



Mountain Pine Beetle SLASH / MULCH PROGRAM

A Wildfire Mitigation and Recycling Program

www.bfslash.org



The rocky mountain pine beetle (MPB) is back. If you have received this mailing you live in an area with potential epidemic pine beetle infestation. MPBs are coming for your trees. Go to the above web site to find details on what they are up to and what you can do to stop them from destroying our forest.



What is Happening

Warm temperatures and drought are encouraging beetle populations to increase in Black Forest & other parts of northern El Paso County. Within the 2013 Fire Burn Perimeter in Southeast and East Black Forest (west of Meridian Road) populations have rapidly increased. Other areas are at risk as well. Rapid population increases (2020-2023) are found in areas with fire-weakened/damaged trees. There are large clusters in 2024 with 50 or more dead faders. Many successfully infested green trees with pitch tubes (2023-2024) have immediate potential for epidemic population explosion. Green trees fade (first lime color then yellowing to brown) will start in May with warm temperatures. Already dead (faded) trees from past years are not infested anymore. Leave some snags! Adult beetles chewed into healthy trees last year (June – Oct 2023), laid eggs, & slowly developed as larvae after hatching until pupation (May – June 2024). Then they become adults and fly this June – September 2024.

Only live-looking (green) trees with pitch tubes from 2023-24 have the new beetles and need to be removed before mid-June before new beetles fly and mate. The newly infested trees from 2024 (June – October) will die next year.

What to Do

Currently green trees with infested trunks with pitch tubes should be cut and removed from forested areas by 15 June to avoid spreading when adult beetles begin to fly.

The Slash/Mulch site (see www.bfslash.org) can accept trunk wood 8" in diameter or less. Take larger trunk material to Urban Firewood on Judge Orr Road (www.urbanfirewood.com) by mid June. Do not haul infested tree trunks after mid June when beetles are flying. After June 15 infested tree trunks can be buried, bark peeled, or chipped (small chips). Slash limbs can come to Slash/Mulch site anytime the site is open.

Other Suggestions

- Help protect high value trees on your property with verbenone – a pheromone beetle repellent applied to trees by mid June, see (www.semiochemical.com).
- Talk to your neighbors about strategies for controlling infestation within your neighborhood. A good place to start would be with HOA's or Neighborhood Watch organizations. The work of controlling the beetles will be easier and more successful the more landowners involved.
- If you have friends/family living outside the forested area, offer them the firewood in exchange for helping to remove infested trees so long as removal and transportation is accomplished by mid June.

Assistance

The Slash/Mulch website (www.bfslash.org) provides detailed information about a wide range of forest management issues ranging from wildfire prevention to erosion control to more specific information about the current mountain pine beetle infestation as well as information about IPS beetles and dwarf mistletoe. The Slash/Mulch site is located approximately 100 yds. South of Shoup Rd. on Herring Rd.. Additional information regarding hours of operation and what types of materials can be dropped off are also available on our website.

The MPB is a native species which has benefited greatly from years of drought and higher than normal temperatures. Left alone this epidemic has the potential to wipe out significant portions of our forest. The dead and dying trees will contribute to the overall fire hazard. This epidemic can be controlled if we all work together to do so.