

# Bark Beetle Fact Sheet

1. **Total U.S. acreage affected by bark beetle (all beetles) since outbreak began in 1996:** 41.7 million
2. **Total Region 2 acreage affected by bark beetle (all beetles) since outbreak began in 1996:** 10.7 million (Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Nebraska)
  - a. By state:
    - i. Colorado: 6.6 million
    - ii. Wyoming: 3.65 million
    - iii. South Dakota: 473,000
    - iv. Nebraska: 30,000
3. **Total Region 2 acreage affected by mountain pine beetle alone since 1996:** More than 5 million (*across all tree species*)
  - a. Acres affected by state:
    - i. Colorado: 3.18 million
    - ii. Wyoming: 1.75 million
    - iii. South Dakota: 344,000
4. **Trees species impacted:**
  - a. **Pine (primarily Lodgepole, but also Ponderosa, Limber)**
  - b. Fir (subalpine, Douglas, silver)
  - c. Spruce
  - d. Cedar
5. **Issues beetle-killed trees pose to Region 2:**
  - i. Falling trees pose risk to human life and infrastructure
  - ii. Fallen trees create heavy fuel loading, which can fuel intense wildfires
  - iii. Hazard trees threat to USFS lands:
    1. 3,700 miles of roads
    2. 460 developed recreation sites
    3. 1,300 miles of trails
    4. 16 ski areas
    5. In Colorado, 550 miles of transmission and distribution power lines
    6. In Wyoming, 69 miles of transmission and distribution power lines
    7. Essential water supplies to 13 western states
    8. 250,000 acres of Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)
6. **Reason for infestation:**
  - a. Overgrown, homogenous forest created by settlers in the late 1800s and forest management decisions that include fire restriction
  - b. Warmer winters (Cold winters typically reduce beetle populations)
  - c. Multi-year drought in the mid-1990s through early 2000's
7. **USFS Priorities in fighting bark beetle epidemic:**

- a. *Safety*-Cut down, clear out dead trees in areas near people because of the risk to life and property; prioritize using local risk assessments
- b. *Recovery*-Restore by replanting/seeding a diverse and healthy working forest that supports abundance and diversity of wildlife, provides clean water through watershed stabilization, and contributes to local economies through harvesting
- c. *Resiliency*-Create age class diversity, research benefits of increasing vegetation diversity, reduce stand density; which aids in forest survival of stresses like drought, insect attack or disease

**8. Rocky Mountain Region bark beetle funding for:**

- a. FY08-\$12 million
- b. FY09-\$13 million
- c. FY 10-\$40 million
- d. FY11-\$32 million
  - i. Projected 2011 accomplishments: 34,500 acres

9. **Summary:** Human health and safety is our primary concern. Clearing out trees and cleaning up fallen trees reduce the dangers these trees present. Standing dead trees can fall on people and infrastructure. They can also fuel wildfires, as can dead trees that have already fallen.

10. **Fast Facts:**

- a. *It's estimated that over the next 10 years, an average of 100,000 trees will fall daily as a result of the bark beetle epidemic.*
- b. *The mountain pine beetle is about the size of a pencil eraser.*
- c. *Thousands of beetles can attack one tree.*
- d. *Beetles carry the spores of a blue stain fungus in their mouths. As the bugs eat the tree, the fungus spread through the sapwood, interrupting the flow of water. The combination of eating and the fungus lead to the death of the tree and leave the blue stain seen in beetle-killed trees.*
- e. *Birds, especially woodpeckers, feed on bark beetles, as do insect parasites and fungal diseases.*
- f. *Humans can spread bark beetles in transporting firewood. To avoid this, select dead and dry firewood from forests where collection is allowed. At home, burn firewood by the end of June before any remaining beetles emerge to infest other trees.*

11. **Important phone numbers and websites:**

- a. U.S. Forest Service, Bark Beetle Incident Management Organization – (303) 275-5057, [www.fs.fed.us/bark-beetle](http://www.fs.fed.us/bark-beetle)
- b. Arapahoe and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland – (970) 295-6600, [www.fs.fed.us/r2/arnf](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/arnf)
- c. Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests –(307) 745-2300, [www.fs.fed.us/r2/mbr](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/mbr)
- d. White River National Forest – (970) 945-2521, [www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver)
- e. Black Hills National Forest – (605) 673-1504, [www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills](http://www.fs.fed.us/r2/blackhills)