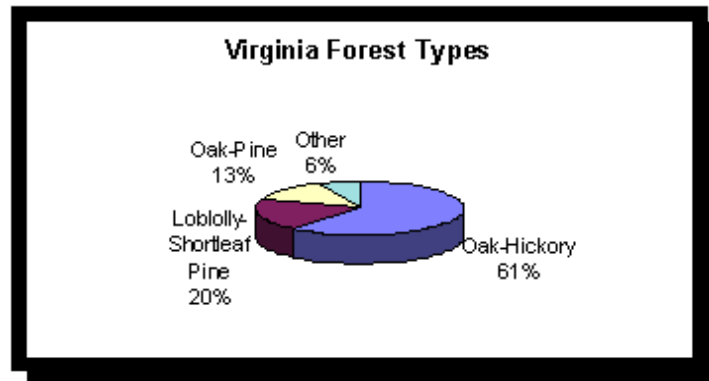


Forest Health Highlights 2000

Virginia

The Virginia Department of Forestry provides forest health protection assistance to state and private land managers within the Commonwealth. Virginia and the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection unit fund this program cooperatively.



Virginia Forest Facts

- Over **66%** of Virginia is **forested** (more than 16 million acres).
- Almost **85%** of forested acreage in Virginia is **privately owned**.
- The **George Washington** and **Jefferson National Forests** (1.4 million acres) provide recreational and wildlife benefits as well as timber products and jobs for thousands of people.
- **Gypsy moth** defoliation started to affect Virginia's hardwood forests in 1984 and became an increasingly serious problem over the next decade. However, from 1996 to 1999 an introduced fungal disease decimated gypsy moth caterpillars and defoliation has been so light that it could not be mapped. However, in 2000 the gypsy moth defoliated 71,000 acres. Suppression treatments are scheduled in 2001.
- For the first time in 25 years, **southern pine beetle** (SPB) infestations increased to outbreak levels in the southwestern mountain counties. There were over 1,6000 spots in a 15 county area, with white pine even being attacked on a regular basis. Overall, this does not represent a large commercial timber loss as most of the spots were in relatively small inaccessible patches, but it does pose a potential fire hazard.
- Severe, summer **drought** from 1998 to 2000 contributed to increasing pine mortality from infestations of pine engraver and black turpentine beetles, and to the decline of mountain hardwoods.
- **Oak decline** is impacting Virginia's upland hardwood forests. Casual factors are stressors such as tree age, drought, frost, ice and defoliation by insects, and root disease. Oak decline and gypsy moth defoliation often overlap and that leads to higher levels of oak mortality.
- The **hemlock woolly adelgid** was first reported in Virginia in 1950. This insect has now spread across most of the State infesting and killing eastern hemlock.

- Virginia is actively participating in a national **Forest Health Monitoring program**. Through a network of 100-forested plots and regularly scheduled surveys, the Department of Forestry annually collects and interprets a wide variety of data to assess forest health conditions.

The Virginia Department of Forestry and USDA Forest Service

In spite of the relatively good health of Virginia's forests, a variety of insects and diseases (both native and introduced), and human-caused impacts such as air pollution, continue to threaten the State's resources. To deal with this constantly changing mix of challenges, the Virginia Department of

Forestry and the Forest Health Protection unit of the USDA Forest Service cooperate to prevent, detect, suppress and manage this multitude of threats. This partnership has worked for more than 30 years to maintain and improve the health of Virginia's forests.

Forest Health Protection contributions (dollars) to the Virginia Department of Forestry Cooperative Forest Health Program, cooperative pest suppression/eradication projects and the George Washington/Jefferson National Forests pest suppression projects, 1998-2001.

| | | <u>1998</u> | <u>1999</u> | <u>2000</u> | <u>2001</u> |
|---|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Cooperative Forest Health Program | | 68,607 | 68,607 | 68,607 | 61,569 |
| Forest Health Monitoring | | 62,000 | 62,000 | 62,000 | 60,000 |
| Cooperative Suppression | Southern pine beetle | 8,000 | 8,000 | 12,000 | 10,000 |
| | Gypsy moth suppression | 205,00 | 110,000 | 103,000 | 450,000 |
| | Gypsy moth eradication | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Slow-the-Spread (gypsy moth) | 552,000 | 536,000 | 604,000 | 610,000 |
| George Washington/Jefferson National Forests | Gypsy moth suppression | 126,500 | 0 | 10,000 | 306,000 |
| | Slow-the-Spread (gypsy moth) | 48,500 | 48,500 | 42,000 | 50,000 |
| | Hemlock woolly adelgid | 30,000 | 46,000 | 46,000 | 55,000 |

For additional information, contact

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