



News Advisory

WOODSIDE AND PORTOLA VALLEY SUDDEN OAK DEATH BLITZ

Date: March 30, 2009

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PORTOLA VALLEY—A Sudden Oak Death (SOD) Blitz is planned for the towns of Woodside and Portola Valley the weekend of April 17th. Sponsored by the towns, in cooperation with Dr. Matteo Garbelotto, UC Berkeley, the California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF), and the San Mateo Department of Agriculture, the Blitz is intended to help the communities identify locations where SOD is present as well as increase local awareness of the issue.

When: Training and Organizational Meeting
Friday, April 17, 2009
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Where: Community Hall in Portola Valley Town Center
765 Portola Road
Portola Valley, CA 94028

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When: Sampling Days
Saturday, April 18, 2009
Sunday, April 19, 2009

Where: To be Determined at Organizational Meeting

Cost: 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, and then 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

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used to generate a local map of disease distribution. The map will then be made available to the community for their use.

SOD is a serious exotic disease that is killing tanoak and several oak species in California. Currently it is found in the wildlands of 14 coastal California counties, from Monterey to Humboldt. Researchers have discovered that *P. ramorum* spreads most often on infected California bay laurel leaves. Symptomatic bay leaves generally precede oak and tanoak infections, and are often the first sign that the pathogen is in a location. Some management options are available (sanitation, chemical preventative treatments, selective bay removal); however, they are most effective when implemented before oaks and tanoaks are infected. Therefore, timely detection of the disease on bay laurel leaves is crucial.

SOD Blitz locations for 2009 include the counties of Monterey, San Mateo, Sonoma, and Santa Clara, as well as the East Bay. Funding for the SOD Blitzes was provided by the USDA Forest Service.

For more information, contact Debbie Muller Mendelson at naturemend@sbcglobal.net. For information on other upcoming SOD Blitz activity, contact Ellen Crocker at ellen.v.crocker@gmail.com. For more information on Sudden Oak Death, contact Katie Palmieri at (510) 847-5482 or Palmieri@nature.berkeley.edu.

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