



Washington State Department of Agriculture

PO Box 42560
Olympia, Washington 98504-2560
Visit our Web site at: agr.wa.gov
[Subscribe to WSDA News Releases](#)

For immediate release: Feb. 6, 2015 (15-10)

Contact: [Mike Louisell](#) (360) 902-1813

WSDA to hold open house Feb. 17 on Clark County gypsy moth project

OLYMPIA – The [Washington State Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) will hold an open house Feb. 17 in Yacolt, Clark County, the site of a gypsy moth infestation detected this past summer. The town is about 20 miles northeast of Vancouver.

WSDA staff, including entomologists, will be on hand to answer questions on the agency's proposal to eliminate a population of [European gypsy moth](#). The proposal calls for treating 220 acres of heavily forested land near Yacolt.

Of the 27 gypsy moths caught in WSDA's annual trapping efforts last summer, 16 were found in the Yacolt area. Gypsy moth is a destructive forest pest and can also affect urban landscapes when the caterpillars feed on host trees, plants and shrubs.

The open house will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Yacolt Primary School, 406 W. Yacolt Rd., Yacolt. Individuals are invited to drop in anytime during this period to get their questions answered one-on-one, view displays on the invasive pest and videos.

Gypsy moth has defoliated millions of acres of forest across the Northeast and Midwest. If left unchecked, gypsy moths could devastate Washington's forests. It has been detected in Washington every year since 1977, but permanent populations have not been established here because of the state's aggressive trapping and eradication projects.

Due to the rugged terrain in the area, WSDA is proposing three aerial applications of a biological insecticide that would be applied to trees, shrubs and other vegetation, three to 14 days apart. The insecticide, Btk or *Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki*, is registered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ([EPA](#)). It is found naturally in the environment and has an excellent safety record.

WSDA will comply with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) before deciding whether or not to approve the proposal. A decision should be made by April.

Visit the gypsy moth [website](#) (www.agr.wa.gov/PlantsInsects/InsectPests/GypsyMoth/) for more information or call the WSDA gypsy moth toll-free hotline at 1-800-443-6684. Questions may also be sent to pestprogram@agr.wa.gov regarding the proposed project or the threat that gypsy moth poses to Washington.

###

WSDA is on [You Tube](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)