



SONOMA ECOLOGY CENTER

Beautiful. Sustainable. Sonoma.

May 7, 2021

Regarding: Sonoma County Tree Protection Regulations

Dear Sonoma County Supervisors and Planner Doug Bush,

Many of Sonoma County's most strongly held values--scenic beauty, climate leadership, thriving natural areas, water security--involve trees. It is essential to retain larger trees for habitat, to sequester carbon, to capture water, and to retain shade to reduce flammability and protect soil moisture. The cumulative effect of tree protections must demonstrate a strong contribution to those values, not a subtraction from them.

Climate change mitigation: Protections should follow the science about how to achieve the carbon sequestration goals of the County. The cumulative net impact of the regulations must demonstrate that they further the County's climate goals, not detract from them.

Fire resilience: There is a lot of misinformation about trees and the risk of structures burning. The truth can be seen in the scientific literature and in the many photos of neighborhoods of burned houses surrounded by standing green trees. Large trees provide shade and wind breaks that can slow the spread of fire. Tree regulations must follow the science that shows that large trees and the shade they create must be retained in 100-foot defensible space, during fuels treatments, and in fuel breaks. Regulations should provide guidance that requires retaining large trees wherever possible. There should not be exceptions in the Tree Ordinance or other regs for fuels-related activities, except for example when trees overhang structures or come within 10 feet of chimneys.

Riparian protections: Tree regulations should be consistent with the Riparian Corridor ordinance, and should not create any exceptions to the Riparian Corridor ordinance. Shade over creeks and waterways is critical for wildlife habitat, and water quality. This is especially important, as our climate warms, to protect water resources and water-dependent biodiversity.

Effectiveness: It is important to not miss the forest for the trees. Having a canopy goal that is measurable and regularly published would help the County know if the tree regulations are effective or not in preserving our trees. There should be publicly visible milestones when the cumulative effect of tree protection regulations is reported. For example, what is the evidence that past or current regulations achieved their intended result?

Mitigation measures must be credible, proportional, readily understandable, enforceable, and actually enforced. The Tree Ordinance mitigation formula should be simplified, but also strengthened to achieve canopy goals. The number of mitigation trees

should be based on the cumulative diameter or circumference of the lost trees. To improve the success of mitigation measures, projects could pay into a fund, and get their money back if and when their mitigation trees achieve some level of success.

We urge Mr Bush to virtually convene a group of environmental stakeholders to discuss their input as a group. More brains think better than one. Invitees might include Kimberly Burr of Forest Unlimited, Denny Rosatti of Rosatti Consulting, Brock Dolman of Occidental Arts & Ecology Center, Kerry Fugett of Daily Acts, Tom Gardali from Point Blue, Ellie Cohen from Climate Center, and Minona Heaviland from Sonoma Ecology Center.

Thank you for your work on this topic. Few elements of Sonoma County's landscape better show how much we care about future generation than its trees.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard Dale". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Dale".

Richard Dale, Executive Director
richard@sonomaecologycenter.org
(707) 888-1656

From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: The war on trees in Sonoma-county.org
Date: May 10, 2021 11:19:49 AM

From: Johanna Lynch <rrtimes@sonic.net>
Sent: Saturday, May 08, 2021 10:06 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: The war on trees in Sonoma-county.org

To: Doug Bush
Project Planner E.mail: Doug Bush@sonomacountyRe the Email received from Permit Sonoma Friday May 7 2021
Thank you for sending this information about tree protections to me here at the *Russian River Times*.

Over the years I have seen the treatment of trees in general change from enjoying big older trees in all kinds of environments throughout the county into staring at trees, many standing alone due to Tricky Tree “cleanups” and removal of what many loggers and tree- haters call "taking out a dangerous tree.” Beautiful trees with big crowns do not need to be killed; simply a crown trim typically about 3 feet.

Shopping for many of us who live in this county, driving into Santa Rosa depends on how much shade there will be outside the malls, the complexes and the retail sites .

When I and my friends go shopping, parking can become an hour-long trial by heat!

Some barren cement-parking places are so hot, no animal can survive inside a parked car for more than fifteen minutes.

If we can't park and shop during the blistering summer months, does that affect the revenues?

What I and my friends would like to see is not only more plantings of sturdy trees—Native or not— to flourish with water provided for enough waterings (around the roots only), with 2-inch mulch around the roots to keep the roots cool. The water wasted with toilet flushings could be changed into flushing gray water. Cut down on giant Cannabis- growers watering twice weekly and not being gardeners and knowing little about roots of olives, grapes, and/or big trees.

We dine out about twice every week and only go to coffee shops if there is a patio shaded by trees and/or awnings. Trees clean the air and provide safe habitats for local birds. Yes. I am a birder too.

The hatred I hear from neighbors and others throughout the county re how trees are dangerous and feed fires, is echoed by “Brush removal” grant-funded amateurs.

To many of them “brush” includes Willows shading creeks and ponds throughout the county of Sonoma.

A neighbor (nitwit) of mine who was a landscape gardener I call him a Land-scraper who talks of the magic of what Roundup can do re killing weeds, hired a two-man crew to “cut down every tree” on his property; later gloating at our HOA meeting about this gruesome work which included destroying Alders, 60-year old Oaks and other beautiful healthy trees.

Too late I told him the erratic strong winds blowing through this area for the first time might be related to the removal of big stands of trees, including very old Redwoods.

He sniffed and told me I was “foolhardy.”

The war on trees suits the loggers very well. How many singed Redwoods have to be cut down and trucked to the mills to make a lotta money?

Three or four trucks are rolling through Guerneville every hour daily. More and more locals are complaining about

the sneaky tree-cutters making money off our forests.

Students in the public schools no longer learn to write a letter, put together a composition and/or a thesis, recognize a map of another country, and they do not learn anything about cultivating healthy, trees . Why?

To the trenches to kick up some dust and get more trees into towns and cities.

Begging you to try to initiate more protection for all the trees. The crooks love it when you talk about saving “only Native Trees.”

Please Insist that Davy Tree and other companies in the biz of cutting down healthy beautiful trees get more training re mulching around the tree roots and NOT spraying

Roundup, which eliminates the entire food sources of food for birds.

No weeds! No birds on a property, which means Sudden Oak death arrives along with other critters free to eat bark and kill trees. It is a real Duh! Relationship.

Trees do not like to stand alone; they thrive with lots of trees around them. And Hey! the trees make Oxygen!

The birds in Sonoma County have nowhere to go; let alone enjoy the day.

