



County Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative

South Dakota Department of Agriculture
Division of Resource Conservation & Forestry
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The County Mountain Pine Beetle Initiative supported the South Dakota Forest Action Plan by utilizing five strategies identified therein to address threats to forest health. The program also utilizes strategies to address the threats of underutilization of woody biomass, and over mature and dying trees as identified in the Forest Action Plan. These strategies achieve the "Protect Forests from Harm" theme outlined by the State & Private Forestry (S&PF) National Priorities and Objectives.

Examples of the strategies outlined in this document include, but are not limited to:

- Monitor forest insect and disease outbreaks.
- Collaborate with other federal, state, and local agencies.
- Develop direct suppression and preventive management options to suppress forest insect and disease outbreaks.
- Encourage management and use of forest resources.

MPBI Overview

In 2013 the South Dakota legislature appropriated \$2MM for FY2014 through HB 1050 to be used for a county MPB suppression program. The program was administered by SD Division of Resource Conservation & Forestry (RCF) as a 2:1 cost-share grant, and was intended to suppress the mountain pine beetle (MPB) epidemic.

The cost-share grant required MPB suppression work to be focused in any, or all of three approved projects.

- **Targeted Areas** - survey and mark portions of national forest land where MPB populations were believed to be in epidemic levels, and where the Forest Service would allow treatment of identified infested trees. It was also intended to be utilized in areas of

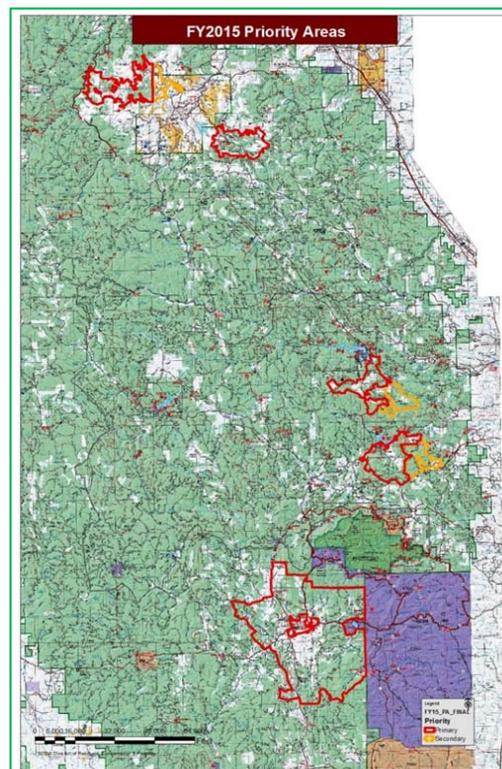
national forest where follow-up treatments, such as thinning, or commercial harvest would occur within a short time-frame following MPB suppression treatments to reduce the susceptibility of continued MPB outbreaks.

- **300 foot Buffer** - survey and mark MPB infested trees on national forest lands within 300 feet of private properties where adjacent landowners are also doing MPB suppression activities.
- **Road Right-of-Way (ROW)** - survey and mark green infested trees and dead ponderosa pine trees within 100 feet of road centerline to be treated to remove the potential hazard of these trees falling into the roadways.

2013 - 2015 Fund Distribution

Distribution of Funds The \$2M was split up among four counties in the Black Hills; Custer, Lawrence, Meade, and Pennington. The money was divided up according to the counties' need, amount of national forest land within that county, scope of MPB epidemic within that county, and ability to respond to the epidemic utilizing resources within their county. The final distribution of funds was:

Custer County:	\$117,660
Lawrence County:	\$955,000
Meade County:	\$257,340
Pennington County:	\$670,000



2013 - 2015 MPBI Components

Survey and Marking

- RCF provided counties with locations of the State designated priority areas
- All crews were supplied with data-recording GPS units for surveying and marking infested trees, which could automatically upload all infested tree data to the State's central database

