

Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest Health Issues

Traditionally forest health has meant tree death, reduced growth, or lowered resistance to other stressors caused by insects or disease. Recently it has been gradually broadened to include the effects from all causes such as air pollution, human land uses, weather events, competition and other factors.

Overall the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests are at risk not just from one specific organism but from a wide range of pests including native and non-native plants, insects and diseases. Non-native species are of greatest concern and can enter the forest through a variety of means from transmission via animals to being imported by people from other areas, such as Sudden Oak Death from California.

The significance of the effects of pests can be measured in a variety of ways including the land area affected, proportion of forest vegetation community affected, ecological values lost or cultural values lost (i.e. the association of hemlock trees with the Blue Ridge Mountains). Pests do not have to kill large numbers of trees over a wide area to be a serious threat.

Forest Health Concerns

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| 1. Tree Decline | Oak Decline |
| 2. Non-native Diseases | dogwood anthrachnose, beech bark disease, butternut canker, Dutch elm disease, chestnut blight |
| 3. Native Insects | Southern Pine Beetle |
| 4. Non-native Insects | Hemlock Wooly Adelgid, European and Asian Gypsy Moths, Asian Oak Weevil |
| 4. Non-native Plants | 55 plants are listed in the forest plan as potential threats including kudzu |

Major Pests

1. European Gypsy Moth
2. Oak Decline
3. Southern Pine Beetle
4. Hemlock Wooly Adelgid