



New River Gorge National River Emerald Ash Borer



Infested tree located in Fayette County, WV less than .6 miles from the park boundary. Note the serpentine feeding galleries.

The Emerald Ash Borer, an exotic beetle native to Asia, was located in Fayette County, WV within 0.6 mile of the New River Gorge National River boundary. This beetle which feeds on and eventually kills its host tree, Ash, was originally detected in Michigan in 2002. Since then both State and Federal authorities have been diligently working to prevent the spread; however, the beetle has continued to expand into Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland (via nursery stock) and now West Virginia . It is estimated that this beetle has killed more than 20 million ash trees in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana.

The Emerald Ash Borer beetle can fly several miles as an adult making it difficult to control. Factors contributing to the spread primarily relate to the transport of green wood materials, such as firewood, from contaminated areas. Regulatory agencies have created and enforced wood transport quarantines in Indiana, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

If New River Gorge National River is infested with this exotic beetle, thousands of acres of forest habitat would be adversely impacted. Although Ash species are not a dominant tree species within the park, this species does comprise between 10-20% of the tree cover within approximately 466 acres of the most valuable forested areas along the river. As a result, park staff are concerned about the spread of this beetle into the park and the future of the floodplain forest along the New River.

The NPS is asking for your help in preventing the spread of this pest into the park. **Please do not bring campfire wood from other states or regions.** When possible, please utilize local sources for campfire wood and burn all transported firewood before leaving your campsite to return home.

For more information please review the EAB Pest Alert at: http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/pest_al/eab/eab04.htm or contact the park at 304-465-0508.