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GYPSY MOTH MATING DISRUPTION TREATMENTS TO BEGIN IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN OHIO,

Athens, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Morgan, Muskingum, Perry, Ross and Washington counties to receive treatment

REYNOLDSBURG, Ohio (June 8, 2017) – The Ohio Department of Agriculture will begin aerial treatments designed to disrupt gypsy moth mating on 74,850 acres in Athens, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Morgan, Muskingum, Perry, Ross and Washington counties.

To help protect Ohio's diverse habitat, the Ohio Department of Agriculture operates multiple programs aimed at managing the gypsy moth in Ohio. One such program, the Slow-the-Spread program, focuses on monitoring, detecting, and reducing isolated populations to slow the gypsy moth's movement across the state through treatments.

Airplanes will fly 100-200 feet above the tree tops and buildings to apply the treatment throughout the day. **Weather permitting**, treatments will begin in eastern and central Ohio the week of June 12th and occur over the next week.

In all counties receiving treatment, the department will use a single application of the product SPLAT GM-O. This product does not kill the moth, but it disrupts the mating process by confusing the male as it searches for a female mate. SPLAT GM-O is an organic product and is not harmful to birds, plants, pets or humans.

Pre-recorded daily updates about planned treatment blocks are available to citizens by calling 614-387-0907 or 800-282-1955 ext.37, after 5 p.m.

The gypsy moth is a non-native, invasive species that feeds on the leaves of more than 300 different trees and shrubs and is especially fond of oak. A healthy tree can usually withstand only two years of defoliation before it is permanently damaged or dies. To date, 51 of Ohio's 88 counties have established gypsy moth populations.

For more information on the gypsy moth, including maps of treatment areas and videos of the mating disruption process, please visit <http://www.agri.ohio.gov/divs/plant/gypsy/gypsy-index.aspx>

