

Spearfish Canyon Foundation

<http://www.spearfishcanyon.com>

January 3, 2012

With the new year comes an exciting new development in the fight against the mountain pine beetles in the Spearfish Canyon area. As of January 1, 2012, there is officially a new way to battle the pine beetle infestation in Lawrence County, which covers much of the northern Black Hills.

In a truly first-of-its-kind partnership, the US Forest Service has made an agreement with Lawrence County officials that allows county-hired subcontractors to cut pine beetle-infested trees on public, Forest Service-managed land. No other county or region in the United States has such permission. Previously, only Forest Service employees could conduct work of this type.

This landmark agreement is the result of months of hard work by many public and private groups, including the Spearfish Canyon Foundation.

In an effort to slow the spread of the damaging insects, Lawrence County will hire qualified employees to cut infested trees on Forest Service land. The process is simply called “cut and chunk,” which refers to the method of cutting infested trees into small sections. The small sections will quickly dry out, eliminating the beetles’ food supply, in turn killing the beetles. The Forest Service will still play a large role in identifying where and what trees the County can cut.

All of the timber cutting subcontractors will be paid by the County, and the County is gladly accepting outside financial support to fund this effort. The Spearfish Canyon Foundation has already committed \$125,000 of funding to Lawrence County for this project.

While we are proud of our ability to contribute to this project, additional support is still needed. You, too, can contribute to this effort and have a direct impact on the future health of the forest. Financial donations can be made online using the Donate buttons that you see on our website. Donations may also be mailed to Lawrence County with a memo indicating their intended use. Your donation – of any size – will make a difference.