

PINE BEETLE DEFENSE STRATEGIES

Vigilance, forest vigor, and timely action.

Mountain pine beetles are native to Colorado forests. Problems grow when susceptible pines are crowded or stressed, making early identification and long-term stand resilience the foundation of effective defense.



Regular inspection helps landowners notice subtle signs while management options are still timely.

● INSPECT

KNOW THE SIGNS

Look closely at the trunk and crown, then consider the whole tree and nearby pines.

- ✓ Check for fresh pitch tubes or fine boring dust.
- ✓ Notice fading crowns, but remember color change is often a late sign.
- ✓ Confirm the beetle species before choosing a response.

✓ START HERE

- ✓ Walk pine trees in fall and mark anything suspicious.
- ✓ Compare signs across the trunk, crown, and nearby trees.
- ✓ Prioritize healthy high-value trees and vulnerable dense groups.
- ✓ Plan removal and wood handling before the summer flight period.

● STRENGTHEN

BUILD RESILIENCE

Healthy, vigorous forests are better positioned to withstand insects and changing conditions.

- ✓ Thin overly dense stands to reduce competition.
- ✓ Retain diversity in tree species, age, and size.
- ✓ Avoid unnecessary root injury, soil compaction, and bark damage.

● RESPOND

ACT ON CONFIRMED TREES

Once a tree is successfully infested, prompt sanitation helps limit beetle emergence.

- ✓ Remove confirmed infested trees before adult flight.
- ✓ Chip, debark, burn, bury, or properly process infested material.
- ✓ Do not move untreated infested wood to another property.

▲ THE RAVEN WORKS PERSPECTIVE

Pine beetle defense is not a single product or one-time treatment. The strongest strategy combines accurate identification, healthier stand structure, timely sanitation, and selective protection of high-value trees.

Manage the forest before an outbreak, monitor it carefully, and respond to confirmed activity with purpose.

Guidance basis: Colorado State Forest Service mountain pine beetle recommendations.

◎ IN THE FIELD

Three practical realities shape pine beetle decisions on Colorado Front Range properties:

IDENTIFICATION MATTERS

Pitch, dust, crown fade, and exit holes can have different causes and timing.

TIMING MATTERS

Infested trees should be handled before emerging adults can reach new hosts.

VIGOR MATTERS

Dense, drought-stressed, or damaged pines are often more susceptible to attack.