Thanks for listening

Johanna Lynch

Russian River Times

rrtimes@sonic.net

707 847 3190

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: Forest Unlimited. Fwd: Tree Ordinance letter to the Supervisors
Date: May 10, 2021 11:20:11 AM

From: Larry Hanson <larryjhanson@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 09, 2021 6:44 PM
Subject: Forest Unlimited. Fwd: Tree Ordinance letter to the Supervisors

FROM:
Forest Unlimited
PO Box 506 • Forestville CA 95436
707-632-6070

May 5, 2021

Dear Supervisors and Staff:

We are writing on behalf of our approximately 1500 Forest Unlimited supporters. We have worked locally for over 25 years to protect watersheds from irreversible impacts of irresponsible logging and planted over 34,000 redwoods on protected properties with hundreds of volunteers.

Forest Unlimited members are participating and watching the County's current effort to update the tree protection policies. In that spirit, while the existing tree policies are reviewed and a new policy adopted, we urge the County of Sonoma to act swiftly and cease issuance of tree removal permits to prevent further destruction of trees, woodlands, and forests. As climate science tells us, existing trees are a large part of the climate saving-equation drawing down large quantities of the harmful carbon we continue to emit in large quantities (*Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Moomaw, Ph. D. et al. Intact Forests in the United States: Proforestation Mitigates Climate Change and Serves Greatest Good*).

Science tells us that we have only ten years for making significant gains. Trees that are 10 years or older translate into time, this is the time we need to make the necessary adjustment to mitigate climate change impacts. Therefore, all trees at least 10 years of age must be preserved across the county's landscape. Protected trees will provide substantial services to the community and future generations.

Major Long-term Economic and Community Safety Considerations

* Climate change is adversely affecting our existing community, our farms, and our watersheds;

- Reversing climate change is of the highest concern and effective measures to contribute to that effort must be implemented;
- Drastic reductions in emissions and drawing down carbon are critically important in that effort;
- Existing trees drawdown carbon immediately and on a large scale;
- Compromising our ability to drawdown carbon should not be an option at this time;
- Existing woodlands, forests, and trees must be preserved with minor exceptions (e.g. trees close to homes);

The Protection of Trees

Currently, Sonoma County permits large numbers of tree removal proposals on a yearly basis.

This is true despite the many valuable functions trees provide to the community including:

- Protection of our shared clean water supply insofar as woodlands of all sorts help infiltrate water into the aquifers for well owners and stream flows, reduce soil erosion by protecting soils from runoff of stormwaters, and help moderate soil heating and soil loss from extreme solar exposure deep ripping, etc.;
- Mature trees are more fire resilient;
- Trees provide free services to the community and are better than “shovel ready” because they are doing critical work for us already;
- Mature trees sequester by far more carbon than seedlings and saplings;
- Woodlands support very high levels of biodiversity which is critical to humans as well as other species;
- Protecting trees safeguards soil and groundwater through their deep root structure and works in combination with canopy shade that also provides micro-climate enhancement;
- Trees create wet weather systems that we need on large and small scales; and
- The upper canopy of woodlands cool the soil below and facilitate absorption of rainfall into the ground for human and other uses.

Actions Required

- Refrain from issuing tree removal permits until such time as the County has in

place a Comprehensive Tree Protection Policy that is based on the latest climate science;

- Create County policy so that mature trees are of the highest value to the health and safety of our community in the fight to rein in climate change.
- Ensure that the new policy is fair—projects and proposed activities will be treated the same and existing mature trees, woodlands, and forests will be presumptively protected;
- The County should look at narrow exceptions for creating reasonable defensible space around individual homes for fire protection (see Jack Cohen, Ph. D.);

Forest Unlimited has, and especially now, views all mature trees as highly valuable and urges the County of Sonoma to move forward a comprehensive and climate appropriate protection policy that honors our children and begins the long process of mitigating past and ongoing development activities.

We look forward to a successful update process that is based on the climate science.

Sincerely,

Larry Hanson
President of the Board of Directors
Forest Unlimited

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: County tree ordinance update
Date: May 10, 2021 11:20:24 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Michael Krikorian <thekriks@sonic.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 09, 2021 11:55 PM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: County tree ordinance update

EXTERNAL

As a 50 year resident of Sonoma County, I would like to express my strong concern that more needs to be done to protect the remaining oak woodlands as well as remaining redwood groves. Between the drought, conversion to vineyards, fires, sudden oak death and invasive species, our woodlands have taken a beating. What remains needs maximum protection, especially when we now know that mature trees tend to do the most when it comes to pulling in and binding CO2 from the atmosphere.

Other than trees needing removal to protect dwellings, I would like to see special efforts to protect the trees we have left.

Thank you, Michael Krikorian

738 Willowood Way

Windsor, CA 95492

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: Trees are essential
Date: May 10, 2021 11:21:01 AM

From: Tanya Constantine <tanya@tanyaconstantine.com>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 9:31 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Trees are essential

Hello, Doug!

I am writing to you to bring to your attention the necessity to maintain as many trees as possible to combat climate change. I think there are a lot of people out there who don't know that the future of the planet depends on saving trees, not getting rid of them. I notice the indiscriminate felling, when the trees still have life, for aesthetic reasons. At this point, it is unconscionable for people to be getting rid of trees because they're in the way. I understand that it's imperative that to maintain trees, they need to be pruned. But not to be felled, if at all possible. Please do your best to communicate to your people that they need to make every effort to protect the trees that are up, and to plant new ones. I want my greatgrandchildren to be able to breathe. It is very important for the planet to be a safe environment for people to continue living on it.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Tanya Constantine
tanya@tanyaconstantine.com
(415) 726-7245

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: importance of trees
Date: May 10, 2021 11:20:37 AM
Attachments: [Ltrr to Supes on Tree Ord.pdf](#)

-----Original Message-----

From: Kenneth Smith <kensmith@sonic.net>
Sent: Monday, May 10, 2021 8:26 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: importance of trees

EXTERNAL

Dear Doug Bush,

Please give the highest priority to protecting our trees and forests. I am a long-time resident of Forestville (43 years living at 6636 1st Street).

Larry Hanson, a friend of mine, has written a persuasive letter I am sure you have read (attachment below).

Ken Smith

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: The Tree Ordinance
Date: May 11, 2021 9:16:14 AM

From: Chris Poehlmann <chrispoehlmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:11 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Cc: Lynda Hopkins <Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org>; Leo Chyi <Leo.Chyi@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: The Tree Ordinance

Dear Supervisors;

I would like to urge you to update the tree ordinance so that the importance of protecting trees, forests, and woodlands for safeguarding our water sources and for mitigating climate effects is maximized.

Climate change and its consequences are arguably the biggest existential threat to mankind and life on earth. Any foreseeable levels of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions will not be enough to meet the conservative maximum target (2.0°C and under) that climate scientists say is needed. We need to additionally increase carbon sequestration in existing forests, wetlands and soils. This study (link below) points to conserving the existing bigger trees in existing healthy forests as a best method to meet the needed target reductions. The term to describe this approach is “Proforestation.” The principal author has been a lead author of five Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Reports.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/ffgc.2019.00027/full>

Please review this science and use it to craft the best tree ordinance possible.

