

LONG ISLAND SOUTHERN PINE BEETLE JULY-SEPT 2016 QUARTERLY UPDATE



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Crews from New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and partner agencies continue to battle the southern pine beetle (SPB) to help save pine trees on Long Island. For background information on SPB, please visit: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/99331.html>.

SPB infestations are being mapped using aerial and ground surveys

- An aerial survey was conducted on August 30th by Molly Hassett and John Wernet over the Central Pine Barrens.
 - More than 5,000 acres of potentially infested trees were mapped during the August flight.
 - The next aerial survey will be in January.
- DEC and Pine Barrens Commission staff continue to conduct ground surveys to verify infested areas.
- More than 230 acres have been ground surveyed for SPB in Suffolk County since May 2016.

Fall SPB Suppression

- 1,923 infested and buffer trees in infested areas have been cut since early June 2016.
 - 1,022 trees were cut at Hubbard County Park.
 - 482 trees were cut at Henry's Hollow Pine Barrens State Forest.
 - 408 trees were cut at Sears Bellows County Park.
 - 11 trees were cut at David A. Sarnoff Preserve.
- DEC crews will resume suppression in October.
- DEC has purchased a compact tracked loader with a timber harvester head to assist in suppression efforts.

Rocky Point Demonstration Forest

- DEC is creating a management demonstration forest in Rocky Point Pine Barrens State Forest. This demonstration forest will show prescribed burning and preventive thinning management and compare these managed areas to unmanaged areas.

Review of SPB Community Recovery Grant Applications

- DEC is in the process of reviewing SPB Community Recovery Grant applications. Awards will be announced in late October or early November 2016.

Replanting

- DEC is looking into the possibility of conducting more replantings with their partners in areas like Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge.



DEC intern James Rittenhouse records the location of an infested tree during a ground survey.

Research continues to be conducted to develop management strategies

- DEC continues to conduct research on SPB mortality and the SPB's life cycle throughout the fall to help develop the most effective management strategies.
- Pitch pine regeneration data was collected in July to help inform replanting efforts.
 - There were only 253 pitch pine seedlings regenerating per acre.
 - There was higher regeneration in areas with less leaf litter.
 - The highest regeneration was in areas with 5-25% shrub cover.
 - This may indicate that some shrub cover protects pitch pine regeneration, but too much shrub cover prevents regeneration.
 - This low regeneration may indicate a need for deer exclusion or management, prescribed fire, and/or replanting in areas impacted by SPB if pitch pine is to be retained in the ecosystem.
- DEC completed research on pitch pine along Central Pine Barrens roads in July.
 - Along 1,000 feet of road, there are approximately 106 pitch pine trees within 20 feet of the road.
 - There will be high costs for removal of these trees once they are killed by SPB.



DEC's Maria MoskaLee collects a bark sample from an infested tree to help develop management strategies.



SPB-killed pitch pine trees are at risk of falling into adjacent roads.