

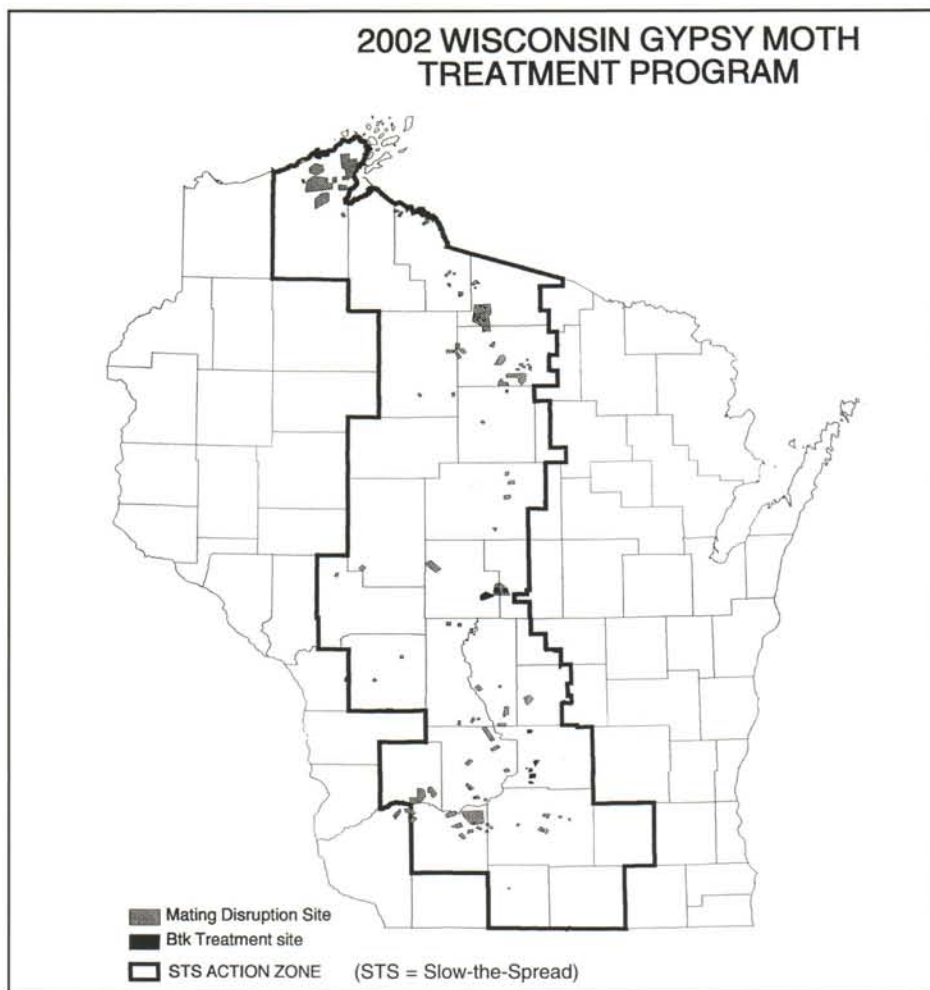
# Gypsy Moth Treatment Areas Proposed for 22 Wisconsin Counties

By **Monroe S. Miller**, Golf Course Superintendent, Blackhawk Country Club

This is Dr. Steve Millett's busy time of year, too, since he has taken over as program coordinator of Wisconsin's gypsy moth control program. Aerial spraying is proposed this spring and early summer to treat 100 sites covering more than 330,000 acres in 22 Wisconsin counties to control the spread of the destructive forest pest. That is three times the acreage of last year's effort, making it the largest state gypsy moth spray program in the nation.

"Gypsy moths threaten our state forests and urban trees because they feed on the leaves of oaks and hundreds of other species of trees and shrubs," explained Steve in a recent interview. "Gypsy moths have a negative impact on Wisconsin's economy affecting the timber, paper, nursery and tourism industries. It's also a nuisance to homeowners to see trees stripped of leaves and to watch hundreds of thousands of caterpillars crawling around," he added.

Twelve sites will be treated in May with *Bacillus thuringiensis* sub sp. *kirstaki* or Btk. Btk, the commonly used organic pesticide, has been used successfully in gypsy moth treatments for more than 30 years. Gypsy moth caterpillars eat the leaves that have been treated with Btk and eventually die. The remaining sites will be treated in June and possibly July with pheromone flakes. These rice-grain sized flakes carry the scent of the female gypsy moth, which confuses the male moths and disrupts their mating cycle. "The switch to pheromone flakes will save the state \$2.8 million," according to Steve.



The counties with proposed treatment areas are Adams, Bayfield, Clark, Columbia, Dane, Grant, Green, Iowa, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, Lincoln, Marathon, Marquette, Monroe, Oneida, Portage, Price, Richland, Sauk, Vilas, and Wood.

"Treating urban sites always presents some extra challenges because of higher populations and more traffic," Millett says. "We're proposing to spray portions of Wisconsin Rapids and Port Edwards in Wood County with Btk. Other urban areas that we're

proposing to treat with pheromone flakes are located in Madison and Middleton in Dane County, and Wausau and Schofield in Marathon County." Pheromone flakes only need one application to be effective whereas two applications of Btk are required.

The map above shows the treatment areas of the state. If you see a plane flying about 50' above ground level in the upcoming month or two in those areas, chances are it is Dr. Millett and his staff giving our trees and shrubs every chance current science can. 🌿