

2011

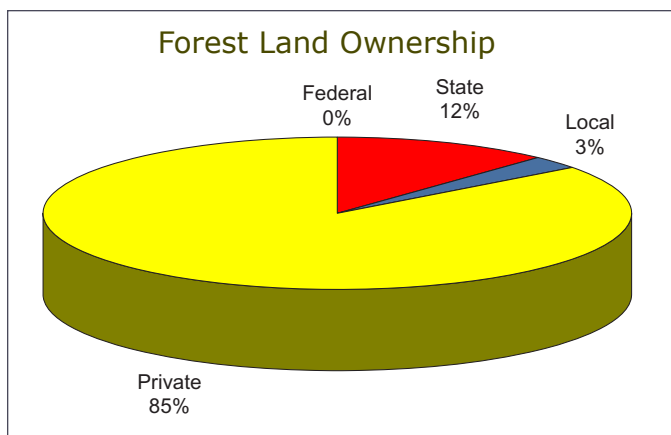
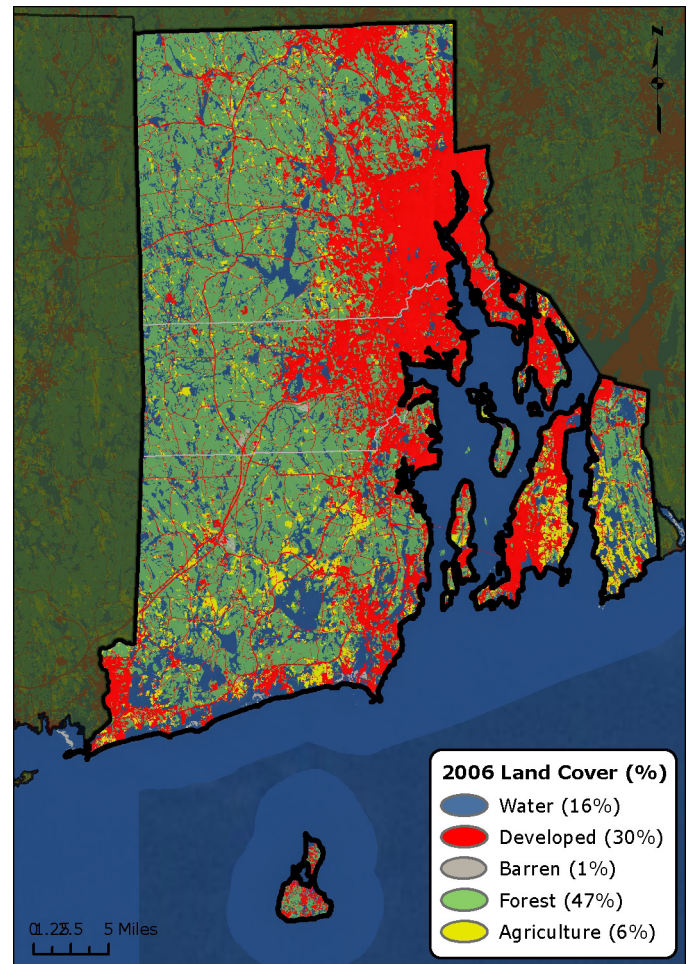
# Forest Health

