



FIDS PEST REPORT 94-23

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SUMMARY OF FOREST INSECT AND DISEASE CONDITIONS YUKON TERRITORY, 1994

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Spruce Pests

Spruce beetle, *Dendroctonus rufipennis*, infested white spruce over an area of 33 000 ha in the southwest, primarily in the Alsek River Valley north of Goathead Mountain, and in the Shakwak Valley between Haines Junction and Kluane Lake. About half of the infested stands fell within Kluane National Park. In some stands up to 70% of the mature trees had been killed since 1992. Areas containing trees attacked in 1993 or earlier were mapped during aerial surveys. Additional trees in all surveyed stands were attacked in June of this year, but symptoms in the form of discolored crowns will not be visible until 1995. Stands throughout the area are composed entirely of white spruce, most of which are in the mature and over-mature stage of development and highly susceptible to attack. Most stands also contain a healthy immature understory which will grow up to succeed the dead overstory.

Eastern spruce budworm, *Choristoneura fumiferana*, caused light and moderate defoliation of white spruce over a widespread area in the La Biche River drainage in the southwestern Yukon. High populations of budworm were also seen in the Irons Creek area near the BC-Yukon border, but defoliation was visible only at trace levels.

Lodgepole Pine Pests

For the fourth consecutive year, **pine needle cast**, *Lophodermella concolor*, caused widespread mortality of year-old lodgepole pine needles throughout the southeast. The most visible damage was again in young stands in the Watson Lake area, where up to 90% of 1993 needles were lost on open growing and roadside trees. Scattered patchy disease centres were also seen along the Robert Campbell Highway and the South Canal Road.

Dead leaders in young pine, caused by **lodgepole terminal weevil**, *Pissodes terminalis*, attacks, were again widespread in the southern part of the Territory, east of Whitehorse. As in 1993, incidences of attack were low, averaging less than 1% of the trees, with the exception of young stands along the Atlin Road near the BC border where up to 10% current attack levels were seen.

Eastern Larch Pests

As in the past two years feeding damage by the **larch sawfly**, *Pristiphora erichsonii*, was at very low levels throughout the range of the host. Scattered trace incidences of damage to new shoots caused by ovipositing adults were seen in stands north of Watson Lake.

Deciduous Tree Pests

Greatly increased populations of **large aspen tortrix**, *Choristoneura conflictana*, caused mainly moderate and severe defoliation of trembling aspen over 10 000 ha near Mayo where infestations occurred in 1993, and between Stewart Crossing and Dawson. Farther south, smaller infestations near Braeburn and Teslin Lake were similar in area to 1993, but damage was less severe.

For the third consecutive year, **aspen serpentine leafminer**, *Phyllocnistis populicola*, populations increased, causing widespread damage to aspen foliage between Dawson and Minto. In the McQuesten area 100% of leaves had been attacked on most trees. Even after three years of severe attacks in this area, however, impact on the health and growth of aspen appeared to be low.

Annual examination of eight year-old lodgepole pine and Siberian larch in a **Canada-Sweden co-operative trial** in the Takhini Forest Reserve near Whitehorse, found a slight increase in the number of lodgepole pine recently killed (1%) and live-infected (2.6%) by **comandra blister rust**, *Cronartium comandrae*.

Annual assessment of a forest **Biomonitoring Plot** in the Takhini Forest reserve established in 1992, was carried out to monitor the effects of acid rain and airborne pollutants on the growth and vigor of trees, shrubs and ground cover. No damage was found.
