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2021 Forest Health Conditions Report reveals an increase in insect, disease, and drought-stress damage in New Mexico
Nearly a quarter of a million new acres impacted

SANTA FE, NM – Today, the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD) Forestry Division released its 2021 Forest Health Conditions Report revealing significant impacts to trees on state and private land due to exceptional drought and warming temperatures.

According to data collected by the Forestry Division and the USDA Forest Service (USFS), the effects of insect, disease, and drought-stress was observed across all land ownerships with 240,000 more acres impacted compared to the year before. More than 30% of that, or 51,000 acres, is privately-owned forest and woodlands. Most of the increase can be contributed to a rise in bark beetle activity causing piñon, ponderosa pine, and Douglas-fir mortality.

“Drought-stress is a major factor because it leaves trees, especially piñon and ponderosa, vulnerable to attack from insects like bark beetles,” said Dr. John Formby, Forest Health Program Manager. “Without enough water the trees are unable to produce enough pitch, or sap, to repel aggressive bark beetles.”

Dr. Formby says most of the damage was observed across Northern New Mexico, including the Cuba, Edgewood, and Santa Fe areas. The public can access the full report and additional information on the Forestry Division website at <https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/sfd/forest-health/>, including the [Forest Health Conditions Story Map](#) and aerial survey [Data Dashboard](#).

Landowners are encouraged to contact their local [Forestry Division District office](#) to develop management plans that can lessen or prevent serious impacts from drought-stress, insects, and disease while also curbing the potential for catastrophic wildfire.

The public can access the 2021 Forest Health Conditions Report and updated Forest Health Dashboard on the Forestry Division website [here](#).

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<https://www.emnrd.nm.gov/>