

**Summary**

The Colorado General Assembly supports efforts that reduce the impacts of the mountain pine beetle, and enhances Colorado's "rural wealth" through increased capital investment, jobs creation, and economic opportunities.

This would be accomplished by:

- Developing marketing and conservation incentive programs to make it economically viable and attractive for private landowners to retain their land as working forests;
- Completing a state-level assessment of biomass supply for wood products and renewable energy;
- Completing an assessment of the relative availability of lands capable of responsibly producing biomass for wood products and renewable energy while ensuring that transportation and movement of beetle-infested wood and logs with intact bark do not further spread the insect infestations;
- Encouraging sound, innovative forestry practices through federal contracts that guarantee specified quantities of material over multiple years in order to enhance multiple public benefits from trees and forests;
- Developing markets for Colorado's wood products through innovative incentives to purchasers and users of those products, including the use of bark-beetle-killed wood in construction projects; and
- Encouraging and developing properly sized, sustainable wood industries in local communities that will help diversify the economy while providing jobs and rural wealth.

Local governments are encouraged to create incentives that will create markets for timber and other biomass utilization. Industries are encouraged to establish operations in local Colorado communities.

**Talking Points**

- Colorado's forest lands are impacted by both human and environmental conditions that have caused many forested landscapes to be vulnerable to large-scale insect and disease attacks.
- Bark beetle infestations have killed or negatively impacted several hundred thousand acres of lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, and Engelmann spruce-subalpine fir forests.
- The mountain pine beetle infestation increased by 374,000 acres in 2009, bringing the total number of acres impacted in Colorado to 2.9 million since the outbreak was first detected in 1996.
- New pockets of mountain pine beetle activity were detected in lower-elevation stands of ponderosa pine on the Front Range, most notably from Rocky Mountain National Park north to the Wyoming border
- Trees killed by bark beetles pose many dangers, including the risk of trees falling on electrical transmission lines and commercial and emergency communications sites during high winds, as well as the risk of wildfire, and the dangers those fires pose to the forest, homes, communities, and critical watersheds.

- Uses of wood from bark-beetle-killed trees are the same as wood from healthy trees, if utilized within five years.
- Biomass from trees affected by bark beetles can be used for products as diverse as fuels, lubricants, heat and electricity, chemicals, food, feed, building materials, paper, clothing, and much more.
- Colorado is home to many place-based collaboratives that address the environmental, social, and economic impacts of bark beetles on high-altitude forests. They are comprised of federal, state, and local government representatives; utility and water providers; wood products industry; and conservation and public interest groups.
- The Colorado State Forest Service supports HJR10-1024.