Regards,
Chris Poehlmann
Annapolis

Chris Poehlmann
chrispoehlmann@gmail.com

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: Protecting our trees
Date: May 12, 2021 7:58:30 AM
Attachments: [Outlook-top4ha5h.png](#)

From: Mary Bates Abbott <mba531@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 6:38 AM
To: BOS <BOS@sonoma-county.org>; Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Protecting our trees

RE: Tree policy

I would like to go on record to say that I believe we need to enact a strong, vital tree protection ordinance in the County. Our precious oaks in particular are a keystone species, vital to our health and well-being, the health and well-being of all other native species in the county. We have already lost so many trees to fire, and in those areas, so much logging is already going on.

Please, stop the clearing of our trees. Removing trees for economic development is so short sighted. Protecting our trees takes a long view of protections for all.

Sincerely,
Mary Abbott
444 Vine Ave
Sebastopol 95472

Also, own property on Seaview Ridge Road

Mary Bates Abbott

Sent from my toaster oven.



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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: For the Board meeting on May 18th
Date: May 12, 2021 11:29:53 AM

From: Tanya Constantine <tanya@tanyaconstantine.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 10:59 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: For the Board meeting on May 18th

Hello, Doug,

Please implement policy that stops the clearing of county woodlands. We need trees to draw down our pollution fast. Sacrificing trees during this important effort does not make any sense. Saving our shared woodlands costs nothing and has immediate and vital on-going benefits.

Thanks for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Tanya Constantine
(415) 726-7245
tanya@tanyaconstantine.com

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: Tree Ordinance Comments
Date: May 12, 2021 9:06:00 AM

It looks like this already went to the board but still wanted to forward to you just in case.

From: Sara <sarajharris@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 8:30 AM
To: BOS <BOS@sonoma-county.org>; Marcie Woychik <Marcie.Woychik@sonoma-county.org>; Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Tree Ordinance Comments

Dear Board of Supervisors and all Involved,
As you gather soon to make vital decisions about the future of Sonoma County trees, I would like my voice to be heard, as a longtime citizen of downtown Forestville.

We are at a critical point and our trees play a very important role. I believe their place in the work we do around our climate future has been very overlooked in the service of development. ALL of the latest research points to the fact that trees are a lynchpin in carbon sequestration, Clearing county woodlands, including such examples of old oaks being felled in the Laguna, is like saying we are a fairly progressive, green county and then slapping a Trumpian type of short-sighted, destructive behavior right over that pretty picture. This county did NOT elect Trump. Why does our policy around forests and trees look like we did elect him?

Sonoma County could become a leader, a beacon of light, in protecting our county trees. There is no lack of scientific evidence that this is essential. This is not at all about just planting new trees. It is about updating the tree ordinances to reflect current science and to take an active role in working with the truths and cycles of nature and how trees play such a role in climate change.

The current Sonoma County Tree Ordinance policy (1986) is scientifically outdated and severely undervalues the importance of trees and woodlands to people, to wildlife, and to the critical struggle to reverse the climate crisis. I am asking that a moratorium on tree cutting be declared while policies are updated. Do not give into the false narrative that trees must be massively cleared to prevent fires.

We are lucky enough to have trees left to save. Many places no longer do! Let this county become a leader in Climate Policies that work WITH nature.

With gratitude for your hard work and your careful attention to this issue,

Sara Harris

6636 1st St/Forestville/95436

photo taken in Sonoma county!



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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: tree policy
Date: May 12, 2021 7:57:18 AM

From: Angelica Jochim <angelica.jochim@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 7:17 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: tree policy

Hello,
Please:

1. Pass a policy that recognizes the huge importance of trees to help draw down the carbon we continue to push into the atmosphere...Reducing emissions is NOT enough. "We will need to commit to removing carbon that is already in our atmosphere if we want to move fast enough to become carbon neutral by 2030." Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority

2. Please implement policy that stops the clearing of county woodlands. We need trees to draw down our pollution fast. Sacrificing trees during this important effort does not make sense. Saving our shared woodlands costs nothing and has immediate and vital on-going benefits.

"Given that land use change, predominantly from forest conversion, contributes substantially to global CO2 emissions, conserving Sonoma County's native habitats is an important element in the portfolio of climate action. " Ag and Open Space

Thank you,

Angelica Jochim

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: trees
Date: May 17, 2021 7:56:06 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: Forrest <fj@monitor.net>
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 7:37 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: trees

EXTERNAL

Dear Board of Supervisors,

SAVE THE TREES!! Let the trees live and breathe, stop the cutting.

Forrest & Eileen Jang
Bodega

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: May 18, 2021 Tree Protection ordinance update
Date: May 17, 2021 8:01:12 AM
Attachments: [Tree Protection May 2021.pdf](#)

It looks like this PDF was already sent to all supervisors but sending to you just in case we need to provide it.

From: Wendy Krupnick <wlk@sonic.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 9:53 PM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Cc: district5 <district5@sonoma-county.org>; district3 <district3@sonoma-county.org>; district4 <district4@sonoma-county.org>; Susan Gorin <Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org>; David Rabbitt <David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: May 18, 2021 Tree Protection ordinance update

Dear Mr. Bush,

Community Alliance with Family Farmers, (CAFF), Sonoma County is submitting the attached comments for the May 18, 2021 workshop on updating the County Tree Protection ordinance.

Thank you for including our comments in your public input and for considering them.

With best wishes,

Wendy Krupnick, Vice-president, CAFF Sonoma County

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May 16, 2021

Doug Bush, Planner III
County of Sonoma, Permit Sonoma
Re: Comprehensive Tree Ordinance Update

Dear Mr. Bush,

The Sonoma County Chapter of Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) would like to thank the Board of Supervisors and Permit Sonoma for moving forward with updating the County Tree Protection Ordinance. This update has been long overdue. Along with many other groups and individuals, we have been sounding the alarm about the loss of mature trees and their surrounding ecosystems, especially the destruction of acres of oak woodland, for many years. We have previously requested, and do so now, that a moratorium be placed immediately on removal of mature trees and clearing of oak woodlands until the revised ordinance is approved.

CAFF promotes ecological farming techniques, including practices that sequester carbon, improve soil organic matter content, reduce erosion and sediment loss, enhance nutrient cycling, increase soil water holding capacity and infiltration, support and sustain biodiversity, and increase resiliency to drought and weather extremes. Native trees provide all of these functions and are a critical part of healthy agricultural ecosystems.

