



Southern Pine Beetle Update

By John J. Riggins, Forest Entomologist

For the first time in quite a few years, it seems that SPB populations in at least one portion of Mississippi are on the rise. During late May and throughout June, foresters on the Homochitto National Forest in Southwest Mississippi have been reporting a growing number of active SPB spots. During an initial survey flight during early June, more than 80 spots were detected. Most of these spots were on Forest Service land, but a few were on private lands. The Mississippi Forestry Commission is working closely with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service to identify and notify landowners affected by this apparent SPB outbreak. A more recent detection flight that was just completed indicated at least 175 new SPB spots in and around the Homochitto. This appears to be shaping up to be a major outbreak incident. I recently visited some of the spots on the Homochitto, and they were very active and some are rapidly expanding. State and Federal foresters are working

hard to treat spots with salvage cuts or cut and leave operations.

Landowners in Franklin, Amite, Wilkinson, Adams, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Copiah Counties are urged to be diligent and conduct inspections of their lands to determine if SPB activity is present. This [publication](#) provides a good overview of SPB signs and symptoms. If any SPB activity is suspected, please contact your local MFC office. Timely salvage or cut and leave operations can dramatically limit total timber losses incurred due to a SPB outbreak, and can limit a landowners liability should the infestation spread to adjacent properties.

Landowners in the rest of the state are also encouraged to pay close attention for SPB activity. No other major outbreaks are known of or anticipated for the rest of the State at this time, but forest stakeholders throughout Mississippi should keep a close eye on things as this year progresses.

For additional information contact:

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