



County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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JEFF ALMQUIST
FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 1/23/01

January 12, 2001

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: STATE FUNDING TO FIGHT SUDDEN OAK DEATH

Dear Members of the Board:

As Board members are aware, Sudden Oak Death is a problem plaguing communities throughout California. While Santa Cruz County has been researching the cause of this disease, a member of the Agricultural Commissioner's Office is also currently working with representatives of other coastal counties to address the significant problems associated with this disease on a regional level. In response to this issue, members of the State Legislature have introduced various pieces of legislation which would allocate funds for Sudden Oak Death to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. As indicated in the attached letter from Marin Supervisor Cynthia Murray, Assembly Member Migden has introduced Assembly Bill 62 which would appropriate \$5 million for the prevention, control and eradication of Sudden Oak Death on public and private lands. In addition, Senate Bill 31, introduced by Senator Chesbro, and Assembly Bill 53, introduced by Assembly Member Wiggins, would appropriate \$10 million for disease research and prevention, with SB 31 targeting \$5 million for aid to landowners in the hardest-hit counties and AB 53 including development of a management plan for landowners impacted by Sudden Oak Death.

Given the very real problems associated with Sudden Oak Death in our own community, I recommend that the Board direct the Chair to write to our State representatives requesting that they introduce, or co-author, legislation which would allocate funding to research and eradicate Sudden Oak Death as well as provide

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assistance to offset the costs to public and private landowners
as a result of this disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mardi Wormhoudt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARDI WORMHOUDT, Supervisor
Third District

MW:ted
Attachment

cc: Supervisor Cynthia Murray

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CYNTHIA MURRAY

SUPERVISOR

5th DISTRICT
MARIN COUNTY

December 26, 2000

Mardi Wormhoudt, Chair
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisor
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Dear Supervisor Wormhoudt:

I am writing to alert you to the need to contact your local state legislators in order to secure urgency state funding to fight Sudden Oak Death.

Sudden Oak Death has resulted in the unprecedented death of thousands of Coast Live Oaks, Tan Oaks, and Black Oaks in California's coastal counties. University of California scientists recently discovered the disease agent is a new species of the fungus *Phytophthora* that caused the infamous Irish potato famine in the 1840s, but they have not definitively determined how it spreads.

The statewide Sudden Oak Death Summit in Marin County last month focused the attention of top state and federal officials on the problem. As a result, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is now preparing an emergency transfer of \$3.5 million to the Forest Service for critically needed research and development on Sudden Oak Death disease characteristics, environmental impacts, and distribution. The money is expected to support not only Forest Service research, but also the activities of Forest Service partner agencies, including universities and private business, in achieving scientific understanding of Sudden Oak Death.

At the same time, coastal county legislators have introduced several bills that would appropriate funds for Sudden Oak Death to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. AB 62 (Assembly member Migden) would appropriate \$5 million for the prevention, control, and eradication of the disease on public and private lands. SB 31 (Senator Chesbro) and AB 53 (Assembly member Wiggins) would appropriate \$10 million for disease research and prevention. AB 53 includes development of a management plan for landowners impacted by Sudden Oak Death, and SB 31 would target five million dollars of the appropriation for aid to landowners in the hardest-hit counties.

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This state funding is vital to the efforts of affected counties (Marin, Sonoma, Monterey, Napa, Santa Cruz and San Mateo) and potentially affected counties to manage SOD. Essential activities like identification and monitoring, dead tree removal and disposal, fire prevention and suppression, and public education to prevent unnecessary spread of the disease and risks to healthy trees cannot wait until the next budget year. Yet, despite the need and threat to public safety, we do not have assurance of the Governor's support for these bills.

I urge you to bring the matter of state urgency funding for Sudden Oak Death to your Board and to ask them to contact your state legislators for their support and with requests for Governor Davis to act on behalf of the coastal counties.

Please contact me at 415-499-7339, or my aide Grace Schmidt at 415-499-7371, if we can provide additional information or facilitate your advocacy for Sudden Oak Death urgency funding.

Sincerely,


Cynthia Murray