



## **Protecting Atlantic Canada's forests from spruce budworm outbreaks**

The federal government's investment of \$74.75 million over the next five years will allow the Healthy Forest Partnership to continue important research to prevent a spruce budworm infestation that threatens Atlantic Canada's forests.

"We are delighted that the Government of Canada has committed in this budget to continuing to be an important partner in the Spruce Budworm Early Intervention Strategy," says Dr. David MacLean, Chair, Project Management Team, Healthy Forest Partnership; Professor, University of New Brunswick.

For the last four years, members of the Healthy Forest Partnership have been working together to implement innovative early intervention strategies developed by Government of Canada (NRCan) scientists. Currently a spruce budworm infestation is happening in Quebec, and has destroyed 7 million hectares of forest and threatens to spread to New Brunswick and throughout Atlantic Canada.

"The good news is that it is working so far. Growing populations identified are being kept below outbreak levels. But we know this research must continue if we are to be successful," says MacLean. "Phase 2 of the early intervention strategy will focus on migration, non-target impacts, improved treatment plans, impacts of spruce budworm on watersheds, understanding spruce budworm in the context of climate change, and improving defoliation detection tools."

The situation the region faces is not unlike what British Columbia went through with mountain pine beetle, or the last spruce budworm outbreak in Atlantic Canada in the 1980s and 90s. Both killed millions of hectares of forest, and hurt the sector and the many people, families, and communities who rely on it.

"We look forward to working together over the next five years to ensure that this research-focused strategy not only keeps our forests healthy, but generates new scientific understanding that can be applied to forest management practices across Canada," adds MacLean.

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**Healthy Forest Partnership** - Being faced with the threat of a devastating spruce budworm outbreak has driven innovation in our region, and resulted in a unique and powerful collaboration between Government of Canada scientists at NRCan, universities, industry, provincial governments, communities, and citizens.

For more information and to follow our research, visit: [www.healthyforestpartnership.ca](http://www.healthyforestpartnership.ca)