



OFFICIAL NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Southern Pine Beetle Outbreak Escalates in Southwest MS

Brookhaven, MS - Southwest MS is continuing to experience an increase in the activity of the Southern Pine Beetle (SPB). SPB populations in Southwest MS are on the rise and show no sign of slowing. The SPB is a borer beetle that attacks and kills living pine trees. The current spots are affecting pine trees of all ages and size classes.

During late May and June, the U.S. Forest Service foresters in Southwest MS conducted two surveys on the Homochitto National Forest where more than 250 active spots were found on and around the national forest. A more recent survey has indicated this number has grown to approximately 500 active spots, with an additional 160 spots being located on private and school trust lands. Maps of the spots are attached to this release.

Dr. John Riggins, Assistant Professor of Forest Entomology at MS State University, visited some of the spots on the Homochitto National Forest in early July and found them to be very active. Some spots were also found to be rapidly expanding.

Landowners in Franklin, Amite, Wilkinson, Adams, Jefferson, Lincoln and Copiah counties are urged to be diligent and conduct inspections of their lands to determine if SPB activity is present. The MS Forestry Commission (MFC) recently flew a detection flight on 8/6/2012 to help pinpoint active SPB activity on private lands and Board of Education lands.

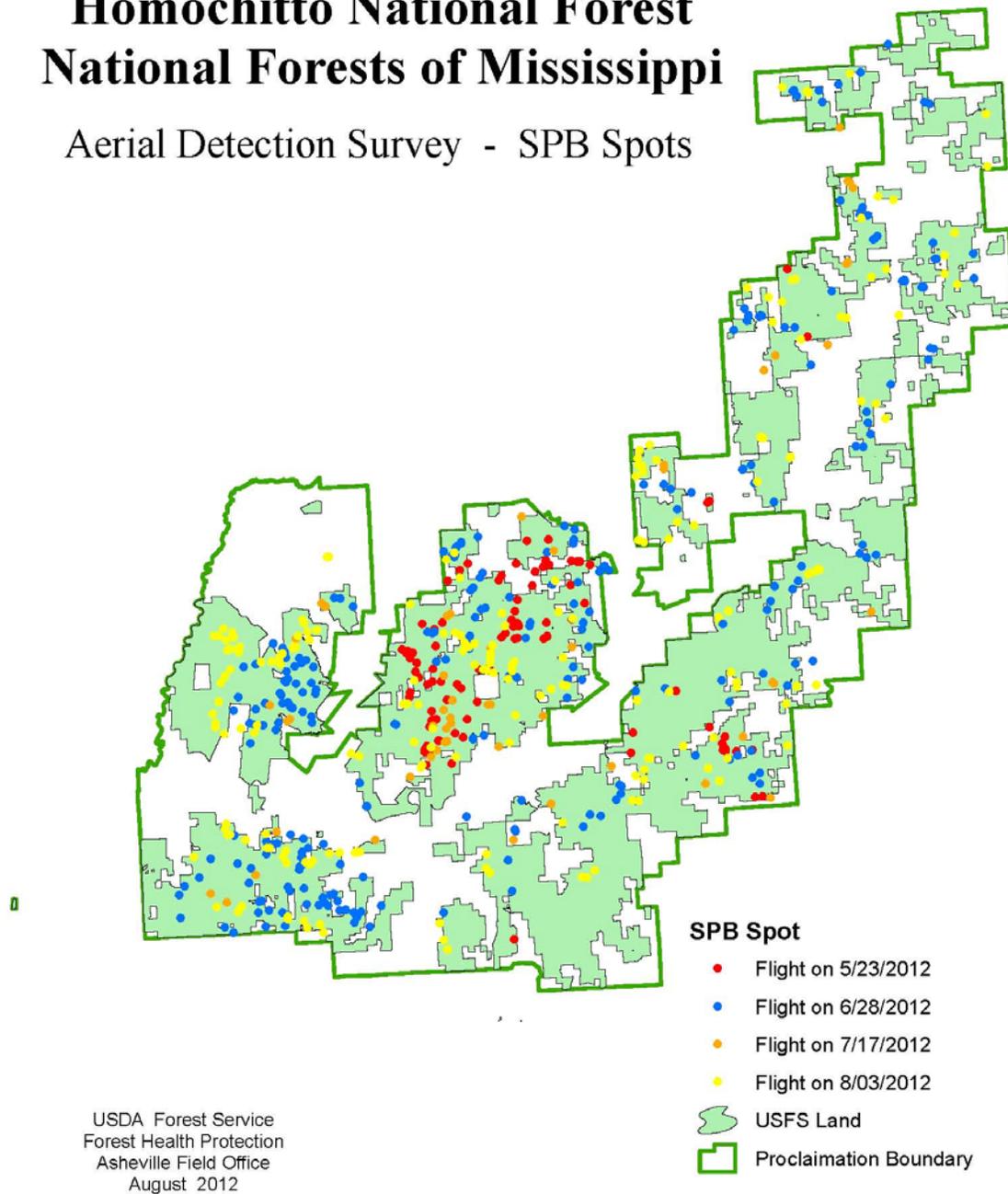
Maps of the spots are available for inspection at the MFC offices in Liberty, Meadville (open 8am-12pm, Mon-Fri) and the Southwest District office in Brookhaven.

