

Longhorned Beetle, Shortchanged City

The Asian Longhorned Beetle in the Big Apple



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May 21, 2006

Executive Summary

The majority of trees lining New York City streets and filling City parks are susceptible to destruction at the hand of the Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB). The Asian Longhorned Beetle feasts on, breeds in, and eventually kills any tree that it infests. Already found in Central Park and concentrated in Brooklyn and Queens, the beetle's unchecked spread carries enormous economic and environmental consequences for the entire northeast region of the United States.

This invasive pest threatens the survival of 17 species of hardwood trees, including varieties of maple, oak and elm found in the City. The beetle has already caused the destruction of over 4,000 trees in New York City and 6,000 trees in New York State since its detection in 1996. More than 2 million trees in New York City are at risk of being eaten by the Asian Longhorned Beetle, and the federal government has estimated it would cost \$41 billion to replace susceptible trees nationwide and \$2.2 billion to do the same in New York City.

While federal investment to combat the Asian Longhorned Beetle in New York has stagnated in recent years, Chicago has been able to eliminate the vicious pest because of aggressive federal investment.

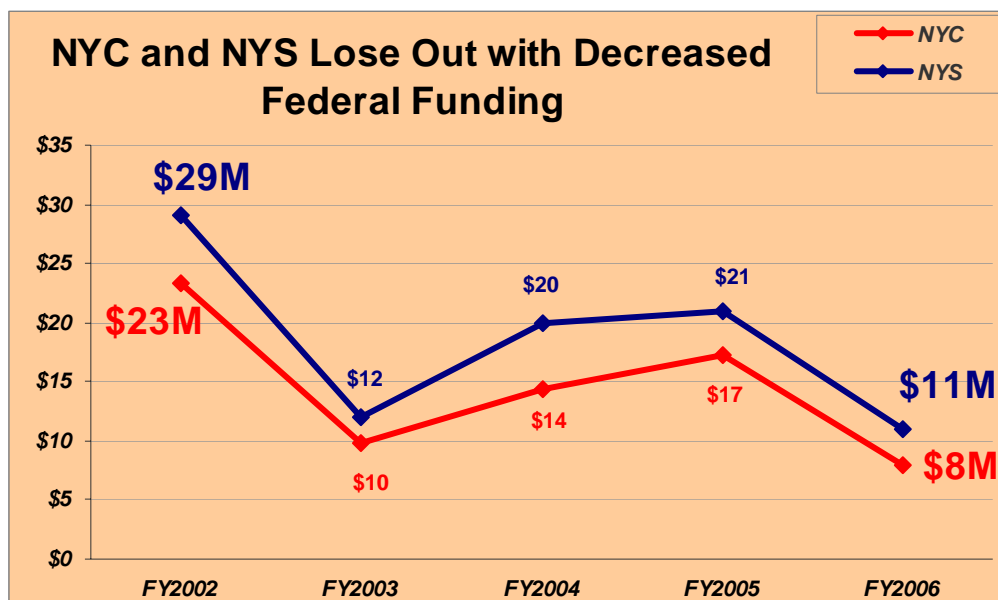
New York City needs its fair share of funding from the federal Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). A modest federal investment now can prevent massive economic damage later.



