

**Airspace Coordination
USAF Eastern/New England Airspace Range Council Meeting
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Introduction: Airspace coordination has been an aviation safety program within the wildfire community since the 1980's. Airspace coordination has also expanded into an "all risk" program serving the needs of aviation fire suppression, volcano eruptions and hurricane responses.

INTERAGENCY AIRSPACE COORDINATION GUIDE: The foundation document of the DOI and USFS is the Interagency Airspace Coordination Guide. Published in 2003 as a result of a comprehensive team effort that included FAA, BLM, USFS, BIA, NPS and DOD aviation personnel. The guide promotes safe, consistent and standardized approach to issues involving airspace and land management agencies responsibilities. The guide may be found at www.fs.fed.us/r6/fire/aviation/airspace.

Fire Season: 2008 was relatively "quiet" except for Northern California. The year 2008 tied with 2001 as the eighth warmest year on record for the earth.

From the NIFC National Wildland Fire Potential Outlook - March 31st, 2009

Eastern Area: Normal significant fire potential is forecast in April, except for an area of below normal significant fire potential in southern West Virginia. During May through July, above normal significant fire potential is expected in north/central Wisconsin and south/central portions of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. A series of storms forecast across Maryland and Delaware in early April are expected to help mitigate fire potential and the long term drought that has been in place over that area through the winter. Snowfall across much of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan this winter is helping to mitigate drought in that area. However, northern Wisconsin and the extreme south central portions of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan will likely see above normal significant fire potential develop this spring after snow cover melts, given the antecedent long term drought over these areas.

The Eastern Region is in its Spring Fire Season with winds drying out the surface. Grass fires and forest fires are spotted and numerous. Fire bands are in place with heavy populations being affected by smoke. Many Fire Detection flights over the 20 northeastern States are taking place daily for many hours. These areas are over national forests and interagency lands as well as over private forested areas owned by lumber and oil companies. This is also the time of the year that helicopters are flying low-level inspecting powerlines and pipeline clearings. These flights are low and slow and can be seen many times in short visual distances.

Aerial fertilization of national forest lands in hardwood forests is taking place. These projects also occur over private lands to secure the growth of these high-dollar hardwood forests composed of Cherry, Oak, Maple, Walnut and Beech. Oil companies are also a factor in low-level flying as they check oil well pumping jacks and powerlines throughout the landscape.

National Interagency Coordination Center (www.nifc.gov)

The National Interagency Coordination Center (NICC) is the focal point for coordinating the mobilization of resources for wildland fire and other incidents throughout the United States. Located in Boise, Idaho, NICC also provides intelligence and predictive services designed to be used by the internal wildland fire community for wildland fire and incident management decision making. From the NICC website you can access the NW Coordination Center, Northern Rockies, Rocky Mountain, Eastern Great Basin and Western Great Basin websites.



DOD Flight Crew Poster:

DOD AP1/B (Ch. 3 Hazards) contains directions to DOD flight crews. Many Military Training Routes (MTRs) traverse areas of mountainous forest and range lands. Flight crews must be alert for fire suppression activities using aircraft during the fire season. In many cases a NOTAM designating a temporary flight restriction area will be in effect for such areas when a fire exists.

All Aircrews should be extremely alert for such areas whether designated or not and avoid such areas by at least 5 NM.

Northeastern Area Spray Projects

The gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar*, is one of North America's most devastating forest pests. The species originally evolved in [Europe and Asia](#) and has existed there for thousands of years.

The gypsy moth is known to feed on the foliage of hundreds of species of plants in North America but its most common hosts are oaks and aspen. Gypsy moth populations are typically eruptive, and when

densities reach very high levels trees may become completely defoliated. Several successive years of [defoliation](#) , along with contributions by other stress factors, may ultimately result in [tree mortality](#).

This year's Gypsy Moth program involves 9 northeastern States for 1.6 million acres in three sub phases of aerial application suppression of pests. The first is the **Eradication** projects, then **Suppression** projects, then the **Slow-The-Spread (STS) projects**. The STS ranges from North Carolina through IN/IL and up to Minnesota to the Canadian border. In addition, West Virginia is launching its first all helicopter aerial application project in this year's Gypsy Moth spraying program.

The project will have a multiple state Airspace Coordinator for Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Maryland. (Gary Jewett – Cell phone 503-803-3763) He will be based at the Forest Health Protection facility at Harrisburg International Airport complex and will be managing the communications and coordination with military installations, FBOs, commercial, and industry business operators in the tri-state area. PA's project is approx 300,000 ac, with WV and MD about 50,000 acres each. Complexities as heavy air traffic, DC-P40-DC, increasing private aircraft usage, powerplant security, etc requires the Airspace Coordinator to sync all activities with ongoing air traffic.

Emerald Ash Borer

Emerald ash borer, *Agrilus planipennis* Fairmaire, is an exotic beetle that was discovered in southeastern Michigan near Detroit in the summer of 2002. The adult beetles nibble on ash foliage but cause little damage. The larvae (the immature stage) feed on the inner bark of ash trees, disrupting the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. Emerald ash borer probably arrived in the United States on solid wood packing material carried in cargo ships or airplanes originating in its native Asia. Emerald ash borer has Killed more than 40 million ash trees in southeastern Michigan alone, with tens of millions more lost in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia.

Also during this time, the Emerald Ash Bore infestation breakout in Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois is requiring many aerial survey flights to map the defoliation and forest damage assessment mission-flights. In addition, southwestern Pennsylvania has reported significant infestation in three counties that is requiring significant flights north of Pittsburgh in an attempt to contain the pest and eradicate it from the dense hardwood forests.

Region 8

The Southern Region is into the southeastern US fire season. Just last week, over 100 homes were destroyed with 25 severe injuries reported fighting wildland fires with blowing winds over Oklahoma. Airtankers and ASMs are conducting aerial fire-retardant suppression missions. Type I, II, and III helicopters are involved as well as Type I Airtankers. The Eastern Region sent its Type I airtanker to Oklahoma and Texas to fight fires through the coordination of NICC.

For additional information about US Forest Service aviation activities:

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