

# ACTION ITEM FORM

Subject of Action Item: **Funding for Gypsy Moth Slow-The-Spread, Eradication, and Suppression Programs**



Submitted By: **NPB**

Text:

**Background.** The gypsy moth remains a highly destructive, exotic forest pest that was accidentally introduced into the United States in 1869. While this pest has been detected in the United States for over 100 years, more than 70% of our susceptible forests, primarily in the southern and Midwestern sectors of the country, have not yet been affected by this pest and remain at risk.

The Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread (GM STS) Foundation, Inc. was established as a model cooperative program to manage this species. Since the establishment of the GM STS Foundation, the program has been successful in significantly reducing the spread and impact of the gypsy moth. While GM STS Foundation member states have directly benefited from the implementation of this program, other neighboring southern states including Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina also see direct or indirect benefits.

The House and Senate Subcommittees on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies have completed their appropriations reports for the 2008 funding year. For the USDA Forest Service, the House Committee recommended funding forest health management at the 2007 enacted level. In addition, they recommended the forest health program should continue to stress strategic funding allocations and should continue the slow-the-spread, suppression and eradication efforts for the gypsy moth at or near historic levels, depending on pest activity. The Senate Committee also recommended funding forest health management at or above the 2007 enacted levels; however, the language regarding the importance of gypsy moth programs was omitted from the Senate report. In the absence of specific direction such as that included in the House report, funding for the gypsy moth slow-the-spread, suppression, and eradication efforts will be reduced by approximately 50% when compared to historic levels. This reduction is occurring despite the fact that the northeastern U.S. is experiencing the worst outbreak of gypsy moth since the 1980's.

**Requested Action:** The National Plant Board requests that the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture work directly with the House and Senate Subcommittees on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies to ensure the final appropriations bill for the USDA Forest Service fully funds forest health management at the 2007 enacted level. In addition the final appropriations bill should contain specific language directing that the forest health program continue to stress strategic funding allocations for gypsy moth management, and should continue the slow-the-spread, suppression and eradication efforts for the gypsy moth at or near historic levels, depending on pest activity.