We appreciate the increased recognition of the value of these ecological farming practices locally and State-wide in recent years. The support and resources provided by programs like the California Healthy Soils Initiative and those offered by the RCDs and NRCS have encouraged even more farmers and ranchers to expand and modify practices that conserve the land and sequester carbon. It has been disconcerting to see removal of carbon-sequestering trees and thereby defeat the progress we can make in that regard. This allowance seems both ill-advised and self-defeating.

To preserve the trees where they stand, and to supplement their innate capabilities with additional climate-beneficial farming practices is in accordance with the County's climate goals. A holistic and comprehensive approach to climate resiliency can only happen if the trees themselves are given increased levels of protection, which the Tree Ordinance is uniquely positioned to do. It is incumbent on these combined and cumulative efforts for us to succeed in combatting the most devastating effects of climate change.

We are responding below to the questions posed for the May 18, 2021 workshop:

Are current rules sufficient to meet the county's adopted natural resource protection goals?

It is clear that current rules are *not* sufficient as evidenced by the extensive loss of mature native trees and oak woodlands in our county. Much of the siltation of our rivers and streams has resulted from tree removal. There is increased run off and flooding during storms and loss



of habitat is surely exacerbating the significant decrease in populations of songbirds, insects, and other species.

How should we define success when it comes to native tree protections?

Successful native tree protection would be indicated by increase in acreage of healthy stands, woodlands and forests and their surrounding ecosystems, specific to each dominant species of trees. For example, oaks would have increasing natural regeneration so oak woodland acreage would increase and have trees of all ages in them. However, young Doug fir trees would be controlled resulting in fewer and much older trees spaced much farther apart with many other species present between trees.

Are certain trees species, or trees in particular areas more important than others?

Oaks and their habitats are among the most critical for California's native biodiversity, including some 2,000 plants as well as 5,000 insects, 80 amphibians and reptiles, 160 birds and 80 mammals. They capture and hold massive amounts of carbon, prevent erosion and increase water infiltration significantly. They are perhaps the most resilient trees to drought, flood and fire. As a UCANR study states, "Conifers maximize growth; oaks maximize persistence." We are lucky to have both in our county and should value each in their unique niches. Species that are particularly flammable and weedy, such as acacia, eucalyptus and young Doug fir, should not be protected and in many cases should be removed in favor of oaks and other more resilient native trees.

Should we continue to exempt most construction and agricultural operations from tree protections?

The exemption from most tree protections for ag and construction operations must be halted immediately. By far the most extensive loss of mature trees, forest and woodland habitat has been due to these activities and there are no justifications for the exemptions to continue. Addressing the climate crisis requires that all carbon stores be preserved and increased while simultaneously cutting carbon emissions as fast as possible. This means halting most new development that would remove carbon capturing trees and plants and supporting natural regeneration and planting of appropriate species, especially native shrubs and trees.

We ask that you move forward quickly with updating relevant existing ordinances and implement an immediate moratorium on further large tree removals to prevent a rush of tree cutting in anticipation of these much-needed restrictions.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Wendy Krupnick

Vice president, CAFF Sonoma County

cc. Chair Hopkins and Supervisors Coursey, Gore, Gorin and Rabbitt

To: Doug Bush, Planner III
County of Sonoma, Permit Sonoma
2550 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
doug.bush@sonoma-county.org

Date: May 16, 2021

Re: Proposed Tree Ordinances for Sonoma County

On behalf of the Milo Baker Chapter (Sonoma County) of the California Native Plant Society, thank you for the opportunity to share our comments on the proposed changes to the Tree Ordinance for Sonoma County. The Milo Baker Chapter is dedicated to protecting native plants and their habitats in Sonoma County. Many of these habitats are imperiled from development including native grass prairies, valley oak woodland, vernal pools and other wetlands. While most tree species in Sonoma County are not endangered or rare, they do play an important role. Trees are long-lived species and a great display of our County's natural heritage; they also enhance scenic vistas, provide habitat for many other species, and enhance critical ecosystem functions like groundwater recharge and prevent wind erosion of topsoil. In addition, trees have important carbon sequestration value.

Following are the Milo Baker Chapter of CNPS' comments to the questions from County of Sonoma Staff:

[Sonoma County: Are current rules sufficient to meet the county's adopted natural resource protection goals?](#)

Milo Baker: There is a wealth of evidence that shows that current rules and proposed rules do not meet the natural resource protection goals. Trees are being removed throughout the County with no oversight or mitigation requirements. Numbers of trees and acres of woodland have decreased dramatically in the past 30 years. Agriculture is moving out of traditionally zoned ag land into forested and oak savannas in the Rural Resource area zoned property, through VESCO and other projects allowing ministerial permitting. The charts used for measuring trees removed and retained do not provide enough protection as it is on a site-by-site basis. In addition, the weighted values for Diameter at Breast Height (dbh) doesn't provide for the condition of the tree itself.

We recommend that the County assess the overall acreage of woodlands and other forests, then provide a projected loss in acreage over time based on predicted development, whether it be from construction development or agricultural development (i.e., vineyards, cannabis and conversions).

In the future, specific criterion about the stands, woodlands and forest should be included, such as stand/woodland/forest composition, distribution of oak species, tree cover and density, stand/woodland/forest size and connectivity, and interfaces of the stand/woodland/forest regarding development. Much of this data is already available through the Ag and Open Space District's dataset for the County; the Sonoma Veg Map (Sonomavegmap.org). The California Native Plant Society provided expertise in this 5 year effort with other advisors. With additional data, this information goes a long way to understanding current resources and in planning future priority land uses.

In addition, resources need to be allocated to improving enforcement of existing rules. In some cases, woodlands are cleared before agricultural permit applications are begun. Developing guidelines for vegetation treatment for fire control is also an emerging and urgent need in the county.

How should we define success when it comes to native tree protections?

The current mitigations for tree removal are insufficient. As many species take more than 40 years to create a good canopy and healthy soils associations, any mitigation measures (such as the current popular planting in-kind by species) should not be measured as fully mitigated until the forest has become established as a community.

Once there is an overall acreage of the various tree communities, the County can identify the success measurements. A Sonoma County Woodland Conservation and Enhancement Plan should be created to evaluate woodland mitigation opportunities that arise as a result of land conversion, including infrastructure expansion or urban and rural development. Such a plan can go into details that will determine success of native tree protections.

Are certain trees species, or trees in particular areas more important than others?

In general, protection of individual trees is benefitting the tree more than the vegetation community or habitat. As a result, we propose identifying important vegetation communities, such as stands, woodlands and forests. We have provided the following definitions for easier understanding of these terms.

"Stand" means an individual tree or a grouping of contiguous trees that occupy less than one acre of area where the dominant trees are of one species.

