

FOREST MANAGEMENT 101

A handbook to forest management in the North Central Region



This guide is also available online at:

<http://ncrs.fs.fed.us/fmg/nfgm>

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Forest Health

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Many events can impact the health of individual trees, stands of trees, and even entire forested landscapes. These can include insect and disease outbreaks, damage from animals such as deer, and weather events such as droughts, hail storms, wind and ice storms. Many of these events are unpredictable, especially the weather events. Others, such as relatively cyclic insect outbreaks should be expected. Their occurrence raises concerns with forest managers and landowners. However, in the majority of cases, the long-term damage that results is small. The presence of some dead and dying trees may be viewed in a positive perspective as these trees provide valuable habitat for wildlife species and increase the diversity of life in a forest stand. Sometimes however, the damage from an insect or disease outbreak or other event can limit the ability to achieve a given management objective. In these cases, management practices may be available to suppress or mitigate the problem. Pro-active approaches may also be implemented well before potential problems surface thus avoiding or mitigating them. In many cases it is simply a matter of avoiding inherently risky management approaches. The tree species specific guides that follow highlight the pro-active approaches as well as the risky practices that may actually foster pest problems.

Tree and forest health information is available in several different formats within the tree species specific management guides. First, for each tree species, a section titled "Specific Pest Concerns" is available. In that section you will find information on the major insects and diseases, important mammal problems and weather related concerns. Second, a section titled "Pest Problems and Stand Development" is available. This section points out what pest problems are likely to impact stands at different stages of development, from seedling to old-growth. Third, forest health material and specific recommendations are integrated into various sections of the guides themselves. In many cases this is done using warnings that indicate certain pest concerns exist. Numerous photographs and links are available to assist in identification and to provide more detailed management information.