

1375 East Siebenthaler Ave.
Dayton, Ohio 45414

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www.metro parks.org

Emerald Ash Borer Program

Five Rivers MetroParks owns and manages over 14,000 acres of natural areas and parks. One of the main goals of Metro Parks is to protect and manage these resources for the optimal diversity of native species in each area. Each area has specific objectives aimed at managing and or restoring native habitats such as grasslands, prairie, wetlands, rivers, lakes, ponds and woodlands. Management decisions are made based on professional knowledge of habitat management, species diversity, and the wise use of taxpayer dollars in an effort to adhere to the MetroParks overall mission:

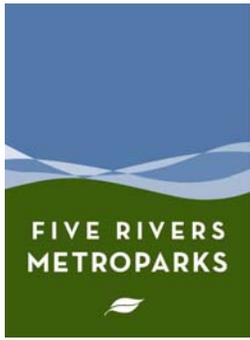
Five Rivers MetroParks is dedicated to the protection and stewardship of the Greater Dayton's natural heritage and to inspiring appreciation and understanding of these treasures through nature-based outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and experiences.

The arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a species native to Asia, to the MetroParks native forested lands appears to be imminent. While the adult beetle does not appear to be a pest by nature, the larvae occur in such numbers as to inflict a high mortality rate among the ash trees. Research to date seems to show that all species of ash (*Fraxinus* sp) appear to be affected to varying degrees. EAB may become established in MetroParks and may persist for several years potentially changing the composition of the forested areas by reducing the numbers of ash trees present. Trees in the ash family are a significant portion, up to 25% and locally more, of the trees found in certain areas of the MetroParks. While relatively few species of animals depend solely upon any of the ash trees it will be a significant loss in the forested areas of MetroParks.

In 2002, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) took the position that EAB could not be controlled by conventional practices. A "cut and chip" eradication method was implemented in parts of Michigan and Ohio as an attempt to contain and eradicate the EAB from the southern Great Lakes Region. Since then, the whole scale of cut and chip process has been abandoned in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio, due to lack of funds. This method proved to not be as successful as first thought as populations continued to be discovered south of the original areas. The Ohio Department of Agriculture began an intensive effort to determine how far EAB had spread by implementing the Detection Tree Program. Once all of these detection trees are collected and analyzed we will have a better idea of how wide the spread of EAB is and proximity to MetroParks properties. **As of July 2007, EAB has been detected in Montgomery, Miami and Warren Counties, which means these counties are all in the quarantined area determined by the Ohio Department of Agriculture.** See Rule 901:5-56-03 of the Ohio Department of Agriculture quarantine and regulations. It is illegal to move ash trees, ash logs, ash branches, ash wood chips, ash bark and all hardwood firewood out of Ohio's quarantined areas. These materials can move freely within, but cannot leave, contiguous quarantined areas.

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If and when EAB is found on MetroParks land we will determine the proper course of action for each park keeping in mind the following issues:

- Protection of forested communities and species
- Protection of public on trails, roadways, parking lots, picnic areas and other facilities.
- Protection of buildings and other structures.
- Available funding.
- Impact on forest composition beyond the reduction of Ash species

Education/Communication

Education will be aggressively pursued as MetroParks is at the edge of a population of EAB. A concerted effort to inform the staff, volunteers and public on how to slow the spread of EAB into their MetroParks will be pursued. Education will also need to include what the public should expect when EAB arrives in the MetroParks sites. This will prevent the appearance of acting in hindsight and show the communities that MetroParks is aware and already has a policy in place to deal with the EAB.

Education/interpretive team will focus the following:

- Ash tree ID
- Alternative replacements/resource information
- Community impact
- Education of Borer look a-likes
- Fact sheets/brochures/Printed material

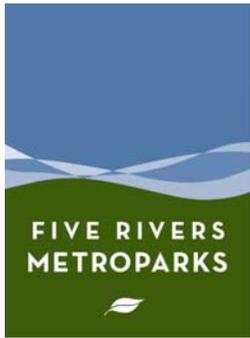
Management Priorities

To manage the impacts and effects of the EAB, MetroParks will focus on its management efforts in the following areas:

- Removal of hazardous ash trees in our public areas such as, picnic areas, trails, parking lots, or structures and property boundary lines will be the priority to maintain public safety. Trees will be evaluated on an individual basis with the focus on trees that are clearly hazardous. Trees may be pruned as an option versus removal for wildlife habitat. This will be at the discretion of the Parks and Conservation Manager of each facility with input from the Land Stewardship section. The management of EAB in our Natural areas will be managed under a ***“No Control Policy”*** and will not be pursued as a management option other than as stated below. It is felt that far more damage to MetroParks land would be incurred by the “cut & chip method” of tree removal than allowing the natural selection and succession process to begin. These impacts include: compaction & disturbance of soils from logging equipment, disruption and damage to other non-target native species of plants and animals, soil disturbances creating areas for invasive plant species to become established and increased erosion issues. Currently this is the recommendation being made by the ODNR, USDA and OSU.
- Firewood policy enforced: In an effort to keep EAB out of our parks for as long as possible and to slow the spread of the insect we will follow the firewood policy already in place. No firewood shall be brought into the parks for camping or other programs. The firewood policy will be stated on the permits

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for campsites and shelter reservations. MetroParks will supply firewood for these events and activities.

- Non ash species of firewood can be moved within our parks anytime of the year with the exception of those parks currently in non-infected counties. (As of July 2007 Greene County is outside the quarantined areas, so for example, Eastwood cannot move wood into Huffman MetroPark or Sugarcreek). Ash firewood should only be moved during the winter months of November-February as long as 100% of the wood is burned on-site. Please do not hesitate to ask the Land Stewardship Section for assistance in identifying tree species.
- The Land Stewardship staff will work closely with the Parks and Conservation Managers of each facility to monitor the EAB movement and will review the best management practices for each facility as part of the annual Land Stewardship planning meetings.

MetroParks will continue to review research and continue communication with the following:

- Ohio Department of Agriculture, EAB communications 614/728-6404.
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Urban Forestry 513/932-6836.
- OSU Extension Montgomery County, 937/224-9654.

At this time MetroParks will choose not to use chemical control methods in an attempt to control the EAB. MetroParks will monitor the situation and the science associated with EAB and will adjust the policy if warranted.

If EAB control is considered under any of the above circumstances, it will be the policy of the Five Rivers MetroParks, to ***use the least invasive method available, with the overall goal of protecting biodiversity first and foremost.***

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