



## **FOREST PEST ALERT**

### **SEPTEMBER, 2017 UPDATE**



Carson City, Nevada - The Nevada Division of Forestry Forest Health Specialist conducted trapping and aerial surveys this season focused on the White Satin Moth outbreak in Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park. Please see the map included with this release.

The survey revealed 226 acres of infestation, ranging from minimal to heavy defoliation. Minimal defoliation was mapped on 52 acres, with moderate areas mapped on 107 acres, and heavy areas mapped on 67 acres. Minimal defoliation ranges between 10-50%, moderate from 50-75%, and heavy being greater than 75% tree defoliation. Results of trapping indicate that populations are trending higher; freezing weather in the higher elevations is triggering the insects' transition to its over-wintering stage which results in lower trap numbers. In late August the second hatch of larvae occurred and sampling found high caterpillar numbers feeding in upper North Canyon, Marlette Lake, and west of Hobart Lake. Bark and leaf samples found 10-15 caterpillars per leaf, which is extremely high. It is anticipated that fall color will be greatly diminished this year, and that populations will likely increase next year causing more defoliation, tree stress, and tree mortality.

Many reports of moth sightings were taken by the NDF in the Carson and Washoe Valley areas, as well as west and northwest Reno in the higher elevations outside of town. Moths in the more urban areas should not lead to any major defoliation since the insect requires more than individual landscape trees to flourish. Defoliation may still occur, but it should be minimal.

NDF is researching the possibility of conducting a biological insecticide spray project next year to control the insect population within the park to minimize the infestation. Since this is a non-native invasive insect, native predators are not present in sufficient numbers to control the population. This type of project will require inter-agency cooperation and planning. The feasibility as well as the costs will be determined prior to moving forward with any project.

NDF would like to extend our thanks for assistance with all of the reporting by the general public since the initial pest alert was released to the public. This provided valuable information of tracking the potential movement of the insect. This also helped the NDF to develop and to focus surveys in priority areas.

If there are any questions about the defoliation, infestation and future plans by NDF to please contact the NDF Forest Health Specialist (Gene Phillips) at 775-849-2500 ext241.