Findings

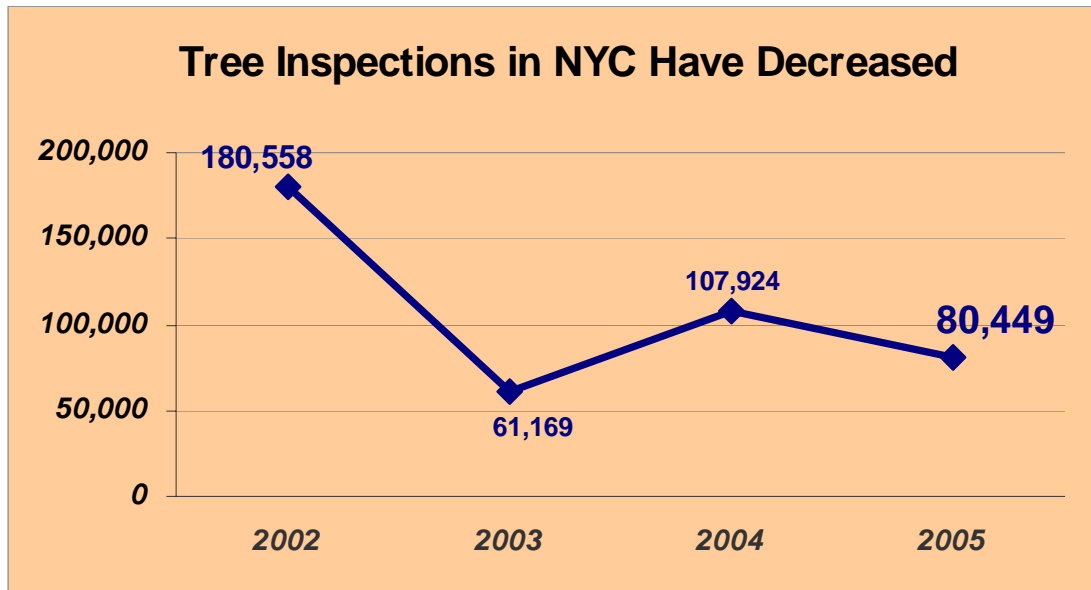
Finding #1: Federal support for efforts to eradicate the Asian Longhorned Beetle in New York have dropped off in recent years.

New York State's ALB eradication program received only \$11 million in federal funding for 2006--a \$10 million dollar decrease from the previous year and the lowest allocation since 2002. As a result, the City has only received \$8 million dollars for 2006 to fight the beetle in Brooklyn, Queens and Manhattan.



Finding #2: Lack of federal funding forces the City to inspect fewer trees.

The fewer inspections state and federal officials can afford to conduct, the less likely the City is to be able to eliminate this pest before it destroys trees on the street, in parks and on private property.



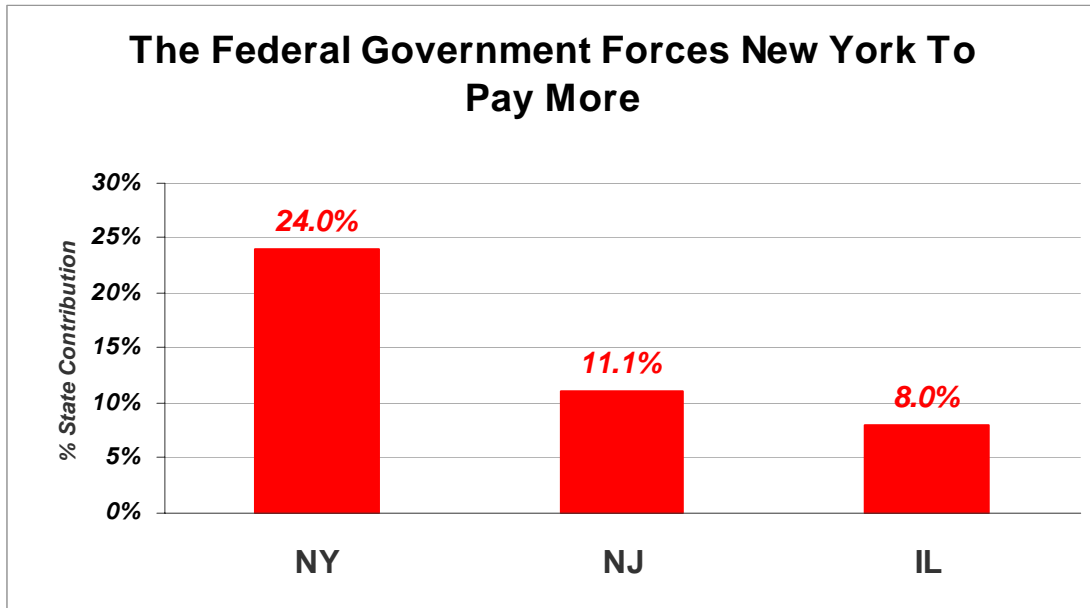
Finding #3: Decreased inspections impact every borough affected by ALB.

In 2002, 180,558 trees were inspected by the New York City Parks Department and APHIS for ALB infestation—63% done by the most effective canopy inspection method. In 2005, the City could only afford to inspect 19,101 trees—and only 7% by canopy inspection.

