

ACTION ITEM FORM

Subject of Action Item: **National Strategy for Mitigation of Risks Associated with the Movement of Firewood**



Submitted By: **NPB**

Text:

Background:

The introduction and movement of invasive and exotic forest pests is often accelerated and assisted by human activities. State and federal agencies have implemented regulatory strategies to address a number of known pest pathways such as commercial log and nursery stock movement. Firewood, however, is a pathway that is outside of normal regulatory restrictions and is moved largely by private individuals with little or no knowledge about quarantine or regulatory restrictions. Firewood has great potential to introduce highly destructive forest and tree pests such as gypsy moth, emerald ash borer, and Asian long-horned beetle into new un-infested, susceptible locations. States which may be impacted by these introductions have little or no ability or authority to inform or interact with interstate travelers or tourists.

Requested Action: The National Plant Board requests that the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture send a letter to USDA APHIS and USDA Forest Service supporting the development of a national educational and outreach program informing interstate tourists and travelers that firewood has the potential to introduce dangerous and damaging plant pests that is consistent and uniform across state lines. This outreach program should be developed in cooperation with the National Plant Board and the National Association of State Foresters. Further, that USDA develops and approves criteria/processes that would mitigate the movement of pests in firewood. Processes would include heat treatment methods for firewood along with other methods that could be adopted by the commercial firewood industry. Lastly, that USDA APHIS should immediately start the process to federally regulate the interstate movement of firewood as a commodity.