

## **CALIFORNIA CELEBRATES ARBOR DAY**

**Date: March 7, 2003**

SACRAMENTO—As California observes Arbor Day, founded by J. Sterling Morton on April 10, 1872, let us celebrate not only by planting trees, but also committing to do our part to preserve mature trees planted by generations past. This year's theme, "Trees are Terrific – Acorn to Oak," highlights our responsibility as citizens to play an active role in all stages of a tree's life as well as the health of the forest.

Invasive species such as *Phytophthora ramorum*, the pathogen known to cause Sudden Oak Death, are killing trees, altering our forests, and creating hazardous fire conditions. First identified in 1995, Sudden Oak Death has killed tens of thousands of oak and tanoak trees in 12 of California's coastal counties\*. There are currently 19 confirmed host plants\*\* of *Phytophthora ramorum*, and the list continues to grow.

In honor of oaks, Arbor Day, and our forests, we should make special note of diseases such as Sudden Oak Death and commit to doing our part to protect our forests. Help reduce the potential for inadvertently spreading Sudden Oak Death to uninfested locations by leaving all host plant material on-site as well as cleaning shoes, tires, pets' paws/hoooves, and equipment before leaving an area known to have *Phytophthora ramorum*.

For more information on Sudden Oak Death, go to the California Oak Mortality Task Force website at <http://suddenoakdeath.org>.

\*Alameda, Contra Costa, Humboldt, Marin, Mendocino, Monterey, Napa, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma

\*\*California black oak, coast live oak, canyon live oak, Shreve's oak, tanoak, rhododendron, California bay laurel, bigleaf maple, madrone, manzanita, evergreen huckleberry, California honeysuckle, toyon, California buckeye, California coffeeberry, coast redwood, Douglas-fir, western starflower, *Viburnum* (UK)