



## THE CENTRAL PLANT BOARD

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July 24, 2018

Ms. Patti Hiram  
Acting Deputy Chief  
State and Private Forestry  
US Forest Service  
201 14th St, SW, Deputy Chief's Office 3NW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Ms. Hiram:

Since 2016, several letters of support from organizations including the Central Plant Board (CPB), National Plant Board, Southern Group of State Foresters, National Gypsy Moth Management Board and others have been sent to the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and other stakeholders in support of the very successful Gypsy Moth Slow The Spread (STS) program. In 2016, after learning of a reduction of STS funding from USFS to a level of \$7.5 million, the CPB membership were concerned about operational effectiveness of STS.

This year we have learned that STS is now operating at \$7.0 million per year, well below the optimal \$10 million dollar program that started back in 2000 and the \$8 million minimum at which STS can operate sustainably. The STS program has been fiscally responsible, reducing all unnecessary costs, implementing technologies to increase field survey efficiencies and reducing trap densities across the program. It has historically operated at or above a 3:1 benefit to cost ratio. Any additional cuts into the survey would be detrimental to the overall program since the survey data drives all STS management actions. In 2016 and 2017 the STS program received additional funding cuts. These cuts have caused a reduction in overall acres treated, from the average 500,000 acres per year to roughly 350,000 acres per year. Furthermore, pheromone reserves, which are the active ingredient in the most widely used treatment tactic, have been depleted to offset budget cuts, which is simply not sustainable.

We are alarmed at the continued cuts to one of the most successful plant pest management programs in the nation's history, while most of the at-risk forest area in the United States (nearly 70%) has yet to be infested by gypsy moth. The fact that so much at-risk forestland is yet to be impacted by the gypsy moth is due to the success of the STS program.

Enclosed are recent support letters from various organizations. We urge you to strongly support this highly effective and well managed program in 2019, by restoring funding to at least \$8M annually. The STS program is all that is standing between the gypsy moth and a vast majority of uninfested hardwood forests in the United States.

Sincerely,



Collin Wamsley  
President, Central Plant Board

Enclosures

CC:

Rick Cooksey, Director, USFS Forest Health Protection  
Aline DeLucia, Associate Director, Public Policy, NASDA  
Osama El-Lissy, Deputy Administrator, USDA-APHIS-PPQ  
Paula Henstridge, Assistant Deputy Administrator, USDA-APHIS-PPQ  
Ann Gibbs, National Plant Board President  
Christopher Logue, Eastern Plant Board President  
Phil Wilson, Southern Plant Board President  
Helmuth Rogg, Western Plant Board President