

Emerald Ash Borer

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry



Extirpation of Ash from America's Forests

Description: The emerald ash borer (EAB), *Agrilus planipennis*, an insect that attacks and kills all sizes of ash trees, is an Asian insect that poses a serious threat to our urban and rural forests. Ash is common in forests throughout the eastern US and Canada, and regularly occurs along riparian areas in the western US. It has also been extensively planted in urban settings throughout the country. None of North America's 16 ash species is known to be resistant to EAB. Some experts have placed the number of ash trees already killed at 20 million, but the actual number is probably much higher.

EAB was found in the Detroit area in July 2002 and shortly thereafter in Windsor, Ontario. The unintentional movement of infested nursery stock, logs, other wood products and firewood from infested areas has helped to spread the insect in Lower Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Ohio, and Virginia. In 2007 new isolated infestations were found in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and in Toronto.

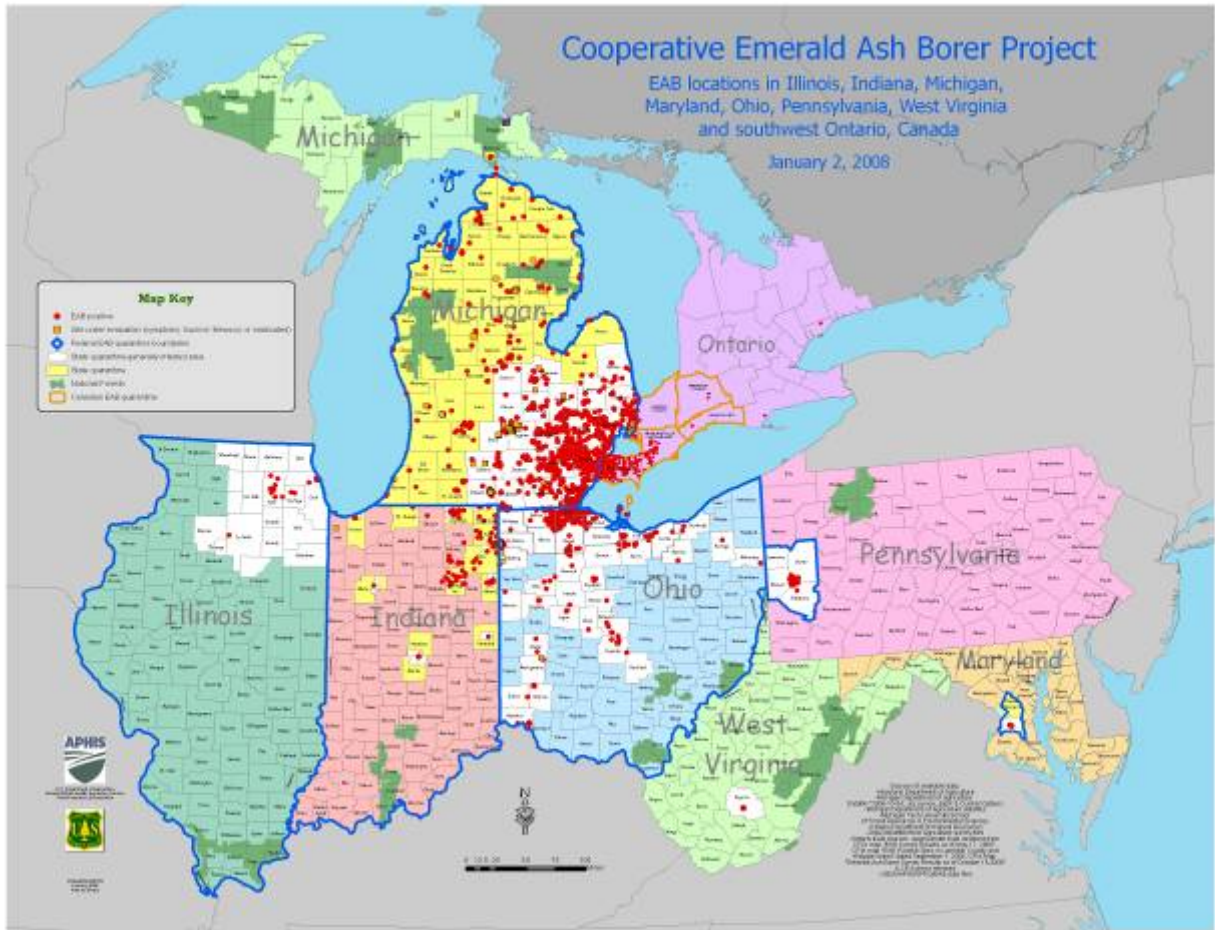
The USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS), Forest Service, state foresters and plant pest regulatory officials continue to implement a strategy to minimize further spread of EAB. Tactics include aggressive surveys using trap trees; destructive sampling and visual surveys; identifying and regulating pathways for artificial movement of the insect; developing compliance agreements with businesses to facilitate commerce; and eradicating isolated spot infestations. Surveys and treatments are labor intensive, time-consuming, and expensive. Surveys require felling ash trees and peeling the bark to look for the small EAB larvae.

Key Issues:

- EAB is the worst tree-killing pest introduced to North America since chestnut blight, having killed millions of urban and forest trees.
- Removing hazardous trees and planting replacements could cost local governments and homeowners \$7 billion over the next 25 years.
- No native ash species are known to be resistant.
- Ash trees are naturally abundant in woodlands and extensively planted elsewhere; the value of ash in forests and urban areas is estimated at more than \$300 billion.
- EAB infestations are now located in Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ontario.
- Movement of infested firewood is a major cause of new infestations.
- More efficient management tools and treatments are needed.

Accomplishments:

- Conducted early detection surveys on public and private lands in 12 eastern states in 2007.
- Completed trap tree surveys on more than 110 federal and state campgrounds in Michigan and northern Wisconsin.
- Continued critical evaluations on EAB rate of spread and dispersal, chemical and biological control methods, EAB survival in wood chips and firewood, and EAB survey techniques.
- Initiated biocontrol evaluations with the release of three EAB parasitoids.
- Prepared and delivered information and outreach activities to support EAB program goals.
- Helped states prepare EAB response plans.
- Supported the EAB web site with Michigan State University, www.emeraldashborer.info.



Budget History:

Emerald Ash Borer Containment and Eradication				
<i>(\$ Thousands)</i>				
	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Totals	\$1,600	\$1,800	1,980	

Future Direction:

- Continue current detection and technical assistance efforts and initiatives.
- Support USDA biocontrol initiative.
- Examine feasibility of integrating control tools and tactics on isolated spot infestations to contain and slow the spread of EAB.
- Reassess and refine current EAB strategy in cooperation with USDA APHIS and the states.

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