

Aerial Detection Survey – Update, July 26th, 2012

Background: Annual aerial detection surveys for tree injury and mortality have been conducted in California since 1994. This is an update of survey status for the 2012 survey season for July 26th, 2012.

Objective: Detect and map tree mortality and damage in California / USFS Region 5.

Surveyors: Z. Heath, B. Oblinger and B. Mattos

Dates: July 25 and 26th, 2012.

Methodology: Recently dead or injured trees (trees still retaining dead foliage) were mapped visually by surveyors using digital aerial sketch-mapping systems flying in a light fixed-wing aircraft approximately 1,000 feet above ground level. Surveyors record the number and species of affected trees and type of damage (mortality, defoliation, branch flagging) at each mapped location.

Details:

- Over 1,000 miles were flown, covering over 2.5 million acres over portions of the Inyo, Sierra and Stanislaus National Forests, and the Yosemite and Sequoia Kings-Canyon National Parks (Figure 1).
- Pockets of ponderosa pine mortality from western pine beetle were observed throughout the west side of the Sierra Range, especially on the southern Stanislaus National Forest (Figure 2).
- We continue to see mortality in large sugar pine throughout the survey area.
- Localized winter damage to conifers (redbelt) was observed again on Yosemite National Park, as was blowdown near Tuolumne Meadows.

Figure 1. Flown area and mapped mortality

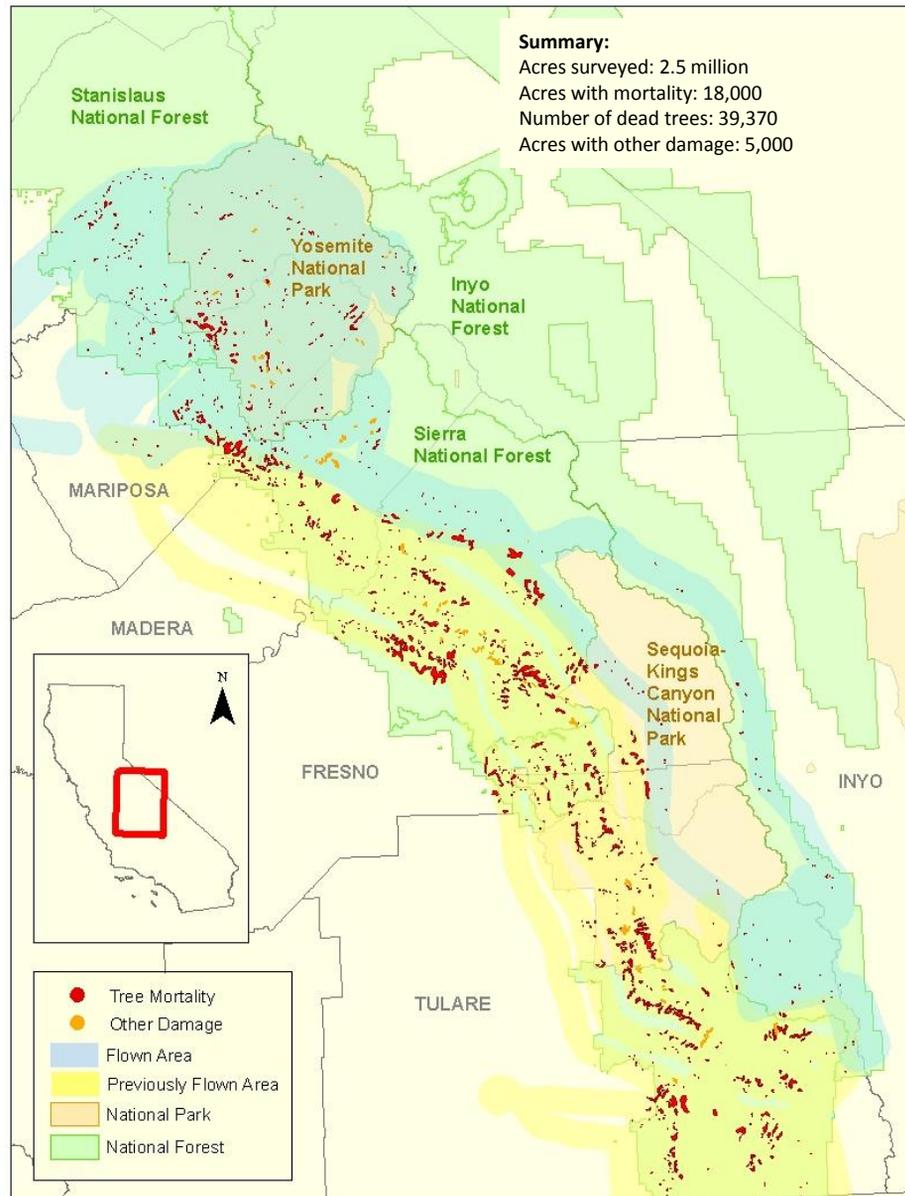


Figure 2. Ponderosa pine mortality near Jerseydale, Stanislaus N.F.

Direct questions pertaining to this report to Zachary Heath (email: zheath@fs.fed.us phone: 530-759-1751). Report Date July 27th, 2012.