrier trenches have been installed with project assistance to treat more than 2,000 oak wilt centers to halt the spread of the disease.
- Four sites infested with **giant Asian dodder** were confirmed in Houston in 2001. A cooperative project involving the Texas Forest Service, Texas A&M University, the USDA Forest Service and the City of Houston will be conducted to eradicate this plant in 2002.

## The Texas Forest Service and the USDA Forest Service

The relative health of the forests in Texas is good. However, a variety of insects, diseases, and human impacts 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 changing mix of challenges, the Texas Forest Service and the Forest Health Protection unit of the USDA Forest Service cooperate to prevent, detect, evaluate, suppress, and manage this multitude of threats. The partnership between the two agencies has worked successfully for over three decades to maintain and improve the health of Texas' forests.

***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, 1999-2002.***

	1999	2000	2001	2002
<b>Cooperative Forest Health Program</b>	97,525	97,525	87,520	119,518
<b>Forest Health Monitoring</b>	0	0	71,000	150,000
<b>Cooperative Suppression - southern pine beetle</b>	0	0	100,000	0
<b>Cooperative Suppression - oak wilt</b>	558,000	600,000	350,000	450,000
<b>National Forests in Texas - southern pine beetle</b>	75,000	20,000	16,000	10,000

**For additional information, contact:**

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