



UTAH FOREST HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

2025

Introduction

A healthy forest maintains function, diversity, and ecological resiliency of its components, and provides essential ecosystem services such as recreation, water, carbon sequestration, food, air filtration, social and cultural values, timber and other forest products, as well as fish and wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Many forests throughout Utah are composed of dense stands that have age, size, structural and species composition indicative poor forest health conditions. Unhealthy forests are conducive to developing insect and disease issues. In other words, insect and disease issues are often the result of, not the cause of, poor forest health and are often precipitated by hot and dry conditions.

This report summarizes the impact of insect, disease, and abiotic disturbance agents on Utah's forested lands (Table 1) as determined by aerial detection surveys (ADS, USFS) and observations by Forestry, Fire and State Lands (FFSL) and Forest Health Protection (FHP) personnel.

Insect and Disease

In Utah, ADS survey area decreased by 20% in 2025 compared to 2023, as the Manti LaSal and Pine Valley Mountain areas were not flown due to smoke from forest fires. Overall, damage from insects, disease, and abiotic agents consisted of about 17% of damage acres (da; density of affected trees within a mapped area) of acres flown in 2025. Subalpine fir decline and Balsam Woolly Adelgid accounted for most of the tree mortality in 2025, with 3,365 da in nearly all counties with Sanpete County being the largest; and 1,852 da respectively with several northern counties effected.

Fir engraver showed 2,933 da mostly in white fir scattered throughout the state. Spruce beetle 1,809 da was noted mostly in Summit, Duchesne and Daggett Counties. Douglas-fir beetle accounted for 1,358 da, scattered throughout the state. Mountain pine beetle was noted at 672 da small amounts found throughout the state with Sanpete and Sevier Counties showing the most da. Pinyon Ips were minimal in 2025, however, the Manti LaSal was not flown and field personnel noted da in and around the Manti LaSal area.

Defoliators such as Western Spruce Budworm and Marssinona blight accounted for 2,545 da and 413 da respectively.

Wind/Microburst

In June 2024, a microburst blew down approximately 125 acres of aspen, subalpine fir, and Engelmann spruce on the east side of the La Sal Mountains in Grand County. State Forest Health Specialists and State foresters are still monitoring the situation and developing an action to respond to potential spruce beetle populations that could increase from the event.

Fire

In 2025; 164,874 acres were burned in Utah, 60% (105,941 were human caused. Of those acres burned four fires comprised most of the acreage. On 06/11/2025 The France Canyon fire started and burned 345,943 acres. The Forsyth fire started on 06/19/2025 and burned 15,662 acres. The other two fires started on the same day 07/13/2025; the Monroe Canyon fires and the Deer Creek fire burned 73,721 and 17,724 acres respectively. For more detailed information on 2024 fire activity in Utah, visit: <https://ffsl.utah.gov/fire>

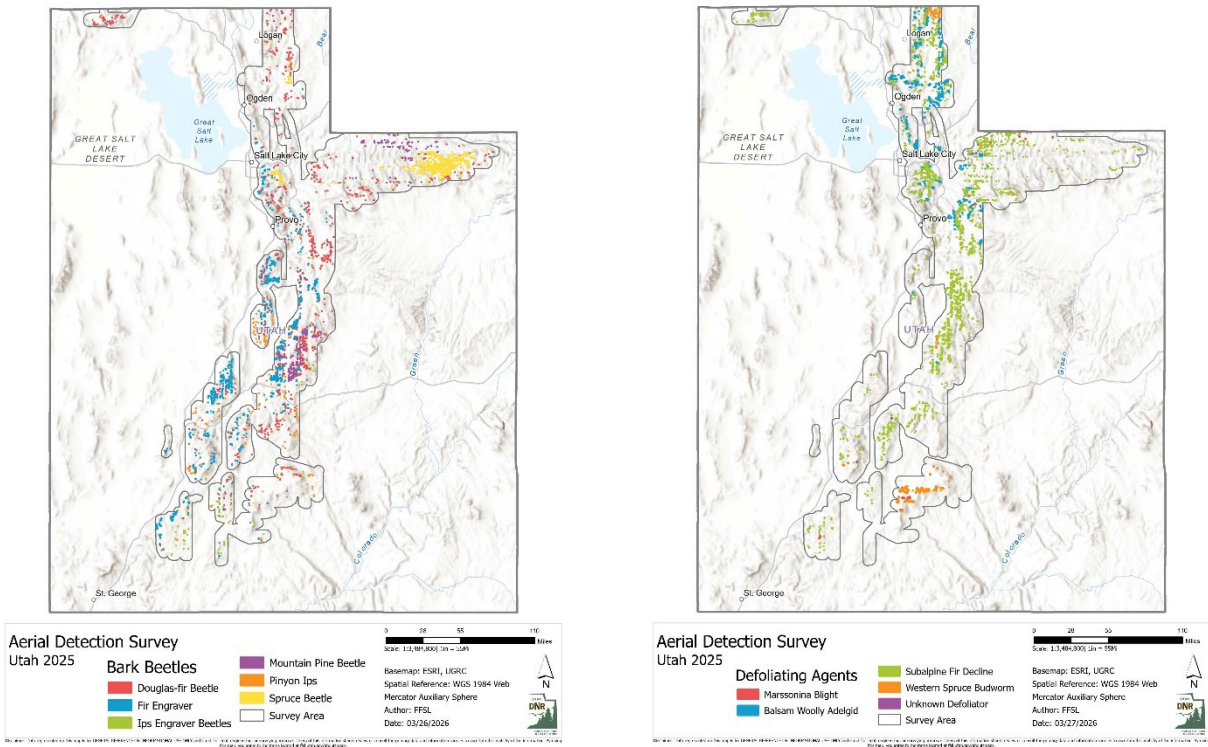
Weather Impacts

Many of our damage-causing agents (DCAs) are affected by weather directly or indirectly. Weather conditions regularly fluctuate and 2023 and 2024 were better water years than the preceding three years when DCAs were causing increased tree mortality. However, in 2025 a swing back toward hot, dry conditions will again stress trees, especially where unnaturally high density stand conditions exist or where range expansion of trees has occurred into marginal sites. In the long term, exhaustion of suitable hosts due to years of continued mortality may limit some damage agents (i.e., spruce beetle, fir engraver).

Table 1. Acres mapped, damage area, and county with the most damage acres for key damage-causing agents in Utah, 2025.

Damage Agent	Acres Mapped	Damage Area (ac)	County with Most Damage Acres
Balsam Woolly Adelgid	14,960	1,852	Wasatch
Fir Engraver	15,886	2,933	Sanpete
Subalpine Fir Decline	22,747	3,365	Sanpete
Western Spruce Budworm	12,653	2,545	Garfield
Spruce Beetle	15,379	1,809	Uintah
Pinyon Ips	49	49	Sevier
Marssonina Leaf Blight	2,341	413	Garfield
Douglas-fir Beetle	2,725	1,358	Sanpete
Mountain Pine Beetle	993	672	Sanpete
Western/SW Pine Beetle	122	11	Sevier
Total	87,829	12,462	

Figure 1. Aerial detection survey coverage bark beetle and defoliator data for 2025.



Department of Natural Resources Forestry, Fire & State Lands
1594 W North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT, 84114-5703
801-538-5418



U.S. Forest Service State, Private & Tribal Forestry,
Intermountain Region
324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401
801-625-5162