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**EMERALD ASH BORER DETECTED IN STEUBEN AND ULSTER COUNTIES
Additional Investigation Planned After Invasive Beetles Found in Traps**

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis and state Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker today announced the discovery of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) on private properties in the Town of Bath, Steuben County, and Town of Saugerties, Ulster County. The EAB is a small but destructive beetle that infests and kills North American ash tree species, including green, white, black, and blue ash.

The first detection of EAB in New York was in the town of Randolph, Cattaraugus County, in June 2009 (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/56774.html>). Since the Randolph find, state and federal officials have implemented an extensive monitoring effort that includes the deployment of approximately 7,500 EAB purple traps in ash trees in high risk locations including major transportation corridors.

The Steuben County discovery occurred on July 12 when a state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) staff member inspected one of the state's EAB purple traps. The traps are sticky and contain a chemical lure that attracts adult EAB. The detection was confirmed this week by Cornell University. The Ulster County discovery occurred on July 15 after USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) staff member check of a federally-deployed EAB trap and confirmed by USDA APHIS. Each EAB trap had one confirmed EAB specimen.

Commissioner Grannis said: "DEC, the landowners, and our federal, state and local partners will work closely to study the extent of EAB's presence in the newly-confirmed area and take the appropriate steps to protect the state's ash resources. We have reason to believe that the movement of EAB to these new areas was due to the movement of firewood, and as summer is now in full swing, we again remind campers throughout the state that they too can help prevent the spread of harmful invasives by not hauling firewood to campgrounds and instead buying firewood locally."

Commissioner Hooker said: "As we continue to find EAB it is important for us all to recognize the challenges we face from this pest and other invasive species. We are currently working to contain EAB, however, in spite of our best efforts, science and some models suggest that EAB is nearly impossible to contain and will likely spread into other areas of the state in the next several years. The Department of Agriculture and Markets is administering a quarantine designed to slow the spread of this pest. Residents can assist the state by being aware of how to identify and report unusual bugs."

(MORE)

New York has more than 900 million ash trees, representing about seven percent of all trees in the state, and all are at risk. This is just the latest in a series of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species detections across New York State, including the Asian Longhorned Beetle, Sirex woodwasp, didymo, zebra mussels, and Eurasian water milfoil. They have prompted the state to strengthen regulations, increase educational outreach, and encourage ways of limiting the unintentional spread of these potentially devastating pests throughout the state.

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>). This was done as a precaution against the introduction and spread of EAB and other invasive species because of the documented risk of transmission by moving firewood. DEC's firewood regulations prohibiting out-of-state transport of untreated firewood and intra-state movement of untreated firewood more than 50 miles remain in effect and are extremely important tools. After more than three years of outreach and education efforts about the risks of moving firewood and the state's regulation, DEC is increasing its enforcement efforts to prevent the movement of untreated firewood into and around New York.

Yvonne DeMarino, State Plant Health Director for USDA APHIS, said: "We are working in cooperation with the state to detect, control and prevent the human-assisted spread of this pest. This is a huge undertaking and therefore we also need the support and cooperation of every New Yorker to promise not to move firewood."

New York State has been actively surveying for EAB since 2003, inspecting declining ash trees and setting detection tools statewide.

THE EMERALD ASH BORER:

The EAB has metallic green wing covers and a coppery red or purple abdomen; it is small enough to fit easily on a penny (photos: <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/CAPS/pdf/Emerald%20Ash%20Borer%20Poster.pdf> and <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html>). 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. Adult beetles leave distinctive D-shaped exit holes in the outer bark of the branches and the trunk. Other signs of infestation include tree canopy dieback, yellowing, extensive sprouting from the roots and trunk (called "epicormic shoots"). Infested trees may also exhibit woodpecker damage from larvae extraction.

Since its discovery in southeastern Michigan in 2002, the EAB is responsible for the death and decline of tens of millions of ash trees in the U.S. Today the beetle has been detected in 14 states and two neighboring Canadian provinces. The primary way this insect spreads is when firewood and wood products are moved from one place to another. Many of New York State's forests and parklands are high-risk areas due to firewood movement.

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WHAT IS BEING DONE NOW:

A cooperative effort among USDA, New York State, Cornell and SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry will conduct a thorough delimiting survey of trees to assess the extent of beetles in both areas. Information from this survey will help determine the response strategy.

The New York Invasive Species Council and DEC's Office of Invasive Species Coordination were established in 2007 to help detect new invasive species outbreaks and rapidly respond to such incidents. Further follow-up to slow the spread of this very destructive forest insect will depend on funding made available. New York is working with state and federal legislators and agencies to inform them of the recent finds and the urgent need to identify additional funding sources to address these new occurrences.

WHAT OTHERS CAN DO:

New Yorkers are urged to take the following steps to keep EAB from spreading to other areas of the State:

- Leave all firewood at home - please do not bring it to campgrounds or parks.
- Get your firewood at the campground or from a local vendor - ask for a receipt or label that has the firewood's local source.
- If you choose to transport firewood within New York State:
 - It must have a receipt or label that has the firewood's source and it must remain within 50 miles of that source.
 - For firewood not purchased (i.e., cut from your own property) you must have a Self-Issued Certificate of Source, and it must be sourced within 50 miles of your destination.
 - Only firewood labeled as meeting New York's heat treatment standards to kill pests (kiln-dried) may be transported into the state and further than 50 miles from the firewood's source.
- Watch for signs of infestation in your ash trees. If you suspect your ash tree could be infested by EAB, go to the websites below for more information. If damage is consistent with the known symptoms of EAB infestation, report suspected damage to the state by calling 1-866-640-0652 for appropriate action as time and resources allow.

For more information, visit the following web pages:

www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/emerald_ash_b/index.shtml

<http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/CAPS/pdf/Emerald%20Ash%20Borer%20Poster.pdf>

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7253.html>

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