



News Release

EMPOWERING CITIZENS - PUTTING SUDDEN OAK DEATH ON THE MAP AND IN PEOPLE'S HANDS

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BERKELEY—Putting information in the hands of citizens is the latest defense in the fight against Sudden Oak Death (SOD). Using a new app called SODMAP mobile that is designed for field use, people in SOD-impacted areas can identify locations of trees sampled for *Phytophthora ramorum* (the pathogen known to cause SOD) and determine the health of each tree at the time of sampling. The app can also assist in assessing risk of oak infection at the location of the user.

“The SODMAP mobile app can be an informative tool for property owners and managers as well as for tree care professionals. It is also useful for people recreating in coastal California, as it can be used to determine whether or not they are in an infested area so that they can take important precautions before leaving the area to help limit the risk of spreading the pathogen, such as eliminating plant material from car and bike tires, shoes, pet’s paws, and equipment,” said Matteo Garbelotto, the UC Berkeley faculty whose lab spearheads the mapping and app projects.

SODMAP, which pinpoints positive and negative *P. ramorum* tree and water samples, and includes 12,151 data points, is the basis from which the SODMAP mobile app was developed. Using SODMAP, the app is able to calculate the number of sampled trees in any area and proximity of positive trees, resulting in a risk rating. While risk is based on many other factors, including host species and their distribution as well as climatic conditions, the app provides an indication of disease presence in an area which can provide input for communities learning to live with SOD. If insufficient data is available at a particular site, the user is directed to participate in a local volunteer-based SOD Blitz survey to help collect data for the area by going to www.sodblitz.org. Funding for development of the app was provided by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

SOD is a serious invasive, quarantine disease that is killing tanoak, coast live oak, California black oak, Shreve's oak, and canyon live oak trees in California. Since its discovery in 2001, more than three million trees have died in 14 coastal California counties, from Monterey to Humboldt, making it the number one cause of tree mortality in California coastal forests.

For information about SODMAP and volunteer-based SOD Blitzes, go to <http://nature.berkeley.edu/garbelotto/english/mappage.php>. For more information on SOD and *P. ramorum*, go to www.suddenoakdeath.org or contact Katie Palmieri at (510) 847-5482 or kpalmieri@berkeley.edu.

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