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## NEWS RELEASE

Governor John R. Kasich

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Officials Discover Hemlock Pest in Southeast Ohio Forest

COLUMBUS, Jan. 20, 2012—The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) today announced the discovery of a hemlock-killing pest in southeast Ohio. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) is a small, aphid-like insect native to Asia that threatens the health and sustainability of eastern hemlock and Carolina hemlock in the eastern United States.

HWA was first reported in the eastern United States in 1951 near Richmond, Va. By 2005, it was established in portions of 16 states from Maine to Georgia, where infestations covered about half of the range of hemlock.

The relatively small infestation was discovered at Shade River State Forest in Meigs County as part of ODNR's ongoing forest health survey program. At this time, five trees out of approximately 500 hemlock trees surveyed were infested. HWA is primarily transmitted by wind and birds. Officials believe the finding in Ohio is the result of natural spread from nearby areas where the pest is established.

While a small number of HWA infested landscape hemlocks have been reported to ODA, this is the first time HWA has been detected in a naturally occurring stand of hemlock in Ohio. After further survey of the areas surrounding the site of infestation, state and federal officials will determine an appropriate course of action.

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