For more information about the Southern Pine Beetle, or this outbreak, please contact your local MFC Service Forester. You may also visit our website at www.mfc.ms.gov.

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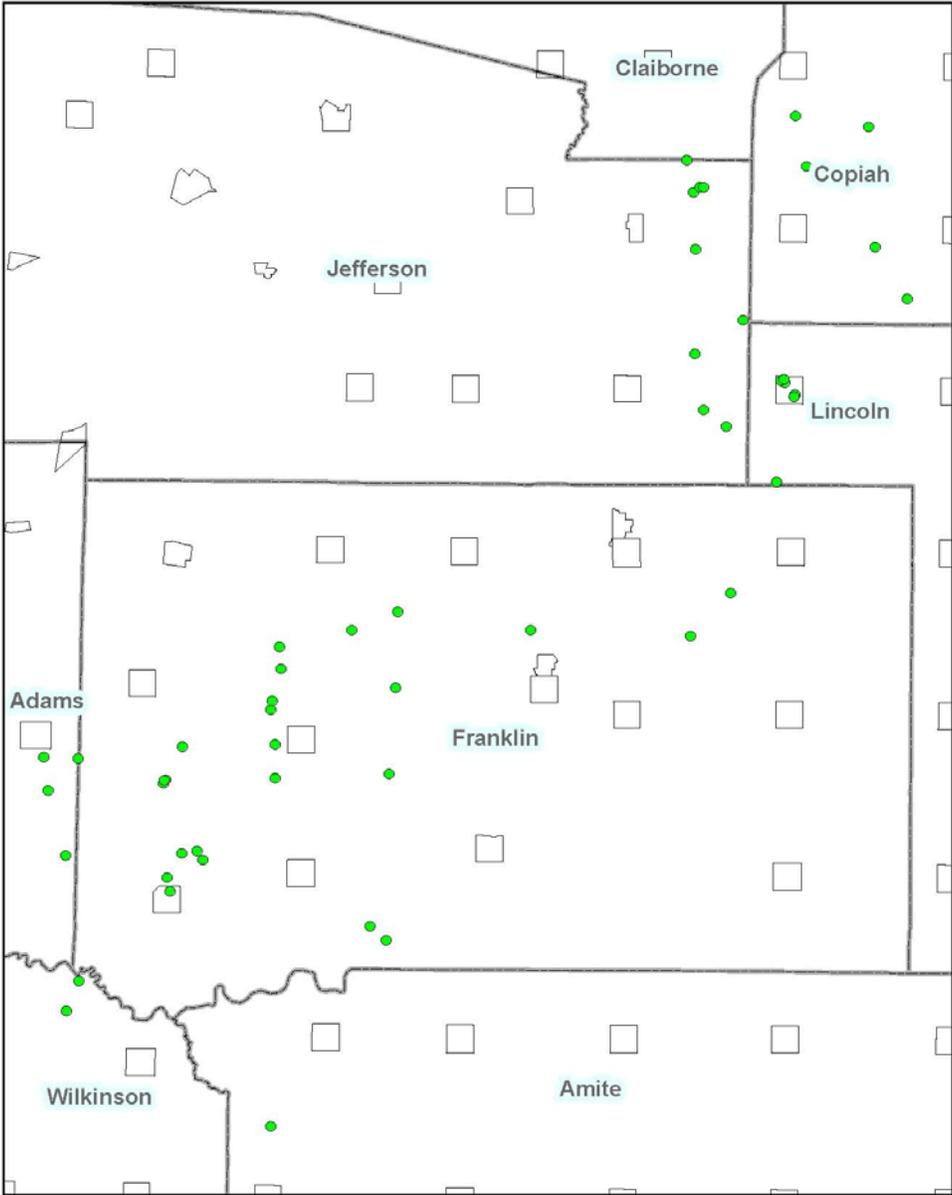
Homochitto National Forest National Forests of Mississippi

Aerial Detection Survey - SPB Spots



Map of all known SPB spots on and around the Homochitto National Forest lands.

