

**BAY COUNTY FOREST
SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM**

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Community Initiatives
Geographic Information Systems
Gypsy Moth Suppression Program
Mosquito Control
Transportation Planning

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bay County Gypsy Moth Program Name Changing to Forest Sustainability Program

In 2021, the Entomological Society of America officially adopted the name “**Spongy Moth**” as the new common name for the invasive species Gypsy Moth. The new name refers to the forest defoliating insect’s distinctive sponge-like egg masses, which are used in management as a key population indicator.

As a result of this, the Bay County Gypsy Moth Suppression Program’s name must be changed. However, the existing program deals with much more than just Spongy Moth, as staff manages, educates, and monitors for a variety of other invasive species that damage local horticulture and defoliate trees, which at high densities, can result in damaged or dying trees that pose a public health and safety threat including fatal injuries and property damage.

After thoughtful consideration, and outreach to local partners on optional names which better represent the diversity of invasive species work the program undertakes throughout Bay County, staff have decided the name of the program will officially be changing to the “**Bay County Forest Sustainability Program**”.

Why this name? Program staff believes the term “**Forest Sustainability**” captures all the important aspects of the program, from managing outbreak Spongy Moth populations in the rural woodlots of northern Bay County, to treating and sustaining nearly 3,000 publicly owned ash trees throughout the urban forested areas of Bay County to protect them from the devastating effects of the Emerald Ash Borer. It also captures the program’s work to prepare/educate the public on new invasive species that may affect local horticulture (trees and plants) in future years to come.

“We believe the **Bay County Forest Sustainability Program** is a name that is broad enough to showcase the diversity of invasive species work performed by the program, but also targeted enough to represent the unique niche in which our work can be categorized,” said Program Coordinator Jeremy Lowell.

Lowell also stated, “In regard to the name change, we would like to ensure members of the public that **NO CHANGES** will be occurring to the current millage, to the program operations, or to the management of the current invasive species we work with throughout Bay County”.

If you have any questions regarding the program name change, please contact Jeremy Lowell, Bay County Forest Sustainability Program, 515 Center Ave. Suite 503, Bay City, Michigan 48708, via telephone at 989-895-4195 or email at lowellj@baycounty.net.

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