



# Project Impacts

NSRC-FUNDED RESEARCH FINAL REPORT

## Damage from Invasive Forest Pests Costs Billions a Year

PROJECT AWARD YEAR AND TITLE:

**2013**

*Introduced Forest Insects and Pathogens: Scientific Synthesis and Policy and Management Solutions*

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:

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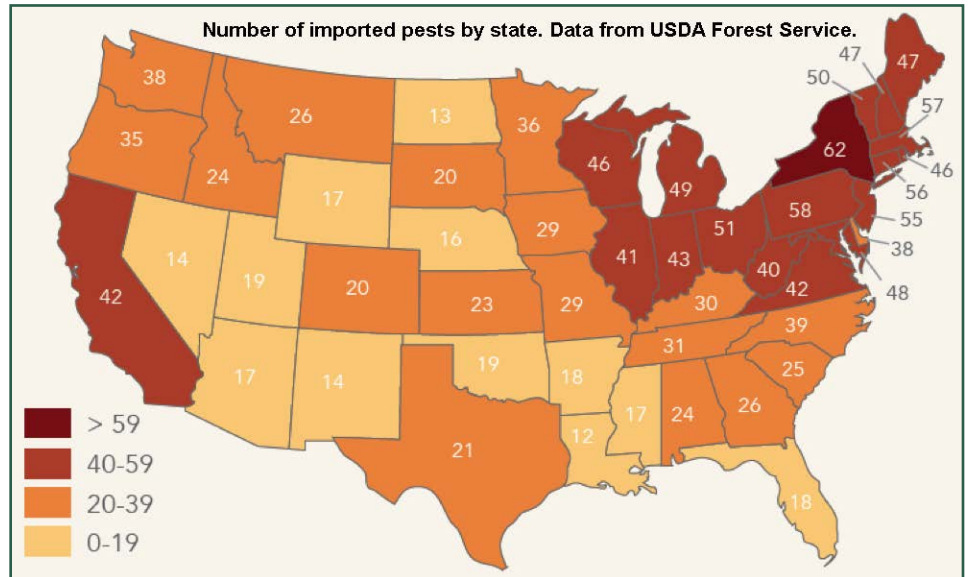
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Introduced forest pests are the most urgent threat to the health of Northeastern forests. Trees of the Northern Forest region are threatened by hemlock woolly adelgid, beech bark disease, emerald ash borer, Asian longhorned beetle, and a long list of other insects and diseases imported from other continents. While scientists have conducted substantial research on the biology and ecological impacts of these pests, and new research quantifies economic impacts, little attention has focused on strengthening national policies to prevent their introduction.

NSRC researchers held a workshop to summarize ecological and economic impacts of introduced forest pests. The team of forest scientists, economists, and policy advisors examined policy solutions aimed at minimizing future introductions. They published a paper through the Ecological Society of America which received national coverage in more than 300 media outlets, including *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Associated Press*, and *Newsweek*.

The authors emphasize that imported forest pests are the most pressing and underappreciated forest health threat in the United States today. All states are affected, but northeastern states are hit particularly hard. Introduced pests are the only forest threat that can eliminate an entire tree species in a matter of decades. Economic impacts cost over \$4 billion per year nationally and fall mostly on local governments and homeowners. Current policies to prevent new introductions are helpful but not sufficient in the face of growing global trade. Policies should focus on preventing importation of new pests and on major pathways of introduction: wood packaging (crates and pallets) and live plants imported for nursery trade.