Quality Control

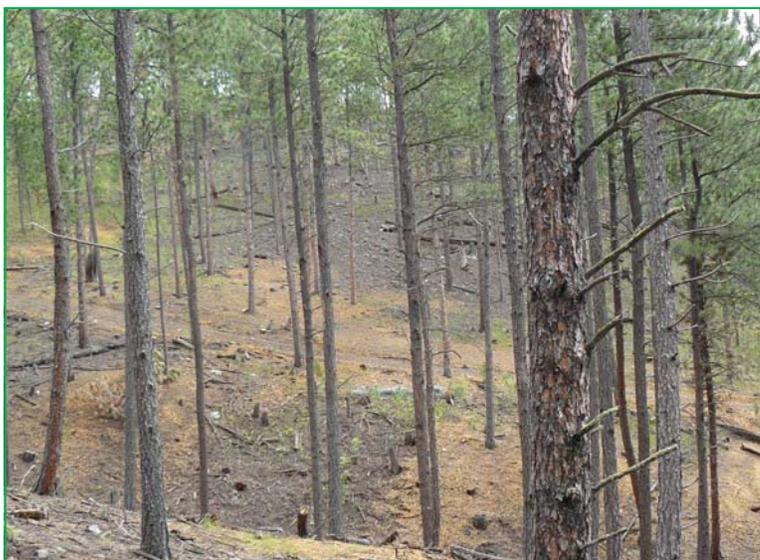
- Counties were expected to complete their own quality control inspections throughout the marking season, however, all of the surveying and marking completed by county crews was subject to quality control monitoring by RCF staff
- Through the use of quality control checks, and RCF's training with the aid of the marking guide, all entities identifying infested trees have continued to maintain their accuracy above 90 percent.

Treatments Used

All infested trees identified in the surveys were treated using methods and timelines proven to reduce

MPB populations, and included:

- Cut and remove
- Cut and chunk
- Cut and chip



Cut and chip treatment pictured above

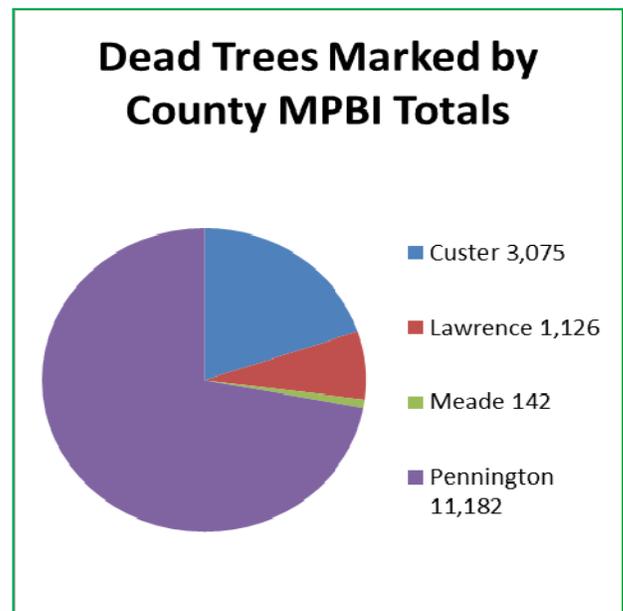
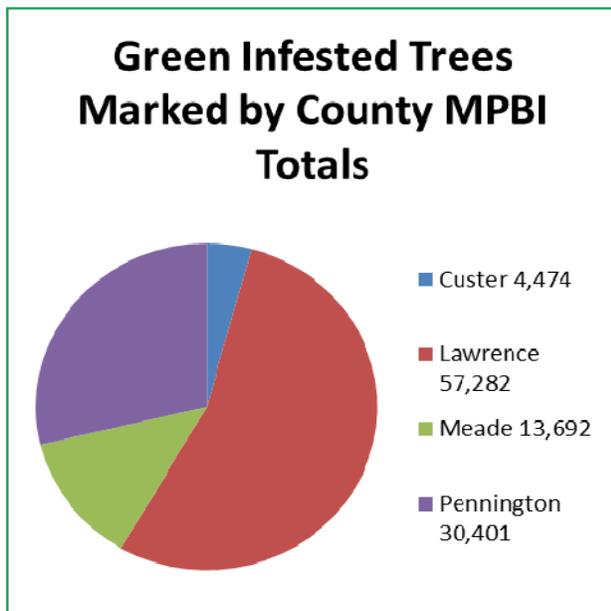


Surveying and Marking Crews

2013 - 2015 Surveying & Marking Results

The counties began surveying and marking for green infested trees following the end of the beetle flight, or no earlier than September 15th. At the end of FY2014, the counties had marked 68,849 green infested trees, and 4,684 dead trees in ROWs. Lawrence County marked the vast majority of their 38,050 trees in targeted areas, while Meade County and Pennington Counties marked both ROWs and targeted areas. Pennington also marked several infested trees within 300 foot buffers of private lands, and Custer County focused all of its efforts on county road ROWs.