RHODE ISLAND *highlights*



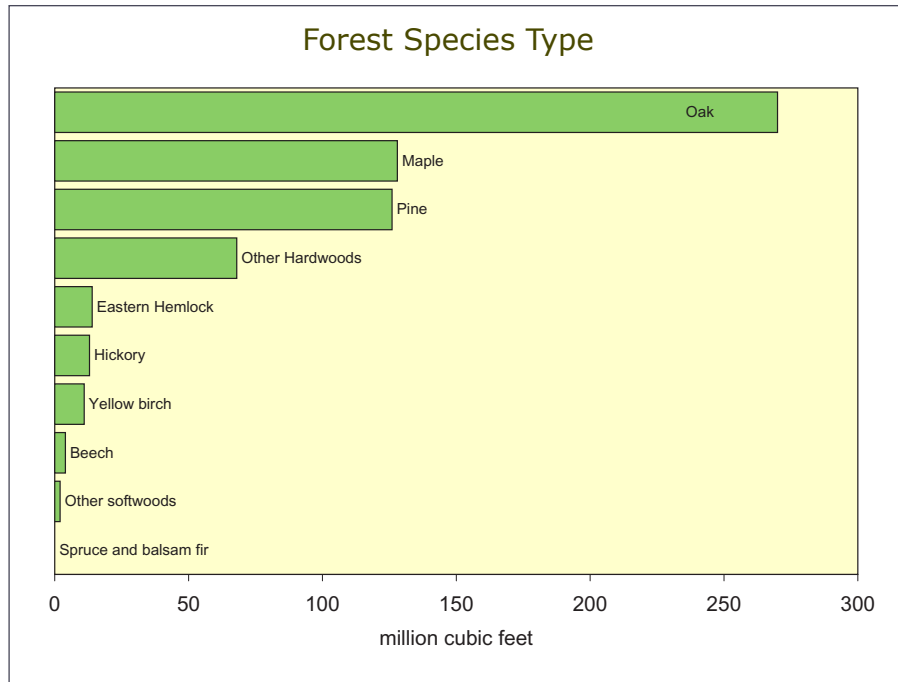
## Forest Resource Summary

Rhode Island's forests are 85 percent privately owned, primarily by individuals who view their land as a source of enjoyment and a resource to be protected. The remainder of the forest land is in State or local town ownership. These forests are valued for clean air, protection of ground and surface water, wildlife habitat, wood fiber, and recreational opportunities. The latest Rhode Island forest inventory estimates that there are approximately 365,000 acres in the State that are forested. The existence of intense public debate related to any impact on undeveloped lands is indicative of citizen concerns for the amenities provided by forest lands, whether privately or publicly held. The forest resource is made up of a



## Forest Health Programs in the Northeast

State forestry agencies work in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service to monitor forest conditions and trends in their State and respond to pest outbreaks to protect the forest resource.

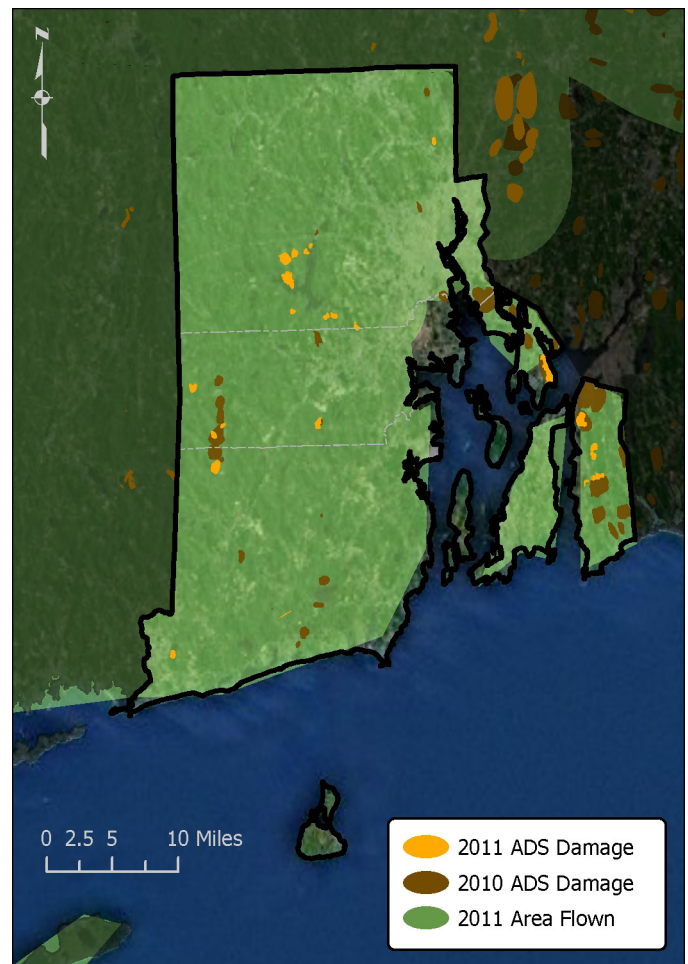


variety of forest types, mostly oak, maples, and pine, along with other hardwoods.

