

**Progress Report on Gypsy Moth Eradication Efforts in 2002**  
**Submitted to: Interstate Pest Control Compact**  
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During the 2001 gypsy moth trapping survey program high moth counts were found at two Twin Cities metro areas and an egg mass survey of the areas revealed hundreds if not thousands of egg masses. Due to these high numbers and the finding of reproducing gypsy moth populations the state of MN began a campaign to eradicate these populations before gypsy moth could take a foot hold in the state. At that time funding was solicited from the Interstate Pest Control Compact and the amount of \$50,000 was granted to help combat this devastating pest.

A total of 2261 acres were proposed for treatment, the states largest treatment acreage in history. An intensive public outreach/educational campaign was initiated. Several meetings were held between city, county, and federal officials to discuss the impacts of this devastating pest, control options, and outreach options. Public meetings were held and several notices were mailed to residents discussing meeting dates and times. Individual meetings were held with school officials, and golf course managers within the treatment blocks and a toll free gypsy moth hotline and website was set up to answer public concerns. Several media interviews were conducted and press releases distributed. It was the goal of the Department of Agriculture to make sure the public was informed about the upcoming treatments.

On May 20, 2002 the first round of two Btk (Foray 48F) treatments were conducted by helicopter, starting at 5:00 a.m. Over 25 staff were on site to help the public within the spray blocks, answer media inquiries, ensure public and staff safety, direct spray aircraft and record necessary weather data. Treatments were shut down between the hours of 7:00 and 10:00 a.m. to avoid over spray of school buses and children at bus stop locations. The entire first round of treatments took several hours over 2 days due to weather conditions and bus route shut down times.

On May 28, 2002, eight days after the first initial round of treatments a second round of treatments was conducted. The treatments again spanned over two days due to weather and the necessary shut down times to avoid school buses and children at bus stops.

After the treatment the core of the infestations at both the sites received burlap banding around several of the trees to help determine the initial success of the treatments. Gypsy moth caterpillars will migrate down the trunk of the tree to find shelter from predators and the hot sun during the day and will rest under the burlap giving managers an early indication of treatment success. Two larvae were found at one of the sites two weeks apart. These initial finds caused some concern but looking at the population that was established, the weather conditions that occurred during the spring, and the susceptible host species available for gypsy moth defoliation it would not be surprising for a small percentage of larvae to survive the treatments. We were concerned whether any remaining larvae would make it through development to become mating moths.

In June, the two treatment areas received intensive pheromone trapping. The core of the two infestations, where egg masses were found, were mass trapped at 3-9 traps per acre with the surrounding treatment area receiving 36 traps per square mile for a total of 761 traps. The survey program resulted in no moths being found in the area in which larvae were found and only 3 single male moths being found in the second site. Data and results are still being analyzed by state and federal cooperators but early speculation is that the 3 moths found within the treatment are in too few of numbers spread out across a large geographical area to sustain a reproducing population. However, both sites will again be trapped at a high rate during the 2003 trapping season to guarantee complete eradication.