



Britton Colquitt on having to buy a Super Bowl ticket for his one-week-old daughter

DENVER AND THE WEST

Spruce beetles moving into more Colorado forests, survey shows

While size of forests devastated by pine beetles is dwindling, the number of acres hit by spruce beetles continues to climb

By David Migoya
The Denver Post

POSTED: 01/28/2016 11:53:26 AM MST | UPDATED: ABOUT 10 HOURS AGO 8 COMMENTS

The devastation caused by spruce beetles across Colorado forests accelerated for a fourth consecutive year, according to a new survey, while the once widespread infestation of mountain pine beetles has largely subsided.

The spruce beetle was found to have newly infected 182,000 acres of previously unaffected forests, bringing the number of acres currently impacted to 409,000 across the state, according to the annual aerial survey conducted by the U.S. Forest Service and the Colorado State Forest Service.

The bug has caused varying degrees of tree mortality to nearly 1.6 million acres across the state since 1996, though still far less than the mountain pine beetle.

Two other defoliators of conifers — the western spruce budworm and the Douglas-fir tussock moth — also expanded their reach last year, touching nearly 340,000 acres of forests.

Damage by the mountain pine beetle, which has ravaged more than 3.3 million acres of Colorado forests since 1996, has dwindled to about 5,000 new impacted acres, and the epidemic has ended in some areas as mature pine trees have been depleted, the survey notes.

The pine beetle infestation that ran across Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota has affected an area roughly the size of Massachusetts.

"The lesson we can take away from the extensive insect and disease damage we've seen in Colorado over the past two decades is the need for proactively taking care of our forests," State Forester Mike Lester, who is also director of the Colorado State Forest Service, said in a news release. "The best time to take actions to address long-term forest health is before a major outbreak starts, and not after."

The Forest Service continues to treat thousands of acres through thinning and prescribed burns as part of its wildfire mitigation and forest management efforts.

Much of the reason for the spruce beetle problem continues to be blown-down trees, drought



Pine trees in the White River National Forest near Frisco, Colo., glow rusty red after being killed by the mountain pinebeetle in this July 5, 2005, file photo. The pine beetle infestation that ran across Colorado, Wyoming and South Dakota has affected an area roughly the size of Massachusetts. (Ed Andrieski, Associated Press)

stress, warmer temperatures, an extensive number of older trees and a high density level, the Forest Service said.

David Migoya: 303-954-1506,
dmigoya@denverpost.com or @davidmigoya



RELATED

POPULAR

MOST POPULAR

POPULAR HOUR NEWS SPORTS BIZ A&E LIFE

Weekend snowstorm could bring up to 10 inches of snow in Denver

Kiszla: Super apology may not need to be reissued by Peyton Manning

Peyton Manning eager to help boost Broncos offense

No charges filed for millions of gallons of missing water

Parker officer: Of two boys who died in pond, one was trying to save other

[See the full most-popular-of-the-hour list](#)

SUBMIT A NEWS TIP OR PHOTO

Email or call 303-954-1201.

If you would like a reply, include your email:

- » [Submit news photos](#)
- » [Investigations tips: 1-866-748-TIPS](#)

POST POLL: ZIKA VIRUS

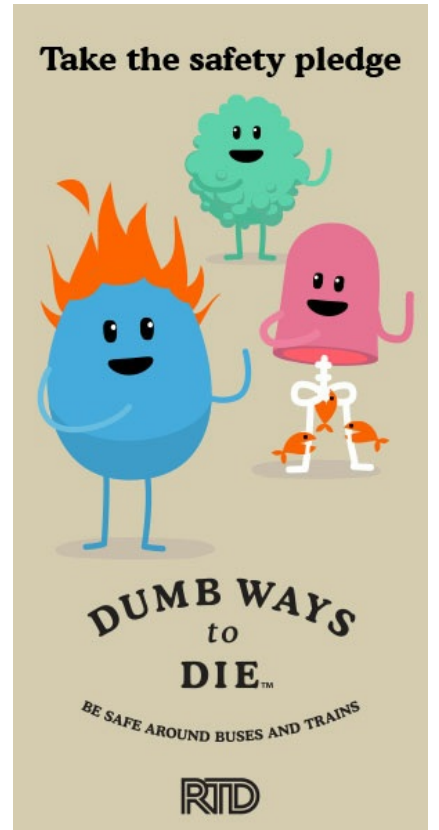


Are you worried about the mosquito-borne Zika virus which the World Health Organization says is spreading explosively in the Americas reaching the United States?



- Yes
- No

Vote!



RELATED STORIES

DISCUSSION (8 COMMENTS)

From Around the Web

(Sponsored)



BEVERLY HILLS MD
How To: Fix Crepey Skin [Watch]



BREAKINGCOFFEE
6 Smart Ways To Use Coconut Oil



MSGOSSIP
10 Genius Tricks To Help You Save Time Cleaning This Winter...



HGTV
Steven Seagal's Cattle Ranch in California



E! ONLINE
John Krasinski Responds to Jenna Fischer's Comments About...



DEFINEVIRALS
10 Vegetables You Only Have To Buy Once And Regrow Forever!



BILLS.COM
Big Changes Are Coming For Homeowners In 2016



MINDBUZZ
7 Gardening Tricks That'll Turn Your Thumb Green

More from The Denver Post



THE DENVER POST
Deal struck to save historic ocean liner SS United States



ALL THINGS BRONCOS COLORADO
They Said It: Tom Brady on why it's tough to play in Denver



THE DENVER POST
Aspen: Skier who pushed snowboarder off chairlift to be...



THE DENVER POST
In October, Facebook will expand beyond the Like



THE DENVER POST
Colorado ranks 46th in nation for getting food stamps to...



ALL THINGS BRONCOS COLORADO
Broncos pay for all employees to travel to Super Bowl 50



PREPPED
Ohio high school students fake childbirth for free throw...



BLOGS | THE DENVER POST
Donald Trump skipping Fox News debate: Cartoons of the day

Recommended by Outbrain

THE DENVER POST



Copyright © 2016 Digital First
Media

[Copyright](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

[Site
Map](#)

[Digital First
Media](#)

[Contact Us](#)

NEXT ARTICLE IN NEWS



**US economy slowed to scant 0.7 pct.
growth rate last quarter**

» [Continue to article...](#)