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DEC AND PARTNERS TO TRACK POSSIBLE SPREAD OF INVASIVE BEETLE Emerald Ash Borer Traps Are Being Deployed Throughout the State

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), along with other federal and state agencies, is setting baited traps in ash trees across upstate New York in an effort to search for possible infestations of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a tree-killing beetle. The public will soon be seeing the purple prism traps deployed in treelines throughout New York, with a concentration in areas adjacent to neighboring states and Canadian provinces that have already detected this potentially devastating invasive species.

It has been documented that a main route that enables this insect, as well as other invasive species, to spread is from moving firewood from one place to another. That is why in 2008, New York adopted regulations that ban untreated firewood from entering the state and restricts intrastate movement of untreated firewood to no more than a 50-mile radius from its source (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html>).

New York has more than 900 million ash trees, representing about 7 percent of all trees in the state, and all are at risk should this invasive, exotic pest become established. Many communities are at particular risk because ash was widely planted as a street tree after Dutch elm disease killed many urban trees.

“The EAB is a significant threat to New York State’s ash trees,” said State Forester Robert K. Davies. “While the EAB has not yet been positively documented within New York State, it is getting closer each day, so we must remain vigilant in monitoring our resources so that if detected, an appropriate response can be employed to protect our trees.”

DEC’s approach to monitoring for the insect is two-fold. First, traps to attract and catch the EAB are being hung in ash trees within a 100-mile radius from previously documented EAB locations in Ontario and Quebec, Canada, and central Pennsylvania. During June, traps will be placed in Western New York areas including Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Allegany, Erie, Wyoming, Niagara, Orleans, Genesee, Livingston, and Monroe counties and in Jefferson, St. Lawrence, Franklin, and Clinton counties along our northern border. Second, DEC will be monitoring "high-risk sites" compiled by state forest health experts. These areas will include campgrounds, major highway corridors, wood industries, and locations with large ash populations. Altogether, nearly 6,000 traps will be deployed across the state.

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The bright purple, prism-shaped EAB traps are made of sticky-coated corrugated plastic and contain scented lures. After 45 days, the traps will be inspected and samples collected. After 90 days, the traps will be collected and removed from the tree. If visitors encounter an EAB trap hanging in an ash tree while at a park or state forest, please help the survey effort by leaving it in place.

DEC is participating in the survey with the state Department of Agriculture and Markets, the state Office of Parks, and Recreation and Historic Preservation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and other volunteer organizations such as The Nature Conservancy and land trusts.

The EAB (photo: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html>) is a small but destructive beetle that infests and kills North American ash tree species, including green, white, black and blue ash. Damage is caused by the larvae, which feed in tunnels called galleries in the phloem just below the bark. The serpentine galleries disrupt water and nutrient transport, causing branches, and eventually the entire tree, to die. Since its discovery in southeastern Michigan in 2002, the EAB is responsible for the destruction of over 70 million ash trees in the U.S. The beetle has been moving steadily outward from its first discovered infestation in Detroit, Michigan, and has now been found in 12 states and two neighboring Canadian provinces.

The EAB has metallic green wing covers and a coppery red or purple abdomen; it is small enough to fit easily on a penny. Adult beetles leave distinctive D-shaped exit holes in the outer bark of the branches and the trunk. Other signs of infection include tree canopy dieback, yellowing, extensive sprouting from the roots and trunk (called "epicormic shoots") and browning of leaves. Infested trees may also exhibit woodpecker damage from larvae extraction. Individual, infested trees can be saved by applying specific insecticides but this treatment is neither practicable nor environmentally appropriate to consider for infested forests or large groups of trees.

While susceptibility to the EAB cannot be eliminated, steps that can be taken to slow its advancement include:

- Adhering to firewood regulations (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/28722.html>) by not importing untreated firewood to New York from any other state or country and refraining from moving firewood more than 50 miles from its source. (Buy firewood where you plan to use it);
- Checking ash trees for any signs of EAB damage; and
- Reporting suspected EAB damage to DEC Forest Health at 518-402-9419.

For more information, visit USDA's EAB page at www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/index.shtml and <http://www.emeraldashbor.info>