

29th



North American Forest Commission



Alberta, 18–22 September 2017

Forest Insects, Disease and Invasive Plants Working Group

The Forest Insects, Disease and Invasive Plants Working Group was established at the first NAFC session in 1961 with the purpose of enabling information exchange and collaboration addressing forest pest challenges in North America. In 2008, the working group included forest invasive plants in the scope of its activities.

Mission

The Forest Insect, Disease and Invasive Plants Working Group promotes the maintenance and improvement of tree and forest health in North American forests through cooperation that supports forest health initiatives for the benefit of member countries future generations.



Objectives

- Advise the NAFC and other authoritative North American organizations on major forest health issues faced by the three countries and requiring special attention from a research and policy perspective.
- Facilitate technical knowledge exchanges informing proactive and effective pest risk management at the country and North American level.

- Facilitate partnerships between key players involved in forest health management in North America and beyond.

Impacts and Accomplishments

Through the collaboration of its members, the working group enables comprehensive reviews on insects and diseases affecting forests in the region. The working group also facilitates knowledge exchange and analysis, with the development of the Exotic Forest Pest Information System (EXFOR), an online platform for information exchange on exotic pests of concern to North American countries.

EXFOR has been a precursor to many modern forest health-analysis applications.

Because of the multiplication of information sources overlapping with a similar purpose of EXFOR, the working group is currently assessing options to address streamlining the information needs of NAFC member countries.

In addition, the working group also enables knowledge transfer activities. A recent example is a workshop on early detection and rapid response to two species of ambrosia beetles in Mexico, in 2016.

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The workshop helped sharing best practices for surveillance and preparedness, to mitigate impacts of an eventual spread of these insects and the fungus they carry, in forests and agricultural crops.



Over the years, the working group has advanced harmonized approaches in forest pest monitoring and management. Current collaboration focuses on technology transfer related to digital mobile sketch-mapping for aerial forest health surveys, and predictive modeling to inform risk analyses.

Publications and links

- Forest Health Conditions in North America (2008)
- Forest Diseases of Mexico (2007)
- Mistletoes of North American Conifers (2002)
- Forest Insects of Mexico (1995)
- Cone and Seed Diseases of North American Conifers (1987)
- Cone and Seed Insects of North American Conifers (1980)
- Important forest insects and diseases of mutual concern to Canada, the United States and Mexico (1967)

For more information on activities and publications consult:

<https://www.fs.fed.us/global/nafc/insects/aboutus.htm>



Membership

MEXICO

Dionicio Alvarado Rosales
COLPOS
dionicio@colpos.mx

David Cibrián Tovar
Universidad Autónoma Chapingo
dcibrian48@gmail.com

Alejandro De Felipe Teodoro
CONAFOR
alejandro.defelipe@conafor.gob.mx

Ana Isabel Gonzales
CONABIO
agonzalez@conabio.gob.mx

Mayra Margarita Valdez Lizarraga
CONAFOR
mvaldez@conafor.gob.mx

Abel Plascencia Gonzalez
CONAFOR
abel.plascencia@conafor.gob.mx

CANADA

Ken Farr
Natural Resources Canada -
Canadian Forest Service
Ken.Farr@canada.ca

Jean-Luc St-Germain (Chair)
Natural Resources Canada -
Canadian Forest Service
Jean-Luc.St-Germain@canada.ca

USA

Paul Chaloux
USDA Animal and Plant Health
Inspection Service
Paul.Chaloux@aphis.usda.gov

Monica Lear
USDA Forest Service
monicalear@fs.fed.us