

Continued Research/Education Funding Needed

Dear Community Member/Supporter:

At 4:20 pm on July 17, 2006, through 5:00 am on July 18th (a little over 12 hours) the Storm Prediction Center (SPC) received 163 damage related reports; which 121 were related to tree failures. Huron County reports stated; *“trees down across M-25 in multiple locations”*, *“trees down in the city of Bad Axe. Power outages reported”*, *“several trees down along Michigan route 25 in Caseville and nearby areas”*, and *“tree down on house, garage damaged”*.

This storm that ripped through our area and several others caused an extensive amount of property damage; with reports of several injuries and one fatality from a public park in Ontario. Could some of these tree “failures” have been prevented? Although we cannot determine this, future “failures” may be prevented.

Along the shoreline of Caseville, Lake and Hume Townships, more than thirty-miles of roadway containing many areas of declining and dying trees (primarily Oaks) have been identified; but the source of this problem has not. After hundreds of research hours and personal funding for diagnostic testing, it appears to be caused from a root related problem.

Two root diseases have been identified, but additional testing is required to determine the extent of their impact. The first is Armillaria (considered a secondary infection) and the other, a devastating disease called **Phytophthora** (Greek: “Plant Destroyer”). Explained further by a scientific research group, “... like many human viruses such as HIV, oomycete plant pathogens disable the immune system of their victims...”

Since July of 2009; observing, researching, data collecting and reporting have been occurring. In March 2010, I went to Minnesota and met with the USDA Forest Service/Forest Health Protection who validated these tree decline concerns and intends to visit this area; along with 2 other specialists. Since their appearance is expected to be short; additional data and diagnostic tests are needed prior to their arrival; to positively identify, or rule-out possible causes.

PROJECT GREEN TREE has been developed to identify and address tree health care concerns in our community. Our primary goals are: (1) To isolate the cause behind the recent upsurge in tree decline and mortality (2) To formulate methods to treat affected trees without creating additional lake water problems; (3) To implement an action plan to prevent future transmissions; and (4) To initiate awareness and educate communities on the importance of tree health care.

I realize these are difficult economic times for many, but the attempts to reach out beyond our community to national corporations, organizations, and government have been unsuccessful; so as the only remaining option, I am reaching out to you. If identification of the source causing this upsurge of decline and mortality remains unanswered; the impact will be severe. We depend on tourism; and significant tree losses will devastate our economical and ecological survival.

Many of us have reached out to underdeveloped and developing nations during a time of need, but there are also local causes that need immediate attention. This is one!!!

I am aware that individuals, businesses and organizations are asked daily to sponsor events and causes, plus the importance of choosing those that are most beneficial. Since this is an issue that affects us all, I am confident you will understand the benefits.

If you are interested in supporting continued research and education, please contact us.