

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) are releasing the draft "*Massachusetts Highly Destructive Invasive Species Draft Response Plan*" for public review and comment. The document is available for review on the DCR website: www.mass.gov/dcr/forestry. A public meeting will be held on December 12, 2007, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sturbridge Host and Conference Center, Route 20, Sturbridge, to review the plan as well as strategies to address the detection of and response to the invasive species in Massachusetts' urban and rural forests.

DCR will also accept public comments postmarked by **January 15, 2008**. Please mail all comments to DCR, Bureau of Forestry: Emergency Response Plan, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114, Attn: Patricia Dickhaut; or via e-mail to patricia.dickhaut@state.ma.us. For a hard copy of the document, please contact Patricia Dickhaut at 617-626-1459.

Public comments will be evaluated and assessed to develop the final "*Massachusetts Highly Destructive Invasive Species Draft Response Plan*" which will be posted on the DCR website's Forestry web page.

Massachusetts through the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Department of Agricultural Resource and in cooperation with the USDA APHIS and Forest Service has prepared a "*Massachusetts Highly Destructive Invasive Species Draft Response Plan*" that anticipates and addresses forest invasive species that pose a threat to Massachusetts urban and rural forests. The plan calls for monitoring, early detection, and rapid response to infestation of emerald ash borer, Asian long-horned beetle, sudden oak death, Sirex woodwasp, and hemlock woolly adelgid.

You can participate by accessing the Draft Response Plan on the DCR Forestry web page at www.mass.gov/dcr/forestry or requesting a Draft Response Plan by calling Patricia Dickhaut at 617-626-1459.

You are also invited to attend an informational meeting on the Draft Response Plan, and have the opportunity to provide comments, on December 12, 2007, from 6:30-9:30 p.m., at The Sturbridge Host and Conference Center, Route 20, Sturbridge.

The 45-Day Public Comment Period closes on January 15, 2008.

After reviewing all comments, a final "*Massachusetts Highly Destructive Invasive Species Response Plan*" will be posted on the DCR website's Forestry web page.