During a survey in 2005, 79 percent of the forest landowners thought that forest health was an important issue in the State. The concern for forest health increased by 2010, as reported in the Rhode Island Forest Resource Assessment, almost as significant a change in importance as forest fragmentation.

## Aerial Surveys

Aerial surveys were flown over 721,000 acres in June and September 2011 to assess defoliation and damage from Tropical Storm Irene, respectively. Winter moth caused 3,000 acres of defoliation. This introduced insect is now found statewide. There were also 1,200 acres of orange striped oakworm defoliation. Salt spray damage from Tropical Storm Irene was noted 4 miles inland in coastal areas. All defoliation areas and salt damage were ground checked. Using the Digital Aerial Sketchmapping System continues to be a great tool to assess forest damage in the State.



*This map delineates aerial detection survey (ADS) results for Rhode Island in 2011 and 2010.*

## Forest Health Special Projects

Through special U.S. Forest Service funding, critical Forest Health projects were carried out in Rhode Island in 2011 (figure 1).

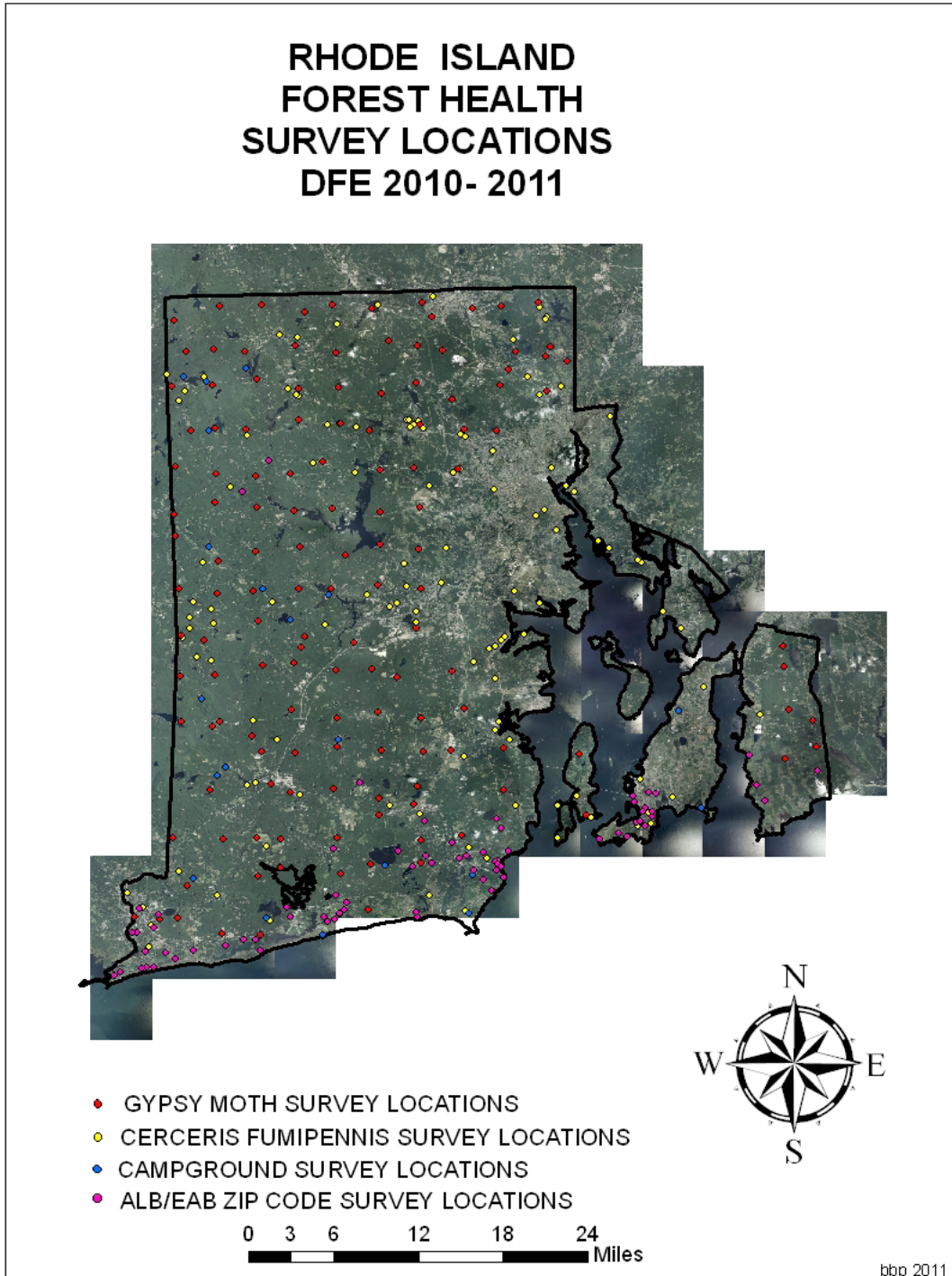


Figure 1.—Forest Health survey locations in Rhode Island.

## **Firewood Vector Survey**

Using a zip code search of registered campers to Rhode Island's campgrounds, it was determined that over the last year there were 210 visits to Rhode Island's 28 campgrounds from residents of areas that have known Asian longhorned beetle infestations. Most of these visitors came from the Worcester, MA, infestation area and a few came from the New York infestation area. The firewood survey showed no introduction of this significant forest pest. The seasonal home survey was not continued this year due to a lag in Federal funding to hire project interns.

