



## REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA OAK MORTALITY TASK FORCE JUNE 2002

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### MANAGEMENT

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Eradication efforts on all nine Sudden Oak Death (SOD) infested sites in Southwestern Oregon were completed this spring. Efforts included cutting, piling, and burning affected and susceptible trees and plants. The good news is tempered with the recent discovery of four new SOD sites. These new sites are small and all are located next to one of the treated areas found last year. Eradication efforts on the new sites are already underway. Further survey work is being conducted this spring and summer in an attempt to identify diseased areas early enough to eradicate them. More information on Oregon's SOD program may be found at <http://www.oda.state.or.us/>.

### FUNDING

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Both the Senate and Assembly Budget Committees approved \$2 million to CDF for 2002/03 SOD efforts. These funds were redirected from CDFA funding for fire ant control and eradication efforts. With budget negotiations still underway, this approval is not yet considered final.

The Pitch Canker Task Force and the COMTF are planning a **joint fundraising golf tournament on Friday, September 27, 2002**. The intent is to raise money and public awareness of Pitch Canker and SOD. The event will be hosted by the Pebble Beach Company at their Del Monte Golf Course in Monterey. Fundraising will occur through sponsorships at the \$1000, \$2000, and \$2500 level. Sponsorships and prizes will be solicited through those in the private sector. All proceeds will be split between the Task Forces. Additional information about the tournament and links to the registration pages can be found at [http://www.cnutility.com/space\\_for\\_trees.htm](http://www.cnutility.com/space_for_trees.htm). If you have friends that golf, please pass on the registration form. If you can help out in any way—provide prizes for the raffle, or volunteer—contact Rick Hawley at [greenspacecambria@earthlink.net](mailto:greenspacecambria@earthlink.net).

### RESEARCH

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**Preliminary results of susceptibility of cranberries and blueberry cultivars to *Phytophthora ramorum*** were presented at the May 15 COMTF meeting in Santa Rosa by Jennifer Parke, Associate Professor, Department of Botany and Plant Pathology and Department of Crop and Soil Sciences, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR. Laboratory tests on detached leaves indicate that cranberry does not appear to be susceptible to *Phytophthora ramorum*. Several blueberry cultivars were also tested with mixed results. Leaves of "Bluecrop," a widely planted cultivar, remained symptomless, but other blueberry cultivars did develop necrotic leaf spots. Lingonberry and evergreen huckleberry, a natural host for *Phytophthora ramorum*, are highly susceptible to the disease in her assays. Parke exposed leaves of native and horticultural berry crops to zoospores of *Phytophthora ramorum* and incubated the leaves in moist chambers. Additional studies to confirm the disease response on whole plants are planned. The



Oregon Blueberry Commission and the Northwest Center for Small Fruits Research contributed funding for the trials.

**Disease progression in a heavily infested area – results from trend plots in Marin County.** Preliminary results show, on average, 18 % of the Coast Live Oak trees (*Quercus agrifolia*) in 20 plots within infested areas of Marin County have died and 23% are bleeding. The trees in these plots were first observed two years ago (3/00) at which time 7% of the trees were dead and 25% were bleeding. The study is based on observations of approximately 479 Coast Live Oak trees in China Camp State Park and the Marin Municipal Water District. Brice McPherson, UC-Berkeley, Center of Forestry, is the lead researcher tracking symptom progression. The results of the first year of this study are available at <http://danr.ucop.edu/ihrmp>. McPherson also set up similar plots for tanoak (*Lithocarpus densiflorus*). Preliminary results show, on average, 20% of tanoak trees have died, with 48% bleeding. The same plots in March 2000 showed 10% mortality and 28% bleeding (based on observations of approximately 164 tanoak trees). Note: These disease progression plots are not representative of the overall landscapes in Marin County. The plots were not intended to provide countywide or regional estimates, but were established to track change on a fine scale.

The Proceedings of the Fifth Oak Symposium are now available on-line at <http://danr.ucop.edu/ihrmp>. There are eight papers on SOD, plus a wide variety of other research papers on topics such as oak ecology, restoration policy, products, and monitoring.

#### **EDUCATION**

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The University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), Marin County and COMTF had a training session in San Rafael on 6/6/02 for arborists on SOD sampling and regulation compliance. There were over 120 attendees. As with the “official sampler training, this class utilized morning lecture and an afternoon hands-on field session at China Camp State Park. The class covered material similar to that of the “official” sampler training, adapted to the needs of arborists. After completion of the course, arborists are considered “certified” by CDFA and allowed to take *Phytophthora ramorum* samples for diagnostic purposes. Due to demand, a similar class will be offered this fall.

#### **MEETINGS**

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The COMTF May 14 – 15, 2002 meeting in Santa Rosa was well received with over 140 attendees from throughout the United States and Canada. On May 14<sup>th</sup> a field trip highlighted SOD in Sonoma County with presentations and a tour of symptoms and impacts at Jack London State Park. On May 15<sup>th</sup> Task Force committees met at the Finley Center in the morning, followed by presentations to the entire Task Force on research, regulations, and impacts on the ornamental/nursery industry.

COMTF will be holding a joint Task Force meeting and Research Symposium in Monterey in December. The Symposium will be a forum for sharing preliminary



findings on SOD research. Further details surrounding the event will be available as the date nears.

### **REGULATIONS**

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The Mendocino National Forest began restricting firewood gathering in the Covelo Ranger District to dead and down conifer wood. Previous firewood permits allowed both hardwood and conifer wood gathering. The new restriction was needed to implement the federal quarantine imposed to reduce the potential spread of SOD. Mendocino County is one of ten California counties with confirmed cases of SOD and the Covelo District is located in that county.

### **PRESS COVERAGE**

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On May 11, 2002, the San Francisco Chronicle Home and Garden section featured a story entitled "Sudden oak death, Homeowners fear for their trees." This article was intended as an informative look for homeowners at Sudden Oak Death. It touched upon financial implications, the history of the disease, SOD symptoms, and prevention as well as treatment. The article can be viewed at <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2002/05/11/HO9708.DTL>.

On May 21, 2002, Yosemite National Park issued a press release that was picked up by many media outlets. The release advised park visitors or resident inholders who have homes in the Bay Area to take special precautions when traveling to the park to prevent the spread of SOD. The announcement reminds visitors to clean soil and mud off of shoes, bikes, pets' paws, vehicles, and tires as well as to not bring in firewood from infested areas. Yosemite National Park appealed to visitors coming from affected counties to adhere to the state and federal quarantine saying "Visitors play a part as stewards of the park resources. Bringing host materials to the park could destroy the very resources they came to appreciate."