

Arkansas



Forest Health Highlights

2010

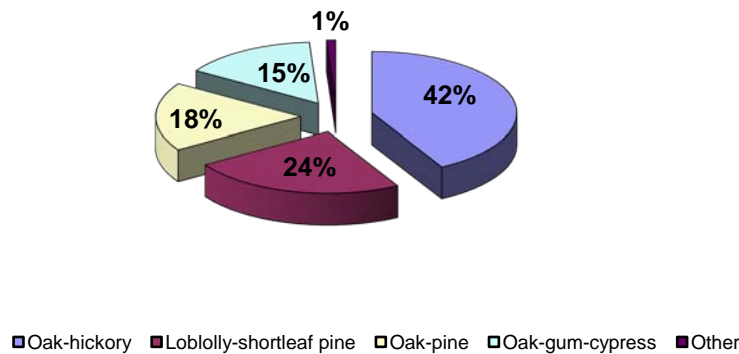
The Resource

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 non-industrial 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, oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress.



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Arkansas Forest Type Distribution



Forest Health Influences and Programs

Southern pine beetle (SPB) is Arkansas' most significant forest insect pest. However, in 2010 no SPB activity was reported, a trend that has lasted for more than 13 years. The Arkansas Forestry Commission is offering cost-share incentives to landowners for thinning and restoration work as part of their comprehensive **SPB Prevention Program**. This program is eagerly sought and well received by landowners. The state is also making special effort to reach out to minority and underserved landowners. The SPB PRP Program enrolled 207 tracts covering 8,837 acres in 2010. Major emphasis was placed on thinning of stands with basal area of 120 or above. Of the 207 tracts, 143 covering 6062 acres

were first time thinning of these dense stands. In addition to a landowner incentive, loggers received an incentive to thin these stands.

Ips and black turpentine beetle are often attracted to trees stressed by drought or damaged during harvest operations. Statewide, populations of these beetles were above normal late in the year due to a dry fall. Thinning of pines stands should be conducted to minimize damage to residual trees.

Nantucket Pine Tip Moth heavily damaged a hundred ten acre plantation in Cleveland County. Other reports of tip moth were received though none as extensive or as heavy as this one.

Loblolly Pine Sawfly feeding was reported from three counties in north Arkansas.

Oak decline and red oak borer. Isolated pockets of ROB still crop up, but nothing on the scale of 99-04. Conditions favorable for the development of future oak decline events persist over thousands of acres. Episodic drought, advanced age, overstocked stands and poor site quality of the state's oak forests create a serious and persistent problem.

Early Oak Defoliation due to sudden and extreme late summer and early fall drought resulted in many calls concerning white and post oaks. Most trees will resume growth in the spring.

Jumping Oak Gall populations were extremely high over thousands of acres in north central, north west Arkansas. Some complete defoliation was noted, but permanent damage should be light.

Eastern Tent Caterpillar infestations were high in most areas. Actual damage from this common defoliator was negligible.

Fall webworm, a common but noticeable pest was extremely heavy in many areas of Arkansas this year.

Gypsy moth trapping is used to make early detections of gypsy moth introduced to the state. No moths were caught in 2010. This is the 5th year with no GM in Arkansas.

Invasive Species Chinese privet is but one of a number of non-native, invasive insect and plants causing problems for foresters and land managers in Arkansas. Other species of interest are Emerald Ash Borer, Asian Long Horned Beetle, Thousand Cankers Disease of Black Walnut, Sirex wood wasp and Cogon grass.

Cooperative programs are addressing some high-value areas such as designated natural areas, forested urban parks and forest regeneration sites. The Arkansas Department of Natural Heritage received a grant to remove or reduce invasive species from some of their exemplary natural areas.

The Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC), Arkansas State Plant Board (ASPB) and the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) developed a cooperative response plan to coordinate activities in case of detection of any invasive species.

A Severe Ice Storm on January 27 & 28, 2009 impacted much of the northern third of Arkansas. This ice storm will have long term impacts as damaged trees are hit by insects and as diseases. Decay fungi have unlimited sites to gain entry into trees and cause problems for years to come. Timber degrade will be extensive in damaged trees.

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.

Forest Health Assistance in Arkansas

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