



Reader response

Pine beetle article clarified

Dear Editor,

The Spring 2005 front page *LINK* article on the FERIC/FORREX operational mountain pine beetle workshop had the following statement:

“According to MOF, the MPB could attack and kill an estimated 80% of lodgepole pine in the Interior of BC over the next eight years.” (www.forrex.org/link)

This statement is based on the results of the project that I lead to conduct a provincial-level projection of the current MPB outbreak (www.for.gov.bc.ca/hre/bcmpb/)

It is important to note that our projections are for the susceptible pine only. Small pine trees are not typically susceptible because their bark is too thin to harbour the beetles. Therefore, even within

stands that are very severely infested, there may be many trees that survive because they are too small to be killed. We project levels of mortality only for merchantable trees (>12.5 cm dbh). Also, there are large areas in northern BC where we believe the pine is not currently susceptible because of severe winter weather conditions.

The statement should be qualified to read “..estimated 80% of susceptible lodgepole pine...”. The point is that even if our projections, which represent a worst case scenario, play out there will still be many live pine trees left on the landscape.

Sincerely,

Marvin Eng, Landscape Ecologist
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