

Kerri Frangioso
PO Box 693
Big Sur, CA 93920
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Milton Marks Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy
925 L Street, Suite 805
Sacramento, CA 95814
email: littlehoover@lhc.ca.gov

Dear Milton Marks Commission on California State Government Organization and Economy:

My name is Kerri Frangioso I am a Staff Research Associate for the David Rizzo, Plant Pathology Lab at UC Davis and a full-time resident and landowner in Big Sur. I have been studying Sudden Oak Death since 2000 with a great majority of my work conducted in the Big Sur region of Monterey County. I have however, been all around the state and throughout the range of the Sudden Oak Death epidemic and there's no doubt that Big Sur has been one of the most impacted areas from this non-native disease. Quantifying the actual number of dead trees in one area is a difficult thing to estimate especially as trees die, fragment, and fall to the ground making it impossible to be detected by aerial surveys. However in 2005 we estimated that along the coastal hills of the Santa Lucia Mountains there were over 230,000 standing dead trees from Sudden Oak Death alone¹. Since the Basin Complex fire in 2008 we have learned about the increase in fire severity at multiple levels due to the increased fuel loading from SOD^{2,3,4}. As the state emerges from a 4 year drought our reservoirs are filling but the toll on the forest remains. Over the last few years we have lost millions of trees across the state to drought but this is on top of the hundreds of thousands of trees the Big Sur coast has already lost to this devastating and on-going disease.

With only 8 years between large campaign fires, the Basin Complex fires of 2008 and the recent Soberanes Fire in 2016, Monterey County residents and agencies are highly motivated to prepare for the next fire. Wildfires don't only consume dead fuel but they leave many standing dead in their wake. I have been to the Sierra to witness the incredible number of dead standing trees in the area and am glad to hear of the work that has been done there. I encourage you however to remember there are many areas in the State that are in desperate need of forest management to maintain healthy and resilient ecosystems and Monterey County should rank high on that list.

Thank you so much for all that you do as an organization and for your time on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Literature cited:

1. Meentemeyer, R. K., N. E. Rank, D. A. Shoemaker, C. B. Oneal, A. C. Wickland, K. M. Frangioso, and D. M. Rizzo. 2008. Impact of sudden oak death on tree mortality in the Big Sur ecoregion of California. *Biological Invasions* 10:1243–1255.
2. Media reports and anecdotal accounts from firefighters linked the intensity of the fire and difficulty of firefighting operations (especially cutting line, & snag hazard) to increased fuels from SOD (Lee, C., Y. Valachovic, S. Frankel, and K. Palmieri. 2010. Sudden oak death mortality and fire: Lessons from the Basin Complex. Pages 271–279 in S. J. Frankel, J. T. Kliejunas, and K. M. Palmieri, editors. *Proceedings of the Sudden Oak Death fourth science symposium*. General Technical Report PSW-GTR-229. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Southwest Research Station, Albany, California, USA.
3. Metz MR, Varner JM, Frangioso KM, Meentemeyer RK, Rizzo DM (2013) Unexpected redwood mortality from synergies between wildfire and an emerging infectious disease. *Ecology* 94:2152–2159.
4. Metz MR, Frangioso KM, Meentemeyer RK, Rizzo DM (2011) Interacting disturbances: wildfire severity affected by stage of forest disease invasion. *Ecol Appl* 21:313–320.