Trees Inspected	2002	2005	Decrease
<i>Queens</i>	105,078	45,164	57%
<i>Brooklyn</i>	17,743	15,569	12%
<i>Manhattan</i>	57,737	19,716	66%
Total NYC	180,558	80,449	55%
Total Canopy Inspections	113,752 (63%)	5,631 (7%)	56%

Finding #4: NYS has contributed more to ALB eradication than any other state.

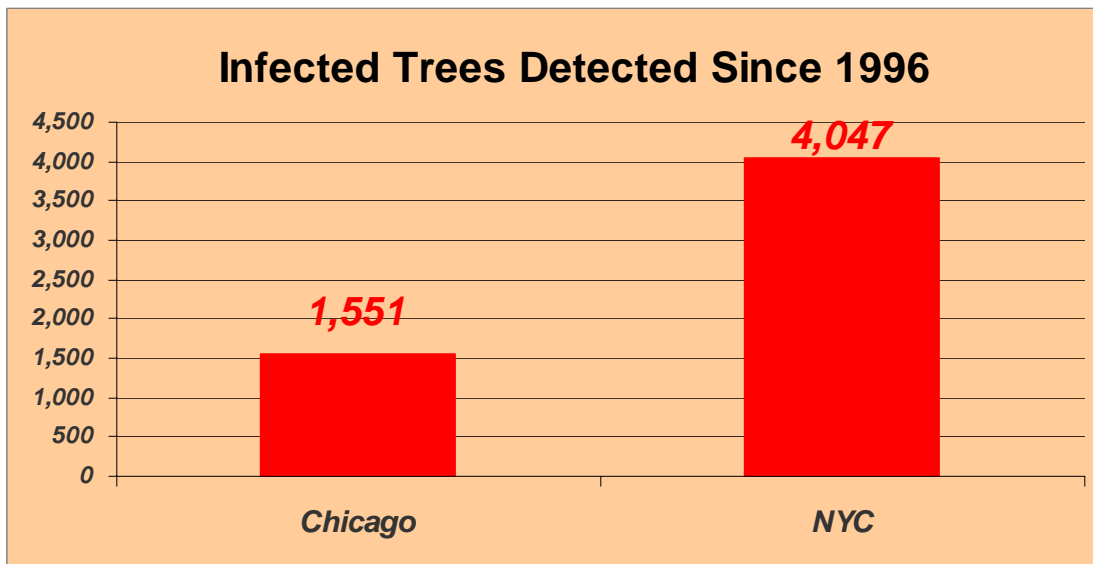
From 2001 to 2006, the federal government funded 92% of total eradication costs in Illinois and 88.9% of total costs in New Jersey, but only 76% of total eradication expenditures in New York.



Finding #5: Increased federal funding for Illinois has helped the state to eradicate ALB while New York remains threatened.

Chicago has been able to eliminate Asian Longhorned Beetle because of aggressive federal investment. There have been no ALB infestations detected in Illinois since 2003.

Without sufficient federal funds, New York City has been unable to eradicate this invasive pest. In 2005, 44 infested trees were found and destroyed in Queens, Brooklyn and Manhattan. So far this year, 21 additional infected trees have been found in Brooklyn and 2 additional infected trees have been found in Manhattan.



Solution

The \$11M in federal funding provided to New York State in FY 2006 was the lowest in 4 years, even as *state contributions to the eradication effort have more than doubled* over the same time period.

APHIS's official Asian Longhorned Beetle eradication plan calls for an investment of \$48 million a year in order to eradicate the pest nationwide by 2014, or \$30 million a year for total eradication by 2020.

An annual federal appropriation of \$48 million would allow the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the US Department of Agriculture to follow through on its plan to eradicate the Asian Longhorned Beetle nationwide by the year 2014.

A federal investment of as little as \$305.5 million could prevent \$41 billion in damage and eliminate an invasive pest that has caused the destruction of over 27,100 trees in New York, New Jersey and Illinois. Congress should invest in the environment and fully fund APHIS' Asian Longhorned Beetle eradication plan.

Methodology

Executive Summary: USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service
New York City Parks Department Central Forestry and Horticulture

Finding #1: Congressional Research Service
USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service

Finding #2 & #3: New York City Parks Department Central Forestry and Horticulture

Finding #4: Congressional Research Service
USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service

Finding #5: USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service
New York City Parks Department Central Forestry and Horticulture

Solution: USDA Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service
New York City Parks Department Central Forestry and Horticulture
Congressional Research Service