



MARCH 2003

CALIFORNIA OAK MORTALITY TASK FORCE REPORT

FUNDING

Federal funding for Sudden Oak Death in 2002/03 (FY 2003) is allocated as follows:

USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Forest Health Protection will be allocated \$1.7 million, primarily for monitoring, education, and management in California; on-going eradication and monitoring in Oregon; and a pilot test for the National *Phytophthora ramorum* Forest Survey in cooperation with the USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS).

USDA Forest Service, Research, will receive \$2 million. A request for proposals (RFP), with a nationwide scope, will be issued for research related to Sudden Oak Death (SOD). The Pacific Southwest Research Station will conduct a Research Needs Assessment to determine areas of emphasis for RFPs and participate in developing a Forest Service national strategic Sudden Oak Death plan.

In 2002/03, USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) will get an additional \$220,800 in Sudden Oak Death funds for the Ft. Detrick, Maryland, Sudden Oak Death program where *Phytophthora ramorum* research is being carried out in a containment facility. ARS plans to hire an additional scientist to work with Paul Tooley on host range testing, infectivity studies, and PCR development. This funding is in addition to their existing Sudden Oak Death budget of \$400,000.

The FY 2003 Appropriations Act provided USDA, APHIS, Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) with \$2 million for *Phytophthora ramorum* program activities under Emerging Plant Pests. This amount will fund the regulatory program, national survey, and other program-related activities.

RESEARCH

***Phytophthora ramorum* was isolated from *Pieris japonica* by Daniel Huberli and Matteo Garbelotto, UC-Berkeley.** While *P. ramorum* has been isolated from *Pieris* in U.K. nurseries, this is the first isolation of *P. ramorum* from *Pieris* in the U.S. The potted *Pieris japonica* plant, from which the pathogen was isolated and sequenced, was located under a heavily infested California bay laurel tree in an open space reserve of Sonoma County. Huberli noticed the plant had suspicious looking lesions on its leaf tips in June, 2002. He is completing Koch's postulates and plans to publish this finding when the study is complete.

EDUCATION

The new and improved California Oak Mortality Task Force website has been posted to the Internet and may be viewed at <http://suddenoakdeath.org>. The website is still under development; comments and suggestions may be directed to Lucia Briggs, COMTF webmaster and statewide coordinator at lbriggs@nature.berkeley.edu. The site



is designed to be thorough, comprehensive, and tailored to the visitors' needs, with sections for private citizens as well as professionals.

On February 5, 2003, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department Forestry, Oregon State University, and USDA Forest Service held an informational public meeting in Brookings, Oregon on Sudden Oak Death. The purpose of the meeting was to provide local residents with an update on the disease in Oregon, the status of the eradication project, and to discuss planned activities for 2003. Approximately 10 local residents attended the meeting. Planned activities for 2003 include follow-up treatments of stumps and sprouts within the burned sites, several aerial and ground surveys, stream and rainwater sampling, soil sampling, nursery inspections, and another informational meeting in April.

The “Sudden Oak Death – How Concerned Should You Be?” International On-line Discussion Symposium is being held April 21 - May 4, 2003 at: <http://sod.apsnet.org/>. The on-line symposium is free, open to anyone interested in participating, and will provide a forum for interactive discussions on the disease. Topics will include: fungal identification, the role of plant species in disease spread, impacts on forest ecosystems and urban/wildland interfaces, Sudden Oak Death surveys, management and control, silviculture, industry implications, policy and regulations, and citizen concerns. The symposium is sponsored by the American Phytopathological Society, the USDA Forest Service, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Go to <http://sod.apsnet.org/> to receive an email reminder when the symposium goes live.

Three training sessions are being offered by the COMTF on “Recognition, Sampling, and Regulations for *Phytophthora ramorum*.” These free sessions are scheduled for March 19 in Felton from 10 – 4:30; April 30 – northern region; and May 29 – Bay Area. March training details have been emailed out to the list serve and are posted to the Task Force website at <http://suddenoakdeath.org>. For more information, contact Heather Matwich, CDF, at (916) 653-5123. Details on the other training sessions will be forthcoming.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- 3/12 - Trees, Pests, and Professional Practice Seminar; Includes an overview of Sudden Oak Death, information on pitch canker, and insect problems of urban trees along California's central coast; Monterey Conference Center, Ferrante Room; One Portola Plaza, Monterey, CA 93940; 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; Registration \$75; Sponsored by the Pitch Canker Task Force; For more information, or to register, contact Rick Hawley, Greenspace, The Cambria Land Trust, at greenspacecambria@earthlink.net.
- 3/19 - Training session in Felton (southern SOD region) on “Recognition, Sampling, and Regulations for *Phytophthora ramorum*,” Details can be found on the COMTF website, <http://suddenoakdeath.org>; For more information, contact Heather Matwich, CDF, at (916) 653-5123
- 4/30 – Training session in the northern SOD region on “Recognition, Sampling, and Regulations for *Phytophthora ramorum*,” details forthcoming



- 4/21 – 5/4 - “Sudden Oak Death – How Concerned Should You Be?” International On-line Discussion Symposium at: <http://sod.apsnet.org/>
- 5/28 - Next COMTF meeting; Bay Area; details forthcoming
- 5/29 – Training session in the central SOD region (Bay Area) on “Recognition, Sampling, and Regulations for *Phytophthora ramorum*,” details forthcoming
- 6/28 – 29 – Jepson Herbarium weekend workshop; Sudden Oak Death weekend workshop with Dr. Matteo Garbelotto and Dr. Ellen Simms at the UC Botanical Gardens, Berkeley and five regions in the greater Bay Area; limited to 20 participants; contact Anneke Swinehart, Jepson Herbarium, (510) 643-7008

KUDOS

Oregon’s Sudden Oak Death Task Force was awarded the Oregon Invasive Species Council "Ten Fingers in the Dike Award." The award is given annually to the person(s) that has gone above and beyond the call of duty to keep new invading species out of the state. Congratulations to Alan Kanaskie, Oregon Department of Forestry; Nancy Osterbauer, Oregon Department of Agriculture; Everett Hansen, Oregon State University; and Ellen Goheen, USDA Forest Service. This group detected the infestation in Oregon via aerial survey in 2001 and currently are carrying out an eradication and monitoring program for *P. ramorum* in Southwestern Oregon. For more information on the Oregon Invasive Species Council, go to http://www.oda.state.or.us/plant/inv_spp/.