

The Environmental Protection Agency's Endangered Species Act Affecting Pesticides Specifically for Florida¹

Frederick M. Fishel²

This guide addresses the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) voluntary program affecting pesticide use for protecting endangered species in Florida.

Introduction

Although the EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs has included endangered species considerations in its risk assessments for many years, the Endangered Species Protection Program (ESPP) started in 1988. It is largely voluntary at the present time and relies on cooperation between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, EPA regions, states, and pesticide users.

This particular program is one of several targeted to protect endangered species, but is unique from other state or federal programs with the same ultimate goals. This EPA program has two goals:

- To provide the best protection for endangered species from the use of pesticides.
- To minimize the impact of the EPA program on pesticide applicators. For more information, see the ESPP site at <http://www.epa.gov/espp/>.

The unique features of the EPA program are that it does not target the entire United States or Florida, but certain counties within Florida, and only specific areas of those counties. It is also very specific in the pesticides included in its scope. Not all pesticides are in the program, but only those that are considered a risk to certain endangered species.

Which species are taken into account in this program?

Currently, there is only one species that is considered in the EPA program for Florida: Florida torrey (*Torreya taxifolia*). Florida torrey (Figure 1) is a relatively small, conical, evergreen, needle-bearing tree (up to 60 feet tall, but usually less than 30 feet). Its needles are attached singly and spirally but their short petioles twist so as to spread the needles in one plane on either side of the twigs. The needles are stiff, sharp-pointed, and piercing to the touch. They have a strongly pungent or resinous odor when crushed (some call it “stinking cedar”). The female cone develops into a single, fleshy-covered, dark green, oval seed about 1-inch

1. This document is PI-125, one of a series of the Pesticide Information Office, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Original publication date July 2006. Reviewed August 2009. Visit the EDIS Web site at <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.

2. Frederick M. Fishel, associate professor, Agronomy Department, and Director, Pesticide Information Office; Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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long which is coated with a whitish bloom. About 20 years are needed for the tree to mature.



Figure 1. Florida torreya. (Photo credit: Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance)

Florida torreya is endemic to the Apalachicola River area in Gadsden, Liberty, and Jackson Counties, Florida, and in a closely adjacent part of Decatur County, Georgia. Scattered immature trees occur within the general range. Florida torreya grows on bluffs and ravine slopes in the moist shade of associated pine-hardwoods. In Florida, the majority of the habitat is in private ownership.

Disease, rather than pesticides, is considered the most prominent threat to this species. Nevertheless, because of the torreya's endangered status, pesticides must be considered as a contributive threat. Housing development, dams, and reservoirs also pose a threat to the species, but the steepness of the bluffs and ravines limit such building capabilities.

Affected counties and pesticides in Florida

There are only three counties in the entire state that are affected: Gadsden, Jackson, and Liberty, all in the states panhandle. County bulletins have been developed for these counties that map the affected areas:

Gadsden County:

<http://www.epa.gov/espp/florida/gadsd.htm>

Jackson County:

<http://www.epa.gov/espp/florida/jackson.htm>

Liberty County:

<http://www.epa.gov/espp/florida/liberty.htm>

To determine whether the information in the bulletins applies to your use of a pesticide, review the questions below. If you answer “yes” to both questions, the bulletins would apply to you.

- Do you intend to use pesticides within or near the shaded area on your county-specific map?
- Are any of the ingredients listed on the front panel of your pesticide product named in the Table of Pesticide Active Ingredients (also listed in Table 1)?

Pesticides shown in Table 1 are considered by EPA to cause a threat in these three counties. All are herbicides.

Additional Information

EPA's Endangered Species Protection Program:

<http://www.epa.gov/espp/>.

Table 1. Pesticides considered by EPA to threaten Florida torreya.

Active ingredient	Sample trade names
Amitrole	Amitrole, Herbizole
Amommonium sulfamate	Ammate, Ortho Brush Killer
Atrazine	Aatrex, Atrazine, many others
Cacodylic acid	Phytar 560, Montar
Dalapon	Dowpon
Dazomet	Cosans, Mogul, AMA, Grazon, Nalcon
Dicamba	Banvel, Trimec
Dichlobenil	Casoron, Branzil
Dichlorprop	Brush and Weed Killer
Diphenamid	Enide, Formula GH
EPTC	Eptam, Styazine, Chacon, Genate, EPTC
Fosamine-ammonium	Krenite Brush Out
Glyphosate	Roundup, Rondo, Rodeo
Hexazinone	Velpar, Pronone, Buckshot
Paraquat	Paraquat, Gramoxone Inteon
Picloram	Tordon
Simazine	Simazine, Princep
Limitations	
Use tree injection only in ravines and bluffs (steepheads). Use ground applications along margins of ravines and bluffs. Maintain a 100-foot buffer strip from ravines and bluffs during aerial liquid applications and a 50-foot strip during aerial granular applications.	