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Phone: 812.275.5987  
Fax: 812.279.3423



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811 Constitution Ave.  
Bedford, IN 47421

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**News Contact:**  
Franklin Lewis 812.277.3580  
Fax: 812.279.3423  
[flewis01@fs.fed.us](mailto:flewis01@fs.fed.us)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **FOREST VISITORS ALERTED TO THREAT OF EXOTIC PEST**

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**Bedford, IN – October 22, 2004** Visitors to the Hoosier National Forest need to be on the look out for the emerald ash borer: an exotic pest from Asia that has destroyed millions of ash trees.

The emerald ash borer is a non-native insect that first appeared in the United States, near Detroit, Michigan, about 2-3 years ago. It kills every ash tree it infests and to date has killed an estimated 8-12 million trees in Michigan alone.

The adult emerald ash borer is slender and a bright, metallic, coppery-green color. It is about one-third of an inch long, making it difficult to spot in tree leaves. The larval, or immature form of the pest, destroys live ash trees by eating the vascular tissue that supplies nutrients to the tree. The tree starves to death three years after the vascular tissue is destroyed. Symptoms include vertical splits in the bark, D-shaped exit holes in the main trunk, and increased woodpecker activity.

**“We knew it was moving toward Indiana and hoped it wouldn’t be here quite this soon,” stated Jodie Ellis, the exotic insects education coordinator at Purdue. “This infestation likely happened because humans moved infested ash products,” Ellis said. “More than likely, it occurred when firewood or nursery stock was moved.” Currently, two counties in Indiana, Stuben and La Grange, have been infected by the emerald ash borer.**

**Ken Day, Hoosier National Forest Supervisor, is concerned with the movement of firewood. “We have a lot of Hoosiers, out-of-state hunters and people wanting to see the fall colors visiting the Forest this time of year,” said Day. “They have an important role in preventing the emerald ash borer from infesting the Hoosier National Forest and other public and private forest land. Most importantly, do not bring firewood from Michigan or Ohio—two states with emerald ash borer infestations—into Indiana. If they do bring firewood with them, they should burn all that they bring.”**

**Forest visitors who see evidence of emerald ash borers, or suspect its presence, should contact Ellis at (765) 494-0822 or the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Hotline at (866) 663-9684. They may also contact the Hoosier National Forest (812) 275-5987. Detailed information and photographs of the emerald ash borer can be found at [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info).**