

SUDDEN OAK DEATH CLAIMS TWO MORE COUNTIES

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SACRAMENTO - Andrea Tuttle Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) today announced action by the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection which added Alameda and Solano Counties to the Sudden Oak Death (SOD) "Zone of Infestation." These two counties join a list of eight others already plagued by the SOD pathogen.

Under the "Zone of Infestation" classification, the CDF authorized to use its resources on private land to assist in the prevention and management of this serious disease. Specific regulations govern the transportation and disposal of wood products in areas designated as infested. "With the continuing spread of this disease, California must move quickly to educate communities, and conduct research. " Assisting counties in the identification of affected trees, as well as providing funding for tree removal and developing best management practices to reduce the spread of SOD is key to getting the upper hand," said Director Tuttle.

Known to the scientific world as *Phytophthora ramorum*, SOD was first identified in Marin County in 1995. Soon after, the disease earned the nickname Sudden Oak Death when seemingly healthy oak trees were dying within weeks. In fact, these trees are often afflicted with SOD for years before showing any symptoms.

To address issues surrounding the pathogen, public agencies, organizations, and private interests have established The California Oak Mortality Task Force (COMTF). The Task Force is working together to implement a comprehensive and unified approach for research, management, education and public policy to combat SOD. For more information on SOD, go to the COMTF Web site at <http://www.suddenoakdeath.org>.