

The Gypsy Moth Slow the Spread (STS) Foundation establishes a formal framework for cooperation among the ten states (listed at the bottom of page) who work with each other and the USDA to slow the spread of gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar* (L.) (Lepidoptera: Lymantriidae). Together they have achieved their goal of reducing spread of this destructive pest by more than 60%, which has prevented infestation of more than 140 million acres in 15 years.

The Threat: Gypsy moth is a destructive, exotic forest pest that feeds on over 300 species of trees. It was accidentally introduced into the United States in 1869 and is currently established throughout the northeast and parts of the upper mid-west (gray shaded area on maps), where it has defoliated 80 million acres since 1970.

- It feeds on over 300 species of trees but oaks are most preferred.
- Defoliation causes extensive tree mortality, reduces property values, adversely affects commerce and causes allergic reactions in sensitive individuals that come in contact with the caterpillars.
- Most of the susceptible hardwood forests in the United States are not yet infested and are still at risk.

The Benefits of STS:

- Prevents invasion of more than 300 million acres over the next 30 years (compare maps).
- Protects the extensive urban and wild land hardwood forests in the south and upper mid-west while also protecting the environment through use of gypsy moth specific strategies.
- Yields a benefit to cost ratio of 3 to 1 by delaying the onset of impacts that occur as gypsy moth invades new areas.
- Delays the impacts associated with gypsy moth quarantines on intra- and inter-state commerce.
- Unifies the partners and promotes a coordinated, region-wide action based on biological need.

