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PEST REPORT

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SITKA SPRUCE DEFOLIATORS IN PACIFIC RIM NATIONAL PARK RESERVE

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Three defoliators were found infesting Sitka spruce in Pacific Rim National Park on Vancouver Island. A spruce budmoth, *Zeiraphera vancouverana*, a conifer cutworm, *Egira sp.*, and the green spruce aphid, *Elatobium abietinum* combined to moderately defoliate Sitka spruce trees along a 2-3 km section adjacent to Long Beach.

The majority of the damage appeared to be caused by the conifer cutworm which was still feeding on the current foliage during the first week of July. Less severe older feeding damage was also apparent on current foliage in the same trees and can be attributed to the spruce budmoth. Large budmoth flights were observed at the time of the cutworm collections. Up to 100% of the current foliage of Sitka spruce was eaten in scattered patches along the Long Beach highway. Defoliation of older needles by the green spruce aphid was reported from this area in the early spring.

The combined feeding of these three pests have contributed to the ragged and unhealthy appearance of some spruce within the reserve. Defoliation will cause reduced growth and in conjunction with the stress created by high winds and salt spray could increase the trees susceptibility to attacks from other insects and disease.

The conifer cutworm, *Egira sp.*, has not been previously recorded causing noticeable defoliation on Sitka spruce in coastal British Columbia. A more complete identification is pending rearing of adults from larval collections. In the early 1960's a closely related cutworm was responsible for defoliating over 3 000 ha of coniferous species in western Oregon.