"Oak Woodland" means a grouping of trees over one acre in area growing in a contiguous pattern and on a site of sufficiently uniform quality that is distinguishable as a unit, including any Stand within 500 feet; where the dominant trees are one or more of the following species: Blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*), coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), interior live oak (*Quercus wislizeni*), valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), and California black oak (*Quercus kelloggii*).

"Mixed Evergreen Forest" means a grouping of trees over one acre growing in a contiguous pattern with a canopy greater than 60% and on a site of sufficiently uniform quality that is distinguishable as a unit, including any Stand within 500 feet; where the dominant trees are one or more of the following species: Canyon Live Oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), Black Oak (*Quercus kelloggii*), Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), Madrone (*Arbutus menziesii*), Bigleaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*), California Bay (*Umbellularia californica*), Christmas Berry (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), Coulter Pine (*Pinus coulteri*), Tan-Bark Oak (*Lithocarpus densiflora*), California Hazelnut (*Corylus californica*), Coffeeberry (*Rhamnus californica*).

Conservation and enhancement efforts should seek to conserve and maintain the full diversity of species present in the county. As threats change over time, these efforts may change as well.

Should we continue to exempt most construction and agricultural operations from tree protections?

No, construction and agricultural operations are removing the largest acreages of stands, woodlands and forests in Sonoma County. As a result, we should NOT exempt them from tree protections. However, we do not have a comparison of what is present versus what is lost. We have little historic information on woodland composition, woodland condition or other factors to fully assess woodland values. The Yolo County Tree Ordinance from 2007 provides good information on the priority for conservation and enhancement.

We are recommending that a broad-based ecosystem approach be taken for protecting and perpetuating biological diversity for forests and especially oak woodlands. In order to achieve this, acreages of each

forest type needs to be examined. The Sonoma County Ag and Open Space District has most of this data from 2012-2017.

We recommend that Permit Sonoma work with Ag and Open Space to determine Sonoma County's relative abundance of forests by forest type including: redwood forest, Doug fir forest, mixed conifer, and oak woodlands by conducting an updated vegetation analysis of all habitat types, to provide a broad stroke analysis of current acreages using ARCGIS. Furthermore, the County could look at the relative abundance of these forested acres in the various zoning types, to evaluate the potential impact of ministerial permits in the different zoned lands. The County may find that if ministerial permits are only applied to currently zoned agricultural properties there would be less of an impact than if the ministerial permits extended to Rural Resource zoned parcels. Understanding the impacts of planning decisions should come before policy adoption.

Once the analysis of how the landscape is changing, then a broad-based ecosystem approach through collaboration and cooperation of numerous private and public partners can be achieved.

This inventory of forests can then be used as a basis for an overall assessment of risk to any particular forest type, for instance, oak resources. A few of the categories that should be evaluated include:

- Activities causing net loss of oak woodlands
- Activities causing fragmentation of functional habitats
- Impacts to family farming operations
- Activities affecting land values

The evaluation of oak woodlands and their risks can then be used to track projects and the effects of those projects on the County resources of oak woodlands. The inventory system might include:

- Listing of approved projects
- Listing of denied projects
- Determination of project impacts (e.g., acres lost)
- Listing of mitigation measures

In summary, the Milo Baker (Sonoma County) Chapter of the Native Plant Society believes that it is incumbent on the County to increase protections for trees and forests throughout the County to meet the requirements for tree protections in the General Plan. In a prior comment letter, the Milo Baker Chapter called on the County to instigate a tree cutting moratorium. We are encouraged that the Board of Supervisors is tackling this issue. Our organization is willing to support reviewing and analyzing data, setting up realistic goals, and supporting the overall health and resiliency of our County by protecting our native forests.

Regards,



Wendy Smit, President

Milo Baker Chapter of the California Native Plant Society

From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: Tree Ordinance
Date: May 17, 2021 8:06:35 AM

From: Jennie Rose <jenstone@sonic.net>
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 10:10 AM
To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Tree Ordinance

Hello,

I am writing you on behalf of the trees in Sonoma County and asking that you please pass a policy that recognizes the huge importance of trees to help draw down the carbon we continue to push into the atmosphere...Reducing emissions is NOT enough. "We will need to commit to removing carbon that is already in our atmosphere if we want to move fast enough to become carbon neutral by 2030." (Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority).

Also, please implement policy that stops the clearing of county woodlands. We need trees to draw down our pollution fast. Sacrificing trees during this important effort does not make sense. Saving our shared woodlands costs nothing and has immediate and vital on-going benefits. "Given that land use change, predominantly from forest conversion, contributes substantially to global CO2 emissions, conserving Sonoma County's native habitats is an important element in the portfolio of climate action." (Ag and Open Space).

Thank you very much.

Jennie Rose

Bodega, CA

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From: [Doug Bush](#)
To: [Chelsea Holup](#)
Subject: FW: Future Updating of Tree Ordinances for Sonoma County
Date: May 17, 2021 7:56:51 AM
Importance: Low

It looks like this one already made it to the supervisors but sending to you just in case.

From: judith Rousseau <jrousseau12@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, May 16, 2021 10:24 PM
To: Lynda Hopkins <Lynda.Hopkins@sonoma-county.org>; David Rabbitt <David.Rabbitt@sonoma-county.org>; Susan Gorin <Susan.Gorin@sonoma-county.org>; Chris Coursey <Chris.Coursey@sonoma-county.org>; James Gore <James.Gore@sonoma-county.org>
Cc: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Future Updating of Tree Ordinances for Sonoma County
Importance: Low

I am concerned about the way the County has framed native tree protection. Putting a primary focus on trees by their size does not take into account the significant value of established ecosystems like Oak Woodlands and Mixed Evergreen Forests. These living systems provide so many benefits, including preserving habitat for biodiversity, erosion control, water quality and carbon sequestration.

Sonoma County has no history of assessing the size and composition of our remaining woodlands and forests, nor do we keep track of the acres of such habitat we have lost to development. This will require a thorough vegetation analysis of our remaining woodlands and forests. Only then, will we know what is being lost.

I fervently hope we will reevaluate and enlarge our understanding of our *Working Woodlands* and then begin to look at the big picture for our future.

Sincerely,

Judith Rousseau
Graton

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From: [Angela Moskow](#)
To: [Doug Bush](#)
Cc: [Janet Cobb](#)
Subject: Fw: Tree ordinance workshop
Date: Wednesday, October 13, 2021 8:25:46 AM
Attachments: [Spring-Summer2021NewsletterDigitized.PDF](#)
[Year End 2020 Newsletter Reduced Size \(1\).pdf](#)

EXTERNAL

Hello again, Doug,

I am forwarding the message I sent earlier this year just to get the conversation started.

