

New York Forest Health Advisory Council

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Impacts and recommendations related to the recent confirmation of Emerald Ash Borer in Randolph, Cattaraugus County, NY.

The first occurrence of emerald ash borer (EAB, *Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire) in New York State was confirmed by the NY Department of Agriculture and Markets and Department of Environmental Conservation on June 17, 2009 in Randolph, NY (Cattaraugus County). An invasive beetle native to eastern Asia, EAB kills all species of ash trees in North America, and has the potential to cause severe economic and ecological damage. First detected near Detroit in 2002 it has now spread to 13 states, the District of Columbia, and two Canadian provinces. Ash mortality is 100% near Detroit and is widespread in all the affected areas. With establishment of EAB in New York State we can expect tremendous economic impacts in forests where ash is a common timber species and in urban areas where ash are frequently planted as street trees. EAB will impact a wide range of stakeholders from homeowners and small woodlot owners to municipal governments and large timber companies. Horticultural and specialty industries that rely heavily on ash, such as baseball bat and tool handle manufacturers, will be severely impacted by necessary quarantine regulations and the potential complete loss of ash. Ecological effects of EAB will be greatest in areas where ash is most abundant, such as along streams and rivers, in northern wetlands, in second growth woodlands of abandoned agricultural fields, and in the extensive upland forests of New York's southern tier.

EAB was identified as the top priority of the New York Forest Health Advisory Council (NYFHAC), a group of leading experts in state, federal, academic, and private institutions that recently formed to identify and address threats to New York's forests. NYFHAC makes the following recommendations regarding EAB in NY State:

- We must all work together to "Slow the Spread" of the EAB. Slowing the spread of EAB will allow more time to research, refine, and implement sustainable management options and allow communities to plan for the eventual arrival of this devastating pest.
- DO NOT MOVE FIREWOOD! Movement of ash firewood is the most common method of long-distance spread. Current DEC firewood regulations (www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html) limit the transportation of untreated firewood to less than 50 miles from its source and prohibit the import of firewood into NY unless it has been heat treated to kill EAB. Compliance with these regulations by the public is critical to slowing EAB spread in New York.
- Early detection and rapid response are key elements to slowing the spread and minimizing the impact of EAB. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of EAB for early

detection (<http://www.emeraldashborer.info/files/E-2938.pdf>). Have plans in place for a rapid response to EAB detection. Trees cut for firewood or other uses should be inspected for signs of EAB. If EAB is detected or suspicious signs are present NYS DEC should be immediately notified. Improper disposal of infested material can hasten the spread of EAB.

- If EAB is located in your area, cooperate with state and federal agencies to assist their efforts for eradication and control.
- Land owners should not act in haste, but deliberately consider their need for action - liquidating ash shouldn't be the first and only consideration. We recommend participation in local educational activities through groups such as Cornell Cooperative Extension and the New York Forest Owners Association to identify management options as well as reputable arborists and forestry professionals in their area.

To view photos and get more information visit: www.emeraldashborer.info or www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html. If you detect EAB or EAB damage, call your county Cooperative Extension, Regional NYSDEC office, or NYSDEC at (866) 640-0652 or (518) 402-9425. Get plugged in to your local Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) to work with other members of your community in EAB outreach, early detection, and management; find contacts for your local PRISM here (http://nyis.info/PRISM/Regional_Partnerships.aspx).

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