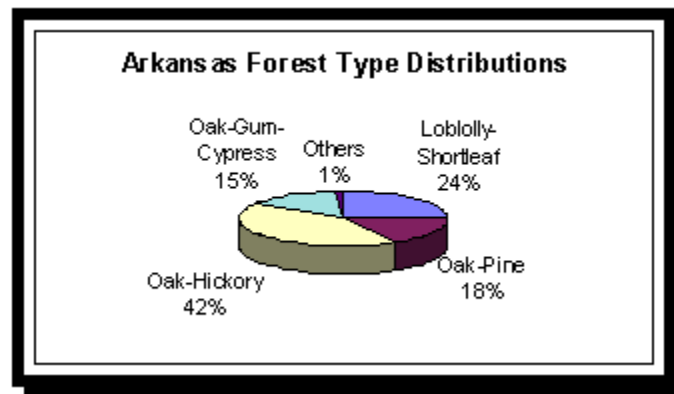


Forest Health Highlights 2003

Arkansas

The Resource

Arkansas' forests cover 18.8 million acres, more than 50% of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land, some 10.6 million acres, is in nonindustrial private ownership, while approximately 2.3 million acres are in national forests. Arkansas' forests are prized for their scenic beauty, supporting tourism and outdoor recreation and providing wildlife habitat from the Ozark and Ouachita Mountains to the Mississippi River. Major forest types in the state include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress.



Forest health monitoring (FHM) activities are cooperative efforts between the USDA Forest Service and the Arkansas Forestry Commission. The FHM program in Arkansas includes periodic measurement of fixed plots as well as regular aerial and ground surveys to detect forest damage.

Special Issues

Key issues which State and federal programs are addressing cooperatively include:

- Sustainable management of private forest lands
- Protection and development of urban and community forest resources
- Increasing participation by underserved citizens in forestry programs

Forest Influences

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Arkansas' most significant forest insect pest. However, in 2003 no SPB activity was detected.

Red oak borer attacks continued at extremely high levels in north central Arkansas in 2003, in association with oak decline and recent severe drought. The unusual activity of this insect has resulted in both mortality and severe degrade in lumber quality in infested trees. The current outbreak has caused oak mortality since 1999.

Gypsy moth trapping continued in Arkansas in 2003. No new outbreaks were detected.

Oak decline continues to be severe on thousands of acres in north and central Arkansas following a fourth year of intense drought. Although the drought ended in 2002, advanced age and poor site quality of the state's oak forests indicate that this will continue to be a serious problem.

Forest Health Assistance in Arkansas

For further information or assistance, contact:

Arkansas Forestry Commission

3821 W. Roosevelt Road
Little Rock, AR 72204
(501) 296-1940

USDA Forest Service

Forest Health Protection
2500 Shreveport Highway
Pineville, LA71360
(318) 473-7286