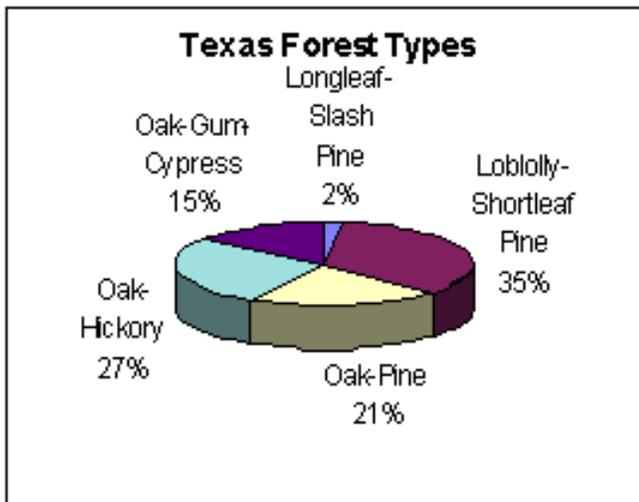


# Forest Health Highlights - 1998

## Texas

The Texas Forest Service provides forest health protection assistance to state and private land managers within the State. This program is funded cooperatively by the State and the USDA Forest Service Forest Health Protection unit.



### *Texas Forest Facts*

 Over **50%** of the eastern section of Texas is **forested** (more than 12 million acres).

 Almost **90%** of the forested acreage in Texas is **privately owned**.

 There are four **National Forests (576,000 acres)** in east **Texas**. They provide recreational and wildlife benefits as well as forest products and jobs for thousands of people.

 The **southern pine beetle** (SPB) is Texas' most important forest insect pest. Historically this state has had the most severe SPB problems in the South. However, since 1994, SPB populations have been very low. In 1997 there were about 800 infestations statewide. In 1998, only 30 infestations were reported – all on National Forest lands. For the first time since 1981, no SPB infestations were reported on state & private lands in 1998. A trapping system has been developed by the Texas Forest Service and implemented in 12 southern states to annually forecast SPB infestation trends. Results for 1999 indicate continued low levels of SPB in Texas.

 The Texas Forest Service and Forest Health Protection are evaluating **new SPB control techniques** using inhibitory pheromones for use in areas where salvage logging is restricted or not permitted.

 Personnel from the Texas Forest Service, National Forests in Texas, and Forest Health Protection have worked together to develop some unique remote sensing applications to assist in the detection and monitoring of forest pest problems. One of the applications involves the use of **aerial videography** to acquire images of project areas that can readily be viewed and analyzed.

 **Oak wilt** is currently affecting live oak in 55 counties in central Texas and 6 counties in west Texas. Although this resource has little commercial product use, values for shade, wildlife and livestock, scenic beauty, etc. are extremely high, particularly in urban areas like Austin. A cooperatively funded suppression project will be in its 12<sup>th</sup> year during 1999. Using matching project funds, over two million feet of trenches have been installed to suppress more than 1,300 oak wilt infection centers. Also, over 7,000 high-value trees have been treated with fungicide and more than 2,200 red oak trees have been removed to prevent spread of the disease by known insect vectors.

 A severe **drought** occurred in east Texas in 1998. In addition, a windstorm in February 1998 caused

widespread timber damage on 150,000 acres across about ten counties. These two events contributed to an outbreak of **pine engraver beetles**.

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## The Texas Forest Service and USDA Forest Service

In spite of the relatively good health of Texas' forests, a variety of insects and diseases 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 Texas Forest Service and the Forest Health Protection unit of the USDA Forest Service cooperate to prevent, detect, suppress, and manage this multitude of threats. The partnership between the two agencies has worked for three decades to maintain and improve the health of forests in Texas.

*Forest Health Protection contributions (dollars) to the Texas Forest Service Cooperative Forest Health Program, cooperative pest suppression projects, and National Forests in Texas pest suppression projects, 1996-99.*

|  | <u>1996</u> | <u>1997</u> | <u>1998</u> | <u>1999</u> |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Cooperative Forest Health Program</b> | 80,984      | 90,984      | 97,525      | 97,525      |
|  |             |             |             |             |
| <b>Cooperative Suppression</b>           |             |             |             |             |
| southern pine beetle                     | 0           | 75,000      | 0           | 0           |
| oak wilt                                 | 429,692     | 431,200     | 400,000     | 450,000     |
|  |             |             |             |             |
| <b>National Forests in Texas</b>         |             |             |             |             |
| southern pine beetle                     | 25,189      | 104,779     | 120,000     | 75,000      |

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**For additional information, contact:**

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