



### Asian Gypsy Moth: What can our District do to help residents?

During the summer of 2015, Oregon Department of Agriculture traps detected two Asian gypsy moths in Forest Park and St. Johns. Additionally, twelve European gypsy moths were detected. Asian gypsy moth is not yet established in the United States and a national plan is in effect to keep it from establishing. A technical working group, convened by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, has developed and recommended a proposed Asian gypsy moth eradication response to be conducted by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The Oregon Department of Agriculture is reviewing the recommendations and is in the process of completing necessary environmental and public review so as to finalize an eradication strategy.

If populations become established, the defoliating insects could cause serious ecological, economical, and social harm to the local area and greater region. Specifically:

- Defoliation, including possible conifer defoliation by Asian gypsy moth, threatens forest health.
- Defoliation exposes our streams to increased sunlight that will adversely impact water quality.
- Gypsy moths displace native moths and butterflies by occupying or altering their habitat.
- Large outbreaks of gypsy moth caterpillars create a nuisance and threaten human health.

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District recognizes the grievous impact that these insects would have on our natural resources. The District will provide information to landowners, residents and community members outlining steps they can take to help protect the forests, woodlands and urban trees they care about. To accomplish this, the District will develop and implement the following:

- 1) Compile and distribute Asian gypsy moth information to landowners and residents.
- 2) Assist with outreach for, and participate in, Asian gypsy moth egg mass detection workshops.
- 3) Work with partners that have specialized expertise and explore opportunities to monitor impacts of the control effort on native *Lepidoptera* species.
- 4) Participate in Oregon Department of Agriculture / Oregon Invasive Species Council Asian Gypsy Moth Inter-Organizational Communications meetings.

Conservation District staff will stay current on Asian and European gypsy moth developments, but recognize that they are not leading experts in this field; nor are they responsible for control operations. For matters beyond the scope of our knowledge, as well as for matters outside the scope of the above initiatives, inquiries will be directed to the appropriate sources and/or leading agencies.

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