

# VISUAL ANALYSIS OF FOREST HEALTH USING STORY MAPS: A TALE OF TWO FOREST INSECT PESTS

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**Abstract**—Historically, results of surveys conducted by the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program of the USDA Forest Service were conveyed in printed reports, featuring text, tables and static figures. Since the advent of the Internet and with the ubiquity of mobile smart devices, technology has changed how people consume information, as well as how they experience and interact with the world. Web applications, such as the ESRI Story Map Journal<sup>®</sup> which serves as a confluence for embedded text, maps, images and other dynamic content, provide a platform from which a user can point and click to interact and engage in in-depth analysis. Here, forest inventory data is used to assess landscape-scale risks and impacts resulting from the outbreaks of two North American insect pests, the native eastern larch beetle and the exotic emerald ash borer, using the ESRI Story Map Journal<sup>®</sup> builder. A series of journal entries, or sections linking maps, interactive graphics, and other content with text was built to enhance the storytelling ability of these two pest outbreaks and the science behind it. Exploring new ways to visualize and convey forest resource information in a technical world will ensure that we continue to meet the needs of current FIA data consumers for years to come and attract new audiences and users.

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