

Article 76.

Protection of Forest Against Insect Infestation and Disease.

§ 106-920. Purpose and intent.

(a) The purpose of this Article is to place within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services the authority and responsibility for investigating insect infestations and disease infections which affect stands of forest trees, the devising of control measures for interested landowners and others, and taking measures to control, suppress, or eradicate outbreaks of forest insect pests and tree diseases.

(b) In this Article, unless the context requires otherwise, the expression "Department" means the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture. (1953, c. 910; 1969, c. 342, s. 3; 1973, c. 1262, ss. 28, 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 72; 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a); 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-921. Authority of the Department.

The authority and responsibility for carrying out the purpose, intent and provisions of this Article are hereby delegated to the Department. The administration of the provisions of this Article shall be under the general supervision of the Commissioner. (1953, c. 910; 1969, c. 342, s. 3; 1973, c. 1262, ss. 28, 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 73; 1997-261, s. 109; 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-922. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

- (1) "Control zone" means an area of potential or actual infestation or infection, boundaries of which are fixed and clearly described in a manner to definitely identify the zone.
- (2) "Forestland" means land on which forest trees occur.
- (3) "Forest trees" means only those trees which are a part and constitute a stand of potential immature or mature commercial timber trees, provided that the term "forest trees" shall be deemed to include shade trees of any species around houses, along highways, and within cities and towns, if the same constitute insect and disease menaces to nearby timber trees or timber stands.
- (4) "Infection" means attack by any disease affecting forest trees which is declared by the Commissioner to be dangerously injurious thereto.
- (5) "Infestation" means attack by means of any insect, which is by the Commissioner declared to be dangerously injurious to forest trees. (1953, c. 910; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, ss. 74, 75; 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-923. Action against insects and diseases.

Whenever the Commissioner, or his agent, determines that there exists an infestation of forest insect pests or an infection of forest tree diseases, injurious or potentially injurious to the timber or forest trees within the State of North Carolina, and that said infestation or infection is of such a character as to be a menace to the timber or forest growth of the State, the Commissioner shall declare the existence of a zone of infestation or infection and shall declare and fix boundaries so as to definitely describe and identify said zone of infestation or infection, and the Commissioner or his agent shall give notice in writing by mail or otherwise to each forest landowner within the

designated control zone advising him of the nature of the infestation or infection, the recommended control measures, and offer him technical advice on methods of carrying out controls. (1953, c. 910; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 76; 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-924. Authority of Commissioner and his agents to go upon private land within control zones.

The Commissioner or his agents shall have the power to go upon the land within any zone of infestation or infection and take measures to control, suppress or eradicate the insect, infestation or disease infection. If any person refuses to allow the Commissioner or his agents to go upon his land, or if any person refuses to adopt adequate means to control or eradicate the insect, infestation or disease infection, the Commissioner may apply to the superior court of the county in which the land is located for an injunction or other appropriate remedy to restrain the landowner from interfering with the Commissioner or his agents in entering the control zone and adopting measures to control, suppress or eradicate the insect infestation or disease infection, provided the cost of court or control thereof shall not be a liability against the forest landowner nor constitute a lien upon the real property of such infested area. (1953, c. 910; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 77; 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-925. Cooperative agreements.

In order to more effectively carry out the purposes of this Article, the Department is authorized to enter into cooperative agreement with the federal government and other public and private agencies, and with the owners of forestland. (1953, c. 910; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 78; 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-926. Annulment of control zone.

Whenever the Commissioner determines that the forest insect or disease control work within a designated control zone is no longer necessary or feasible, then the Commissioner shall declare the zone of infestation or infection no longer pertinent to the purposes of this Article and such zone will then no longer be recognized. (1953, c. 910; 1973, c. 1262, s. 86; 1977, c. 771, s. 4; 1989, c. 727, s. 79; 2011-145, s. 13.25(r), (s).)

§ 106-927. Annual report on hemlock restoration.

No later than October 1 of each year, beginning October 1, 2022, the Commissioner shall submit a report on the State's hemlock restoration initiatives to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources and the Fiscal Research Division. The report shall include the following with respect to each hemlock restoration initiative funded during the previous fiscal year:

- (1) Identification of goals and outcomes for the initiative.
- (2) A description of the measures used or data collected to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the initiative in reaching its desired goals and outcomes.
- (3) The performance of each initiative with respect to the identified goals and outcomes. (2021-180, s. 10.3.)

§ 106-928: Reserved for future codification purposes.

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