



CALIFORNIA OAK MORTALITY TASK FORCE

News Advisory

MENDOCINO COUNTY SUDDEN OAK DEATH BLITZ

Date: June 3, 2008

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MENDOCINO—A Sudden Oak Death (SOD) Blitz is planned for Mendocino County June 13, 2008. Sponsored by the Mendocino County Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with Dr. Matteo Garbelotto, UC Berkeley, and the California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF), the Blitz is intended to develop a detailed survey for the disease as well as educate the community.

**When: Friday, June 13, 2008
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**Where: Mendocino County Fairgrounds
14400 Highway 128
Boonville, CA**

**Registration: FREE
Registrants should bring GPS Units if they have them**

SOD Blitz participants will be trained to identify disease symptoms, correctly sample symptomatic plants, and document sample locations. Samples will be collected at the end of each sampling day (June 14th and June 15th) and taken to the UC Berkeley Garbelotto lab where they will be analyzed to determine the presence or absence of *Phytophthora ramorum*, the pathogen that causes SOD. Laboratory results will be used to generate a map of disease distribution. The map will then be used for developing a comprehensive management plan for SOD in the area.

SOD, a serious exotic disease, is threatening the survival of tanoak and several oak species in California. Currently it is found in the wildlands of 14 coastal California counties, from Monterey to Humboldt. While patchy in distribution, with each passing year, the areas of infection continue to become more contiguous. Researchers have discovered that *P. ramorum*

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spreads most often on infected California bay laurel leaves. Symptomatic bay leaves are often the first sign that SOD has arrived at a location, and generally precedes oak infections. Some management options are available (sanitation, chemical preventative treatments, selective bay removal), but they are effective only if implemented before oaks and tanoaks are infected; hence, timely detection of the disease on bay laurel leaves is key for a successful proactive attempt to slow down the SOD epidemic.

SOD Blitzes have already been conducted in Monterey and San Mateo Counties. A Blitz will also be held in the East Bay Area June 7th, and a final Blitz will be held in Humboldt County on Saturday, June 14th at Beginnings in Briceland, from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Targeted Blitz locations were those believed to have low to intermediate levels of disease. Funding for the SOD Blitzes was provided by the USDA Forest Service.

For more information on the Mendocino County SOD Blitz, contact Assistant Agricultural Commissioner Tony Linegar at (707) 463-4208 or linegart@co.mendocino.ca.us. For more information on the Humboldt County SOD Blitz, contact Matt Cocking at the Mattole Restoration Council, (707) 986-1078. For information on other upcoming SOD Blitz activity, or for information on Sudden Oak Death, contact Katie Palmieri at (510) 847-5482 or Palmieri@nature.berkeley.edu.

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