



# ALABAMA FORESTRY COMMISSION

PROTECT • SUSTAIN • EDUCATE

[www.forestry.alabama.gov](http://www.forestry.alabama.gov)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Southern Pine Beetles Reach Epidemic Level in Alabama's Forests

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As of August 22, the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) has identified almost 5,000 Southern pine beetle (SPB) spots across the state, with an average mortality of 191 pine trees per spot. For the remainder of the summer, the number of SPB spots, as well as the number of trees affected per spot, are expected to increase.

"Alabama's timber industry is a driver of our economy, and these pine beetles can pose a real threat. Landowners should take care to identify these beetles to protect their own harvest, as well as to help prevent the spread to other timber," said Governor Kay Ivey. "The Alabama Forestry Commission is working hard to locate the beetle spots and notify landowners of the potential problem."

"Unfortunately, this is the highest number of beetle spots we've experienced in the state in the last 23 years. The agency has conducted aerial surveys in 51 counties so far, with more counties anticipated over the next couple weeks," said State Forester Rick Oates. "Both Mississippi and Georgia are also counting numerous spots. So, it looks as if this is an especially active pine beetle year not just here in Alabama, but across the Southeast."

Counties with significant SPB activity (more than 100 spots) are Bibb, Calhoun, Choctaw, Clay, Colbert, Coosa, Franklin, Lamar, Lawrence, Marion, Perry, Randolph, Talladega, and Winston. The worst infestations are located within and around Bankhead National Forest and the Oakmulgee District of the Talladega National Forest. This data is relevant to landowners because a large number of beetle spots exist on adjacent private lands as well.

The AFC will continue marking beetle spots and at the conclusion of each flight, the data will be synced to the '*SPB Location Map*'. The agency is also conducting ground checks and notifying forest landowners by mail. By locating their property on this map, forest landowners and land managers can begin treating the spots. Both the SPB map and beetle control information can be viewed on the AFC's website at **[forestry.alabama.gov](http://forestry.alabama.gov)**. To speak to an AFC representative in your local area, click the 'Contact Us' tab on the homepage, then select your county in the drop-down menu.

The mission of the Alabama Forestry Commission is to protect and sustain Alabama's forest resources using professionally applied stewardship principles and education, ensuring that the state's forests contribute to abundant timber and wildlife, clean air and water, and a healthy economy.

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MEDIA CONTACT: [elishia.ballentine@forestry.alabama.gov](mailto:elishia.ballentine@forestry.alabama.gov)

*Serving Alabama's Forest Landowners for 100 Years*