Best,

Angela

From: Angela Moskow
Sent: Monday, May 17, 2021 3:01 PM
To: Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Tree ordinance workshop

Dear Doug Bush,

I am with the California Oaks program of California Wildlife Foundation. Anne Morkill of Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation communicated with our office today about the Comprehensive Tree Ordinance Workshop tomorrow.

Our organization started to prepare comments only to discover that written comments would have needed to be received by last Friday, May 14th in order to be considered at the workshop. If you are still accepting brief comments, the California Oaks program of California Wildlife Foundation suggests that Sonoma County:

1. Adopt a no-net-loss policy for the county's oaks, California's primary old growth resource.
2. Prohibit oak removal in areas designated as critical habitat, except for limited removal in order to ensure woodland health.
3. Provide a greater level of oak protections in areas that are important wildlife corridors, habitat for rare or native species richness (including valley oaks), irreplaceability, or sensitive habitat.
4. Prioritize habitat connectivity.

5. Keep oaks standing in working landscapes for carbon sequestration, habitat, and watershed maintenance.
6. Ensure that oak impacts are properly assessed during environmental review. California law defines oak woodlands as stands with greater than 10% canopy cover, or that formerly had such cover. This definition is frequently ignored during environmental reviews, which instead rely on land categorizations that may not identify oak woodlands present.

Two of our recent publications are attached. The first shows thirty-three listed and fully protected vertebrates are dependent upon oak habitat for reproduction, cover, or feeding, and 134 listed plants and 26 invertebrates are associated with oaks. The second reports on oaks and fire.

Best, Angela

Angela Moskow
California Oaks Information Network Manager
California Wildlife Foundation/California Oaks
201 University Avenue
Berth H-43
Berkeley, CA 94710
www.californiaoaks.org
Telephone: (510) 763-0282

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From: [Laura Avalos](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001.
Date: November 04, 2021 8:52:40 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Commissioners and Staff,

Tomorrow is your meeting to discuss **woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001**. At this point, a tree protection ordinance is of utmost priority and importance to me as your constituent.

I would like to put my vote in and demand you put a TIME OUT to Tree Removal in Sonoma County, most especially for new "land development." It is time the Planning Commissioners create a strong and expansive ordinance for tree & forest protection and create an extensive plan for ecological security. It is of utmost importance to place our future generations ahead of human profit, which includes clean air, soil, and water. In order to do so, the protection of trees, including woodlands and trees growing in Sonoma County (and beyond) need to be protected. First, they provide carbon sequestering properties which affects our ecosystem. Articles citing this value below. Second, these trees and their ecosystems are not easily replaceable, often taking decades if not centuries to regrow. The older the trees are, the more robust carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration has a direct impact on climate change.

If, in partnership with our indigenous communities such as the Coast Miwok or Pomo - it is determined that calculated burns are essential for the well being of our community for fire protection - and these indigenous peoples are partnered with fairly, prioritizing their knowledge and compensating them equitably in order for a process like this to occur, I approve. However, if tree removal is in essence for "land development," I am strongly opposed.

We must take all the actions necessary at this time to protect our planet from prioritizing human profit over the well being of our forests, waters, and air.

I CALL FOR A TIME OUT OF TREE REMOVAL, AND FOR GETTING AN ORDINANCE ON YOUR AGENDA RIGHT AWAY.

Please email me if you would like to discuss this further. I have worked with children and families as a mental health therapist and outdoor educator for more than a decade, am a mother of a three year old in Sonoma County, and know how important it is to make decisions now and swiftly that will affect our land and water for generations to come.

All of our actions count and will make a difference.
Please prioritize our future generations and all of our relations.

Best,

Laura Avalos
High School Road
Sebastopol

<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2016-2-march-april/ask-mr-green/how-much-carbon-do-trees-really-store>

<https://environment-review.yale.edu/carbon-capture-tree-size-matters-0>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jul/04/planting-billions-trees-best-tackle-climate-crisis-scientists-canopy-emissions>

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"Ojalá te aventuras y te sucedan cosas en la vida que las labores y riegues con tus lágrimas y con tu risa hasta que florezcan" - Clarissa Pinkola Estés

"May you have adventures, and may things happen in your life that call for a deeper knowing, may you water these with your tears and with your laughter until they flower."

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From: [Colin Baptie](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Cc: [Sheryl Bratton](#); [Jennifer Klein](#)
Subject: Tree and Woodland Protection Ordinance ORD21-0001.
Date: November 01, 2021 4:38:56 PM

EXTERNAL

To: Commissioner Koenigshofer, Commissioner Cornwall, Commissioner Reed,
Commissioner Ocana, Commissioner Deas

Dear Planning Commissioner,

Re: Tree and Woodland Protection Ordinance (ORD21-0001)

In advance of the Planning Commission meeting on November 4, 2021, I am writing to respectfully ask that, until a policy is finalized regarding the Tree and Woodland Protection Ordinance, you temporarily pause all county-approved tree removal permits. At this crucial juncture in our fight against climate change and while government leaders are meeting in Glasgow to hopefully advance protections for our planet, you have an opportunity to make a meaningful decision at a local level. Please act now to protect the trees and woodlands in Sonoma County by enacting a temporary time-out on the removal of mature trees while the Tree and Woodland Protection Ordinance is being finalized.

Sincerely yours,

Colin A. Baptie, Psy.D.

17447 Riverside Drive
Guerneville
CA 95446

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From: Noel Bouck <noelb@sonic.net>
Date: November 2, 2021 at 8:55:35 AM PDT
To: Sheryl Bratton <Sheryl.Bratton@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Planning Commission meeting

EXTERNAL

Commissioner Eric Koenigshofer

Planning Agency @sonoma-county.org

Cc: Sheryl Bratton, COA

SBRATTON@sonoma-county.org

Re: County woodlands

Dear Commissioner Koenigshofer,

We of the Salmon Creek Watershed Council strongly request that the Planning Commission use this meeting to call for a **temporary time out on removing any of our woodlands** during the time that the County's final policy is being developed. It is essential to retain these resources should their value be recognized later. At this time when so many of us are doing what we can at the local level to avoid accelerating the climate change that is threatening our world, destruction of carbon sequestering woodlands without careful consideration of the consequences seems unwise.

For the sake of the county we love and the planet on which it rests, it is now essential to study carefully, taking the long view, of possible results of our actions. We look forward to the Commission's data-based investigations and hope that when policy is decided upon, the woodlands that may be necessary to implement it are still standing.