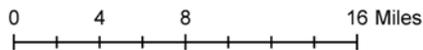
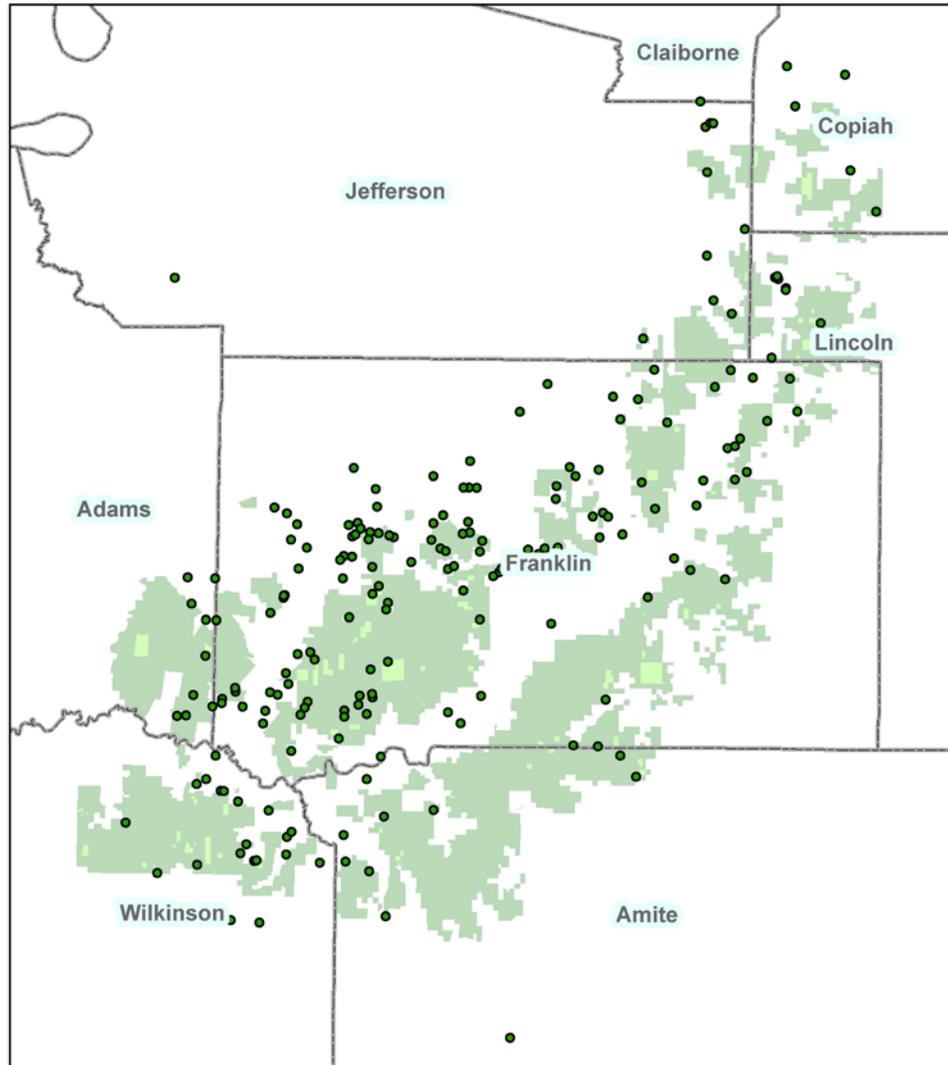
New SPB Spots 8-6-2012



Map of new SPB spots located on private owned and school trust/state owned lands on 8-6-12.



2012 MFC Bug Spots



SPB spots recorded from June to August by the MS Forestry Commission in 2012. Map created 8/7/2012 by Joshua Skidmore

Legend

- MFC 2012 Bug Spots
- ▭ County Boundary
- Forest Service
- Private

Map of all SPB spots reported on private owned and school trust/state owned lands in 2012.