



South Carolina Forestry Commission

FOREST HEALTH

2021 SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHLIGHTS



Figure 1. A five year old stand of MCP loblolly heavily infected with *Ploioderma* needlecast.

The Resource

South Carolina's forest cover 12.9 million acres, which is 67% of the state's land area. The majority of the state's forested land is in nonindustrial private ownership, covering about 11.4 million acres, with approximately 629,000 acres in national forests.

Forestry is the most important manufacturing industry in South Carolina, providing 84,000 jobs and a total economic impact of \$21 billion annually. \$1.3 billion in forest products are exported from South Carolina and forest products are the number one export commodity from the port of Charleston. Trees are South Carolina's number one harvested crop. South Carolina's forests are known for their scenic beauty, attracting tourism, outdoor recreation, and providing wildlife habitat from the Appalachian Mountains in the upstate to the Atlantic Coastal Plain.

Major forest types in South Carolina include oak-hickory, loblolly and shortleaf pine, mixed oak-pine, and oak-gum-cypress. Longleaf and slash pine forests, once more widespread, now make up four percent of South Carolina's forests, with other minor forest types accounting for an additional six percent.

Forest Issues and Influences

Southern pine beetle (SPB)/Pine engraver beetles (*Ips* spp.)

Spring trapping for southern pine beetle indicated populations of SPB in Edgefield, McCormick and Berkeley counties. A long term outbreak was found by the US Forest Service on their property in Berkeley County, but no spots were identified in McCormick or Edgefield counties.

Asian longhorned beetle

Asian longhorned beetle was reported in Charleston County in May of last year. The eradication effort continues with a permanent workforce (Federal and State)tackling surveys and tree removals. As of November 13, 2021, 5,498 infested trees had been detected and 2,763 of these had been removed. The quarantined area now includes 76.38 square miles, but may expand in the near future as infested trees are found near the edges. Prospects for eradication from the state look good.

Redbay mortality (laurel wilt disease)

Caused by the fungus *Raffaelea lauricola* and vectored by the redbay ambrosia beetle (*Xyleborus glabratus*) laurel wilt has killed many redbay trees along South Carolina's coast and continues to spread along bottomlands in the interior of the state. We are also seeing sassafras infected.

Cogongrass

As of 2021 a total of 17 infestations of cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) have been identified in seven counties. Of these, only nine remain active. All known sites are monitored to combat cogongrass where it is still active or to ensure that managed sites remain inactive. Infestations by county are: Anderson 1 active, Beaufort 4 (2 active, two inactive), Charleston 5 (3 active and 2 inactive), Hampton 4 (3 active and 1 inactive), Williamsburg 1 (inactive), Florence 1 (inactive), and Colleton 1 (inactive).

Common oak moth

For the second year in a row, we had sightings of damage related to common oak moth (*Phoberia atomeris* and *P. orthosoides*) on white oak and post oak in Lexington, Newberry,

Fairfield and Greenwood counties. In some cases trees were completely defoliated and had to refoliate during the growing season.

Native elm beetle

For the third year in a row, we had sightings of severe defoliation of *Ulmus* spp., primarily *U. alata*, in Lexington, Richland, Fairfield, Newberry, Greenwood, and Union Counties. This was caused by the leaf beetle, *Monocesta coryli*.

Oak wilt

Oak wilt continued to be reported from sites in sandbelt counties, including Aiken, Barnwell, Lexington, Kershaw, and Florence.

Needle blight

Stands of certain MCP clonal pines showed severe infections of *Ploioiderma* needle cast, but recovered rapidly in the summer. This was due to an excessively wet winter and spring. These infestations were found in Newberry and Hampton counties.

Forest Health Assistance in South Carolina

For more information or assistance, please contact:

South Carolina Forestry Commission
PO Box 21707
Columbia, SC 29221
(803) 667-1002
djenkins@scfc.gov

USDA Forest Service
Southern Region, State & Private Forestry
Forest Health Protection
200 W.T. Weaver Road
Asheville, NC 28804
(828) 257-4320