Sincerely yours,

David Shatkin

For the Salmon Creek Watershed Council

salmoncreekwater.org

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From: [Serena Coltrane-Briscoe](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: ORD21-0001
Date: November 04, 2021 9:37:37 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Planning Commissioners,
I am writing with regard to item number 2 on today's meeting agenda, regarding ORD21-0001. I am strongly in support of meaningful tree and woodland protection. Our trees are one of the greatest protections we have against climate change, in addition to providing habitat, beauty, and cultural benefits to our community. I encourage you to consider an **ordinance that is science-based and that emphasizes protection of mature trees**, as these sequester the most carbon, have higher fire resistance, store more water, serve more wildlife, and have the most developed roots and canopies.

While you consider the tree and woodland protection ordinance, I urge you to implement a **time out** for tree removals permitted for development.

Thank you for considering my perspective and for the work you do on behalf of Sonoma County.

Serena Coltrane-Briscoe
Designer
MArch + LEED AP
707.494.0087
serenabriscoe@yahoo.com

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From: [Kimberly Burr](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Cc: [Doug Bush](#); [Robert Aguero](#); [Brian Oh](#); [Sheryl Bratton](#)
Subject: COMMENTS 11/4/21. Tree Protection Update
Date: November 02, 2021 4:43:43 PM

EXTERNAL

11/2/21

Please add these comments to the record.

Dear Planning Commission: Thank you for your attention to the Comprehensive Tree Protection update currently underway. Such an update is consistent with the county's Climate Action and Resiliency strategy (see below).

The climate science is clear, we should place a much higher value on our trees, woodlands, and forest. We can't stop emitting green gas houses tomorrow, but we can stop cutting down trees under county jurisdiction where protection of homes and businesses are not implicated.

The County has an opportunity and obligation to properly protect these woodlands and forests for the public services that they provide the community in this time of climate crisis. As the *county's* Climate Action and Resiliency strategy recognizes, it is time to move -- not just talk about or plan to, protect the natural "air purifiers" of the community.

Excerpt from Sonoma County Climate Action and Resiliency Strategy"

"Goal 5: Maximize opportunities for mitigation of climate change and adaptation through land conservation work and land use policies

- **Objective 1:** By 2025, update the County General Plan and other county/special district planning documents to incorporate policy language and identify areas within the County that have the potential to maximize carbon sequestration and provide opportunities for climate change adaptation. The focus of these actions will be to increase overall landscape and species resiliency, reduce the risk of fire and floods, and address sea level rise and biodiversity loss.
- **Objective 2:** Develop policies to maximize carbon sequestration and minimize loss of natural carbon sinks including old growth forests, the Laguna de Santa Rosa, and rangelands. Encourage agricultural and open space land management to maximize sequestration. Develop a framework and policies to

incentivize collaboration with private and public land owners."

Thank you for your service.

Kimberly

"Balance - When we are urged to weigh the environmental impacts against the interests of developers, consider this...."We've lost nearly two-thirds of the world's wildlife since the first Earth Day 48 years ago."

—The Nature Conservancy

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From: [Kimberly Burr](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: COMMENTS Comprehensive Tree Protection Policy 11/4/21
Date: November 03, 2021 9:46:50 AM

EXTERNAL

Comprehensive Tree Protection Policy

Although the Tree Protection presentation is informational, I write to urge the Planning Commission to support a temporary time out on county approved tree removal permits now.

The process of reviewing the current development policies, collecting the data requested by the Supervisors, and drafting science based comprehensive options to bring it forward takes time. Meanwhile tree removal permits are being issued. Since the County has surprisingly not kept track of the many tree removal permits each department approves, it has been left to the public to do so. We now know hundreds and hundreds of acres of trees have been converted to other uses. And as a community, we all now know that we need these woodlands and trees more than ever - and pretty much more than we need most other things, as we race to get our climate stabilized.

Everything we do must support climate stabilization. You are informed enough to know we must act now. We must reduce emissions and sequester our CO2 in large quantities.

As you can see from the comments you have received, most are from people who get this concept and hope and expect our representatives are paying attention and doing ALL they can to bring policy changes that contribute to real climate stabilization.

Petaluma the Little Town that Roared

This is not time for business as usual. Take Petaluma for example. It passed a prohibition on new gas stations. In the whole country, Petaluma is the leader on this and individuals are receiving national and international attention for doing something good. People welcomed this act.

Sonoma County can also get itself on the map without an expensive branding campaign by simply doing a common sense thing to protect its mature trees - because they are more valuable to the community standing than they are converted to any other use. Imagine the headlines in the NYTimes and the Guardian of London ...Sonoma County Planners Support Smartest Tree Protection Policy Climate Scientists Have Seen. Local leaders will stand out from the crowd and be interviewed and people around the country will know Sonoma County for acting appropriately and consistent with science.

Climate Science Is the Guiding Science

Climate scientists tell us we have less than 10 years to avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change by reducing emissions and sequestering the green house gases that we continue to emit.

Saving trees and woodlands costs the County nothing. It is a free and effective climate change fighting "technology" that the county has thus far seen willing to squander.

Sonoma County residents know and want to see their political leaders be clear-eyed about our land use policies. This generation and the next want you to embrace the science and stand for their future.

Ministerial Means No Potential for Significant Environmental Impacts

Right now clearing acres of trees and woodlands is largely considered a “ministerial” act...like getting a dog license. This is one of the biggest loop holes that exist in our public policy. Lumping very destructive activities into a category of development that allows for no public notice, no climate analysis, no environmental analysis, and no mitigation is a mistake that we need to correct.

We have an opportunity to change this when it comes to tree removals, and staff needs time to work on what is now a very permissive, preferential, not transparent, and an out of date approach to tree removal.

Please support a temporary time out on county approved tree removals until we make our code consistent, fair, and climate smart.

Thank you.

Kimberly Burr
Protect Our Working Woodlands
Green Valley Creek

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From: [Jim Finn](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Tree ordinance
Date: November 01, 2021 2:40:18 PM

EXTERNAL

Hello,

Ref. ord21-0001. Please word the ordinance in such a way to protect mature trees.

Jim Finn
3455 Creighton Ridge Road
Cazadero, Ca.

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From: [Laura Goldman](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Cc: contact@forestunlimited.org
Subject: Tree and woodlands protection needed ORD21-0001
Date: November 01, 2021 7:46:24 PM

Hello, Planning Commissioners,

I have learned from Forest Unlimited that you will be voting on an ordinance this week that will affect our environment and Sonoma County residents.

Please, do the right thing for our community and planet and craft a science-based ordinance that includes a time out for tree removals permitted for development.

There's no more time to procrastinate. The future of a healthy Sonoma County is in your hands. You have the power to make decisions that will determine our future.