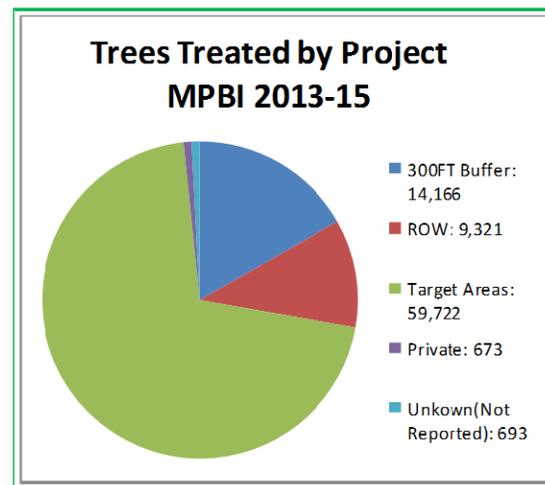
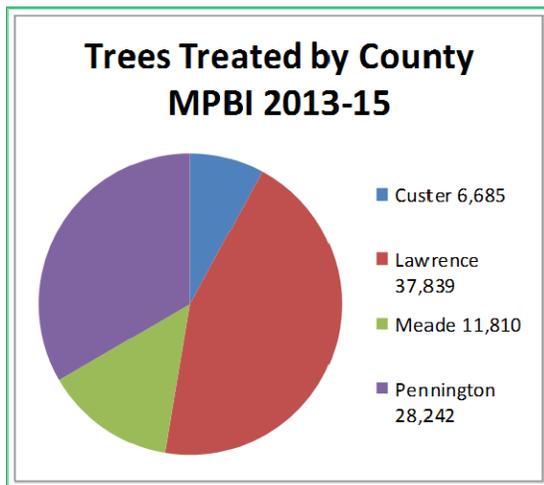
For FY2015, the counties' foci remained the same as the previous year, however Pennington County used some funds to mark private lands signed up for the State's survey and marking program outside of the designated priority areas. County crews marked 37,000 green infested trees, and 10,841 dead trees in ROWs. Lawrence County completed marking early in the season, stating that they had exhausted all of their available funds for marking and treatments. The total number of green infested trees identified after both years of marking was 105,849 along with 15,525 dead trees marked in ROWs.



2013 - 2015 Treatment Results

All of the counties heavily utilized the cutting and chunking method of treatment for infested trees since most of the trees were inaccessible, and it was the only method allowed in most cases under the counties' agreements with the US Forest Service. Custer County was the only county that almost exclusively used the cut and salvage method. Custer County's efforts were focused on only ROW infested and dead trees. Through an agreement with the Forest Service, Custer County reported that 3,279 infested and dead trees were removed by salvage

operations through Forest Service contracts in FY2014. Pennington County had over 500 trees salvaged through unique stewardship agreements with the Mystic Ranger District, and also burned and chipped a small fraction of their total 28,242 trees treated in both fiscal years combined. Lawrence County reported a total of 37,839 trees cut and chunked in both fiscal years, and Meade County reported 11,810 trees cut and chunked throughout the project. A total of 79,896 green infested trees were treated, as well as 4,689 dead trees in ROWs.



2013 - 2015 MPBI Accomplishments

2013-2015 County Accomplishments				
COUNTY	GREEN INFESTED		DEAD	
	MARKED	TREATED	MARKED	TREATED
Custer	4474	3922	3075	2763
Lawrence	57282	37839	1126	0
Meade	13692	11678	142	132
Pennington	30401	26454	11182	1788
TOTAL	105849	79893	15525	4683

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