## ***Cerceris fumipennis* Biosurveillance Survey for Emerald Ash Borer**

In 2011, 88 sites were resurveyed and 44 sites had active colonies of the wasp that is predatory on the emerald ash borer. Beetle collection took place at only 10 sites that had over 50 wasp nests. All but 3 sites were baseball fields with most of the activity along the third baseline. This year a collaborative project was initiated with USDA APHIS to survey Washington, Bristol, and Newport Counties. Of the 336 beetles that were collected, 93 are being sent to E.R. Hoebeke, Georgia Museum of Natural History, University of Georgia, Athens, GA, for identification. All others were identified using information from past surveys. No emerald ash borer has been discovered in the State.

## **Emerald Ash Borer Trap Tree Project**

Five systematically placed locations for girdled ash trap trees were identified because emerald ash borer is attracted to girdled ash. These trees will be girdled in the spring of 2012 and then inspected for any signs of this highly invasive insect.

## **Kingston, NY, Emerald Ash Borer Delimitation Survey**

Rhode Island personnel participated in this multiagency delimitation survey and regional forest insect pest training opportunity. The survey was developed in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry, Durham Field Office and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The participants assisted with emergency response-related delimitation efforts in eastern New York, the closest known infestation to Southern New England. This also gave Forest Health State Coordinators the necessary skills to detect, delimit, and survey low-density emerald ash borer populations in their States (figure 2).



Figure 2.—Emerald ash borer survey training in Kingston, NY.

## References

### Land Cover Map:

U.S. Geological Survey. 2011. 2006 National land cover dataset. Sioux Falls, SD.

### Forest Land Ownership, Forest Species Type:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. 2009. Forest resources of the United States, 2007. Gen. Tech. Rep. WO-78. Washington, DC. 336 p.



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