

## Coalition in Minnesota Working to Slow the Spread of Emerald Ash Borer

### The Challenge

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is an insect native to Asia that is considered an invasive species here in North America. It was first detected near Detroit, MI, in 2002 and has since spread across 22 States and parts of Canada. In this short time the insect has killed millions of ash trees and currently threatens the entire North American ash family.

Minnesota has possibly more ash trees than any other State and features extensive black ash forests associated with wetlands in its northern half. Communities in Minnesota have large ash components, and many cities' urban forests, including those of St. Paul and Minneapolis, are comprised of 15–20 percent ash. Many smaller towns in western parts of the State have in excess of 25 percent ash. EAB was first found in the Twin Cities in 2009.

### The Solution

A coalition of Federal and State agencies is working with local governments and nongovernmental organizations to:

- Slow the spread and population buildup of EAB;
- Use that time gained to get communities with and without EAB to begin to mitigate impacts and reduce their risk to this invasive insect; and
- Work with a number of groups within the State to achieve desired results.

The coalition's main goals are to create a healthier urban forest and to maintain functional forests in those areas now dominated by extensive stands of ash trees. The core group includes the following entities: Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture (MDA); Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR); USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS); all three branches of the U.S. Forest Service; many cities, including St. Paul and Minneapolis; University of Minnesota and University Extension; several Tribes in the State; and groups such as the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee.



*Jon Osthus trains land managers about EAB and EAB biocontrol. (Photo: Monika Chandler, MN Department of Agriculture)*

### Resulting Benefits

MDA led and coordinated a very active and aggressive management approach in the Twin Cities area that appears to have significantly slowed the spread of EAB there compared to other metropolitan areas. Much of the EAB work in Minnesota has been funded to date by the State and city. Minnesota DNR and the University of Minnesota took the lead on helping other communities prepare for the ash borer's arrival. The Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry unit of the U.S. Forest Service provided on-the-ground technical assistance and more than \$816,000 in grants in recent years to support the collaborative project. APHIS has also provided extensive support.

### Sharing Success

MDA hosted frequent EAB updates and get-togethers that were well attended by representatives of metro communities. Participating organizations also maintain active outreach programs for residents. MDA and cooperators hosted a number of training sessions on identification of infested trees for neighboring cities. For more information, visit the MDA Web site at <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/emeraldashborer>.

*Collaboration helps communities at risk for EAB invasion gain valuable time.*

