



Lake George Association

People Protecting the Lake Since 1885

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Emerald Ash Borer Funding Threatened

Lake George, NY – June 10, 2011 – The LGA supports U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer opposition to proposed cuts for invasive species funding, which he announced earlier this week in a news release. Proposed cuts in the House budget would make fighting New York’s Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) infestation much more difficult.

First discovered in New York in 2009, EAB threatens the more than 900 million ash trees in Upstate New York and the timber and lumber business that they support. Eighteen counties have been placed in a quarantine zone due to EAB infestations. The House budget proposal slashes the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal Plant Health Inspection Service budget by \$73 million, which includes a \$37 million cut to the Plant Health program, and slices \$354 million from agriculture research programs.

Schumer believes that these cuts would obviously provide short term savings, but ultimately make little sense in the face of looming invasive species threats that could have a devastating economic effect on communities throughout upstate New York. Forest-based manufacturing accounts for nearly 50,000 jobs in New York, and \$1.5 billion in payrolls – workers in the Southern Tier have already been laid off, thanks in part to the EAB infestation.

The EAB infests and kills North American ash trees, including green, white, black and blue ash.

“There are approximately 800,000 ash trees in the Lake George watershed,” said Kristen Rohne, the watershed educator for the Lake George Association. “We don’t want to find out what would happen to our watershed and our water quality without these trees,” she said. The larval stage of EAB feeds under the bark of trees, cutting off the flow of water and nutrients. Infested trees always die within two to four years, even if the trees were healthy before being attacked.

Public involvement is key to detecting the EAB. Most common in June and July, the EAB is very small – just 3/8 to 5/8 inches long with metallic green wing covers. Signs of tree infection include: 1/8" D-shaped holes in the bark; tree canopy dieback; and serpentine galleries -- S-shaped feeding tunnels, often with larvae, just under the bark. Sucker sprouts may grow from the base of the tree.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services, alongside state departments of agriculture, are cooperating partners in an EAB survey effort. The large purple triangular-shaped objects you may see hanging in an area ash trees are important detection tool being used in this effort. These “purple traps” are 24 inches long and covered in glue, and it is important that they not be touched, removed or disturbed.

The EAB is now located in Cattaraugus, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Steuben, Ulster and Greene counties. A quarantine affecting the majority of western New York, as well as Greene and Ulster Counties, is restricting the

movement of ash trees, ash products and firewood from all wood species in order to limit the potential introduction of EAB to other areas of the state.

What Can You Do to Help?

1. Look for signs of infestation and report them immediately by calling the LGA at 518-668-3558.
2. Don't move firewood. The EAB is commonly transported to new areas on firewood. "Please remember to leave all firewood at home; do not bring it to campgrounds, parks or summer homes," says Kristen Rohne, the LGA's watershed educator.
3. Purchase firewood from a local vendor, and ask for a receipt to verify the firewood's local source. Firewood must remain within 50 miles of its source.
4. Only firewood labeled as meeting New York's heat-treatment standards to kill pests may be transported further than 50 miles from the firewood's source.
5. Don't disturb the purple EAB traps, which you may see hanging from trees this summer.

How do ash trees benefit the Lake? Ash is a common and important forest species. Ash seeds are a food source for birds and mammals and ash is a commercially-valuable species, used for baseball bats, flooring, furniture, lumber, and pallet manufacture.

All trees are important for water quality. Tree leaves and branches intercept rainfall, reducing its erosive energy and slowing the movement of rain water. Root growth of trees and plant litter improve soil structure and enhance infiltration of rainfall, reducing surface runoff. Trees supply debris to streams, and provide shade to keep the water temperature cool, improving aquatic habitats. Trees even filter contaminants. They keep excess phosphorus and nitrates – found as pollutants in runoff – from entering waters by using them as nutrients for their own growth.

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About the Lake George Association

The LGA is a member-supported nonprofit organization. Families, businesses, summer residents and donors support the LGA. Founded in 1885, the Lake George Association is the nation's oldest lake protection organization. Members and friends of the association can:

- Learn more about lake-friendly living;
- Take a trip aboard the LGA's Floating Classroom;
- Subscribe to a free e-newsletter;
- Attend educational outreach presentations;
- Become a citizen scientist or volunteer for stream clean-ups;
- Call the LGA for technical expertise and solutions for low-impact development and landscaping; and
- Learn about LGA stormwater protection projects in their neighborhoods.

The LGA is located on Rt. 9N across from I-87 South Exit 21 in Lake George. For more information the public can call 518-668-3558 or visit www.lakegeorgeassociation.org