

# NEWS RELEASE

## USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry

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### **Forest Service: cold weather still no time to haul firewood**

DURHAM, N.H.-- No matter how cold it gets, it's never a safe time to haul firewood far from home. That's the message the Maine Forest Service is reminding hunters, skiers and other outdoor enthusiasts who pack warm clothes and firewood for trips this season.

Like summer campers, autumn and winter recreationists often pack firewood from home when they travel to hunting camps and ski chalets. The long-distance movement of firewood can bring with it long-distance movement of tree-killing pests.

"Some people think it's safe to move firewood when it's cold out," said Maine Forest Service Entomologist Charlene Donahue. "But that's not true."

"If unused firewood gets left here in the winter, the insects inside the logs will come out next spring. Freezing temperatures rarely kill insects. After all, they live outside," she added.

The Maine Forest Service is asking winter outdoor enthusiasts to do their part for forest health – today and every day -- by leaving firewood at home. Local or kiln dried wood is best for the hearth, stove, and forest, they say.

The U.S. Forest Service says invasive species is one of the top threats facing America's forests. The emerald ash borer, a particularly harmful invasive insect, has already killed more than 20 million ash trees in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio. If brought to Maine via firewood and left unburned, it would emerge to threaten Maine's ash trees.

EAB is moving Eastward across the United States. Just last month, forest health experts found EAB in West Virginia – at a campground. The bug has also been found near Pittsburgh, Penn.

"It's only a 12-hour drive from there to here," said Donahue. "It's not that far at all, only a day's drive to Maine."

Donahue added that forests throughout Maine, the nation's most forested state, are currently experiencing a relatively healthy period.

"We haven't had any new major insect infestations recently," said Donahue, "and the public's help regarding firewood movement will help keep it that way."

To view a video message about the firewood invasive species issue, visit:  
<http://www.na.fs.fed.us/nanews/archives/2007/archives07.shtm>

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