

Forest Health Highlights

New York



February 2000

The Resource

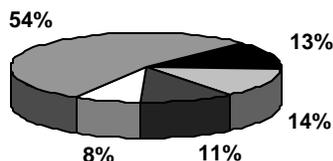
New York's forests provide a recreational base for millions of New Yorkers and others visiting the state's scenic regions. Forests are also productive in timber, providing employment to 2 percent of the workforce. The manufacture of wood products provides \$2.4 billion to the state's economy annually.

•62% of the state is forested
(18,641,300 acres)

Out of the forested area:

- 82.6 % timberland
- 17.4 % non commercial or reserved forestland
(data unpublished)

Major Forest Types:



- white/red pine/hemlock (13%)
- oak/hickory (14%)
- other (11%)
- elm/ash/red maple (8%)
- northern hardwoods (54%)

Special Issues

The forests of northern New York continue to be impacted by the extensive January 1998 ice storm, which affected over 3 million acres. Two years after storm, damage is still very noticeable in Lewis, Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton, and Essex Counties. A regional assessment to determine the impact of the ice storm on the forest resource and the maple sugar industry in northern New England and New York was completed in 1999. The species most affected by the storm were aspen, black cherry, red maple, and American beech. White ash, birch, basswood, oak and sugar maples also lost substantial portions of their crowns in many areas. A Federal appropriation provided for technical and financial assistance for communities, private nonindustrial landowners, and sugar maple producers to recover from the damage caused by the ice storm. Funds were also provided for long-term monitoring to determine effects on forest health, wildlife, plant communities, sugarbushes, and urban trees.

Exotic pests are still a major concern within the state. The most recent introduction is the **Asian longhorn beetle**, which was discovered in Brooklyn and on Long Island during the summer of 1996. Since then, other infestations were discovered in Queens, Manhattan, Bayside, and Islip. A quarantine is in effect encompassing all know infested areas. The trees in these areas appear to have been infested for several years. Hardwoods are the preferred hosts of this insect, especially maples. Through quarantines and removal of infested trees, along with extensive community outreach, the number of standing affected trees has been greatly reduced. In a continued effort to eradicate the insect, surveys continue around the perimeter of the known infestation to identify newly infested trees for removal. Tree planting has been initiated in an attempt to provide greenery in neighborhoods as the infested trees are cut down. An infestation has also been discovered in the city of Chicago and, like the New York infestation, is thought to have originated on packing material from China. The US Department of Agriculture has put restrictions on the use of untreated wood as packing material or dunnage, in an attempt to curtail further introductions of the beetle. Inspections are conducted nationwide for the beetle, and other exotic pests, at ports engaged in international trade.



Special Issues cont.

Another introduced pest, the **hemlock woolly adelgid**, continues to cause damage to native forest and ornamental eastern hemlock trees, from Virginia up into southern New England. In 1999, the insect was found for the first time in Greene County, indicating that the pest is moving northward in New York. Damage to long-term infested hemlocks is increasing. In some areas a majority of the trees are infected and many of those are in declining health. New York is cooperating with the USDA Forest Service to introduce a predatory ladybug in selected hemlock stands to control the adelgid population.

In the early 1990's, the **European common pine shoot beetle** was discovered infesting pine plantations around the Great Lakes. The beetle is primarily a problem in pine Christmas tree plantations. First found in western New York in 1993, the insect now occurs across the state. In 1998, 29 counties were infested. In 1999, the beetle was discovered infesting seven new counties, including Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida, Madison, Chenango, Broome, and Tioga. The areas where the insect has been found are under a Federal Quarantine in an attempt to reduce its' spread.

A survey of flowering dogwood trees in 1999 for **Dogwood anthracnose**, an exotic disease, indicated that the disease is found statewide, with 21 new counties found infected.

Overall, the incidence of the **European gypsy moth** in New York is very low. However, 4000 acres in Ulster County and 2000 acres in Warren, Washington, and Saratoga Counties were defoliated in 1999. Populations have been at low levels in many areas recently due to a fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga*, which attacks the insect larvae.

Research related to the **pine false webworm**, which has caused significant defoliation in northern New York since 1991, is continuing in eastern white pine plantations. The research emphasis is on finding management techniques to protect trees.

In 1999, drought surveys were focused on southeastern New York, including New York City. The most prevalent damage was foliage discoloration. The lower Hudson Valley was most affected by the drought, with over 70 percent of the trees surveyed showing some effects. One beneficial effect of the drought on the forest trees was the decreased incidence of tar spot on maples. This foliage disease is most prevalent in years with high rainfall in the spring and early-summer.

Stewardship

Among the several NY DEC programs that contribute to forest health improvement, the **stewardship program** has the potential to reach a large number of forest landowners. All forest management plans prepared under the stewardship program include a forest protection component. The planning process helps alert forest landowners to potential and existing forest health conditions and procedures to protect forest resources. This program also continues to help landowners recover from the ice storm.

Regional Surveys

The **North American Maple Project** was initiated with Canada in 1988 to look at change in sugar maple tree condition. There are several states in the Northeast involved including New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, and Massachusetts. Overall, sugar maple located within the sample sites are in good condition.

In 1999, New York joined the **National Forest Health Monitoring Program** which began in New England in 1990. Permanent plots have been established that will be visited annually statewide to assess the condition of the forest resource.

For More Information

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