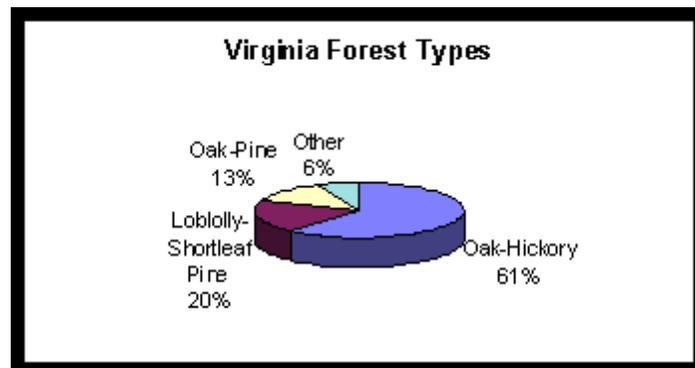


Forest Health Highlights 1997

Virginia

The Virginia Department of Forestry provides forest health protection assistance to state and private land managers within the State. This program is funded cooperatively by the State and the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection unit.



Virginia Forest Facts

- Over **66%** of Virginia is **forested** (more than 15.2 million acres).
- Almost **85%** of forested acreage in Virginia is **privately owned**.
- The **George Washington** and **Jefferson National Forests** (1.4 million acres) provide recreational and wildlife benefits as well as timber products and jobs for thousands of people.
- **Gypsy moth** defoliation started to affect Virginia's hardwood forests in 1984 and became an increasingly serious problem on the next decade. However, an introduced fungal disease decimated gypsy moth caterpillars in 1996 and defoliation was so light that it could not be mapped. The same was true in 1997 and little defoliation is expected in 1998.
- Since 1993, Virginia has participated with the USDA Forest Service in a pilot project to demonstrate that the rate at which the gypsy moth spreads into new areas could be reduced in a cost effective manner using current technology. Several intervention projects have taken place within the state over the past 4 years and the results indicate that the rate of spread of the gypsy moth can be slowed by 60%.
- **Southern pine beetle** (SPB) infestations were at low levels in 1997. This cyclic insect sometimes kills millions of board feet in timber statewide. Cooperative state-federal monitoring programs help ensure that personnel and budgets are prepared to deal with predicted outbreaks. The outlook for 1998 is for relatively low populations.
- **Oak decline** is impacting Virginia's upland hardwood forests. Casual factors are stressors such as drought, frost, and defoliation by insects, and root disease. Oak decline and gypsy moth defoliation often overlap and that leads to higher levels of oak mortality.
- The **hemlock woolly adelgid** was first reported in Virginia in 1950. This insect has now spread across most of the State infesting and killing eastern hemlock. State and federal officials are investigating both chemical and biological control methods for limiting the impact of the adelgid in high value areas.

- Virginia is actively participating in a national **Forest Health Monitoring program**. Through a network of 100 forested plots and regularly scheduled surveys, the Department of Forestry annually collects and interprets a wide variety of data to estimate current health of the forest.

The Virginia Department of Forestry and USDA Forest Service

In spite of the relatively good health of Virginia's forests, a variety of insects and diseases (both native and introduced), and human-caused impacts such as air pollution, continue to threaten the State's resources. To deal with this constantly changing mix of challenges, the Virginia Department 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 Virginia's forests.

Forest Health Protection contributions (dollars) to the Virginia Department of Forestry Cooperative Forest Health Program, cooperative pest suppression projects and National Forests in Virginia pest suppression projects, 1995-98.

	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>
Cooperative Forest Health Program	64,557	68,607	68,607	68,607
Forest Health Monitoring	62,000	62,000	62,000	62,000
Cooperative Suppression				
southern pine beetle	0	10,000	10,000	8,000
gypsy moth suppression	1,100,296	651,949	292,300	267,000
gypsy moth eradication	0	0	52,000	0
Slow-the-Spread (gypsy moth)	1,004,565	584,484	590,686	672,500
George Washington/Jefferson National Forests				
gypsy moth	231,351	100,963	131,500	126,500
Slow- the-Spread (gypsy moth)	101,375	293,570	55,197	30,000
hemlock woolly adelgid	4,564	40,200	40,000	34,000

For additional information, contact

Virginia Department of Forestry
P.O. Box 3758
Charlottesville, VA 22903-0758
(804) 977-6555

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