

“New Directions for Forest Service Termite Research”

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SUMMARY

The USDA Forest Service, Wood Products Insect Research unit has long been well known for nationwide termiticide screening studies. With increased concern regarding the environmental and health impacts of insecticides used in and around buildings, alternative control methods such as baiting techniques, preservative treatments to wood, biological control, and non-chemical and low-chemical physical barriers should continue to be investigated. Furthermore, extensive behavioral and ecological studies must be carried out that lead toward novel and proactive management systems. New information will be applied to current and emerging techniques for control of subterranean termites.

Forest Service is increasing emphasis on evaluating the role of subterranean termites in forest ecosystems; information will be developed on decomposition, carbon and nutrient cycling, and interactions of termites with associated forest flora and fauna. Joint efforts with USDA Agricultural Research Service will elucidate the behavioral ecology of subterranean termites relative to semiochemicals influencing attraction, repellency, and behavioral modification of individuals and the colony. This will facilitate developing standardized monitoring systems and long-term management with less reliance on traditional pesticides.