

## What's Happening In The Forest?

- *Changes in the forest are natural:* our forests look different today than they did 100 years ago, and will continue to change. Fire, drought, insect infestations, and other natural events alter forests over time. These are natural events that are inevitable.

## Why is this happening now?

- *It's not a beetle problem, it's a forest health problem:* Several factors have led to the current epidemic:
  - Drought
  - Absence of natural fire
  - Climate change
  - Dense, even-aged, forests

## Fire is Important to maintaining Forest Health.

- *Without fire, pine forests can become overcrowded potentially making fires' effects more severe:* Historically, periodic low-intensity wildfires would natural thin the forest, making them less susceptible to insects and disease. Absence of low intensity fire allows for the buildup of more flammable material, making fires more intense, and harder to control.



### Eagle County Wildfire Mitigation

PO Box 179 / 500 Broadway  
Eagle, CO 81631

Phone: 970-328-8742

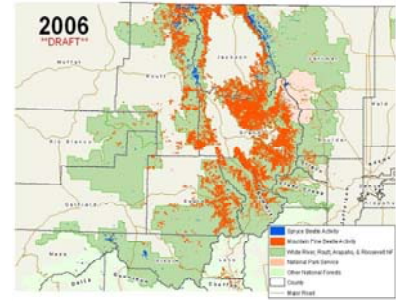
Fax: 970-328-7185

E-mail:

Eric.Lovgren@eaglecounty.us

# Pine Beetle Outbreaks and Wildfire: A 'Slow-Motion' Emergency.

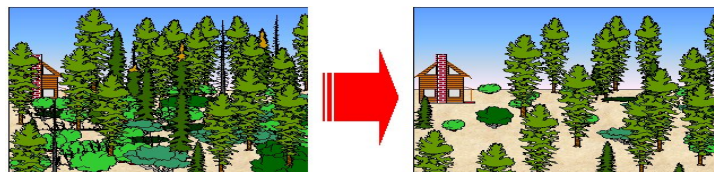
- Over 660,000 acres in northern Colorado were infested with bark beetles in 2006.
- 2 million acres across Colorado are still susceptible.
- What's at risk?
  - Public safety: increased wildfire danger.
  - Key watersheds: impacts on water quality.
  - Local Economies: dying trees affect aesthetics, quality of life, and Colorado's tourism industry.
  - Loss of wildlife habitat.
  - Loss of timber value.



**Above:** current outbreak state-wide. **Left:** the culprit.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

- **Take Action:** There are many simple steps you can do to protect your life and property in the event of a wildfire:
- **Step 1:** *Remove* dead and dying trees on your property. Dead trees can fall on houses, roads, or power lines and may be a fire hazard.
- **Step 2:** *Thin* overcrowded trees on your property. Overcrowded trees carry fire faster and are more prone to insects and diseases. Well-spaced trees are healthier and reduce the fire hazard around your home.



- **Step 3:** *Create Defensible Space* on your property. Ideally, remove all flammable vegetation within 15 feet of your home. Regularly clean all pine needles and debris from your roof and gutters. Landscape with fire resistant plants. Stack wood at least 30 feet from your home. Trim all vegetation on your property to remove "ladder fuels" that may carry fire from the surface to the crown of the trees. Contact Eagle County Wildfire Mitigation for a free hazard assessment and defensible space evaluation.