Thank you,

Laura Goldman

[contact@forestunlimited.org](#)

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From: [Larry Hanson](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Comment on Woodlands/Trees, Item number 2 and ORD21-0001 on the agenda
Date: November 02, 2021 11:41:34 PM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-1.pdf](#)
[Comment Planning Commission Tree Ordinance.pdf](#)

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PO Box 506 • Forestville CA 95436 • 707.664.7060

November 2, 2021

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing on behalf of our approximately 1500 Forest Unlimited supporters. We have worked locally for over 25 years to protect watersheds from irreversible impacts of irresponsible logging and planted over 34,000 redwoods on protected properties with hundreds of volunteers.

Forest Unlimited members are participating and watching the County's current effort to update the tree protection policies. In that spirit, while the existing tree policies are reviewed and a new policy adopted, we urge the County of Sonoma to act swiftly and **cease issuance of tree removal permits to prevent further destruction of trees, woodlands, and forests**. As climate science tells us, existing trees are a large part of the climate saving equation that draw down large quantities of the harmful CO2 we continue to emit in large quantities (*Intact Forests in the United States: Proforestation Mitigates Climate Change and Serves the Greatest Good, Moomaw, Ph.D. et al*).

It appears that the current iteration for trees protection is restricted to woodlands rather than to protect both woodlands and forest ecosystems. Redwoods forests and mixed coniferous forests should be included. Redwoods, especially, have a unique ability to sequester the most carbon, be the most fire resistant, and live the longest, besides other practical benefits for communities such as an iconic draw for tourism in Sonoma County.

Science tells us that we have only ten years for making significant gains. Trees that are 10 years or older translate into time. This is the time we need to make the necessary adjustment to mitigate climate change impacts. Therefore, all trees at least 10 years of age should be preserved across the county's landscape. Protected trees will provide substantial services to the community and future generations.

Major Long-term Economic and Community Safety Considerations

* Climate change is adversely affecting our existing community, our farms, and our

watersheds. Reversing climate change is of the highest concern and effective measures to contribute to that effort must be implemented;

- Drastic reductions in emissions and drawing down carbon are critically important in that effort;
- Existing trees drawdown CO2 immediately and on a large scale;
- Existing woodlands, forests, and trees must be preserved with minor exceptions (e.g. defensible space around homes);
- Compromising our ability to drawdown CO2 should not be an option at this time;

The Protection of Trees

Currently, Sonoma County permits large numbers of tree removal proposals on a yearly basis. This is true despite the many valuable functions trees provide to the community including:

- Protecting our shared clean water supply due to how woodlands and forests store water and slowly release it throughout the year into aquifers and streams. This benefits agriculture and residents.
- Reducing soil erosion from runoff from stormwaters as well as keeping land intact with their root systems;
- Due to upper canopy development, woodlands and forests utilize shade as a mechanism for conserving water and moisture. This keeps sun from heating up the forest floor that would dry out vegetation increasing the potential for high severity wildfires.
- Mature trees are more fire resilient and sequester far more carbon than seedlings and saplings;
- Woodlands support very high levels of biodiversity which is critical to humans as well as other species;

Actions Required

- Refrain from issuing tree removal permits until such time as the County has in place a Comprehensive Tree Protection Policy that is based on the latest climate science;
- Create County policy so that mature trees are of the highest value to the health and safety of our community in the fight to rein in climate change.
- Ensure that the new policy is fairly applied with no loopholes for any business sectors.
- The County should look at narrow exceptions for creating reasonable defensible space around individual homes for fire protection (see Jack Cohen, Ph. D.);

Forest Unlimited has, and especially now, views all mature trees as highly valuable and urges

the County of Sonoma to move forward a comprehensive and climate appropriate protection policy.

We look forward to a successful update process that is based on the applicable climate science.

Sincerely,

Larry Hanson
President of the Board of Directors
Forest Unlimited



PO Box 506 • Forestville CA 95436 • 707.664.7060

November 2, 2021

Dear Commissioners:

We are writing on behalf of our approximately 1500 Forest Unlimited supporters. We have worked locally for over 25 years to protect watersheds from irreversible impacts of irresponsible logging and planted over 34,000 redwoods on protected properties with hundreds of volunteers.

Forest Unlimited members are participating and watching the County's current effort to update the tree protection policies. In that spirit, while the existing tree policies are reviewed and a new policy adopted, we urge the County of Sonoma to act swiftly and **cease issuance of tree removal permits to prevent further destruction of trees, woodlands, and forests**. As climate science tells us, existing trees are a large part of the climate saving equation that draw down large quantities of the harmful CO₂ we continue to emit in large quantities (*Intact Forests in the United States: Proforestation Mitigates Climate Change and Serves the Greatest Good, Moomaw, Ph.D. et al*).

It appears that the current iteration for trees protection is restricted to woodlands rather than to protect both woodlands and forest ecosystems. Redwoods forests and mixed coniferous forests should be included. Redwoods, especially, have a unique ability to sequester the most carbon, be the most fire resistant, and live the longest, besides other practical benefits for communities such as an iconic draw for tourism in Sonoma County.

Science tells us that we have only ten years for making significant gains. Trees that are 10 years or older translate into time. This is the time we need to make the necessary adjustment to mitigate climate change impacts. Therefore, all trees at least 10 years of age should be preserved across the county's landscape. Protected trees will provide substantial services to the community and future generations.

Major Long-term Economic and Community Safety Considerations

* Climate change is adversely affecting our existing community, our farms, and our watersheds. Reversing climate change is of the highest concern and effective measures to contribute to that effort must be implemented;

- Drastic reductions in emissions and drawing down CO₂ are critically important in that effort;
- Existing trees drawdown CO₂ immediately and on a large scale;

- Existing woodlands, forests, and trees must be preserved with minor exceptions (e.g. defensible space around homes);
- Compromising our ability to drawdown CO2 should not be an option at this time;

The Protection of Trees

Currently, Sonoma County permits large numbers of tree removal proposals on a yearly basis. This is true despite the many valuable functions trees provide to the community including:

- Protecting our shared clean water supply due to how woodlands and forests store water and slowly release it throughout the year into aquifers and streams. This benefits agriculture and residents.
- Reducing soil erosion from runoff from stormwaters as well as keeping land intact with their root systems;
- Due to upper canopy development, woodlands and forests utilize shade as a mechanism for conserving water and moisture. This keeps sun from heating up the forest floor that would dry out vegetation increasing the potential for high severity wildfires.
- Mature trees are more fire resilient and sequester far more carbon than seedlings and saplings;
- Woodlands support very high levels of biodiversity which is critical to humans as well as other species;

Actions Required

- Refrain from issuing tree removal permits until such time as the County has in place a Comprehensive Tree Protection Policy that is based on the latest climate science;
- Create County policy so that mature trees are of the highest value to the health and safety of our community in the fight to rein in climate change.
- Ensure that the new policy is fairly applied with no loopholes for any business sectors.
- The County should look at narrow exceptions for creating reasonable defensible space around individual homes for fire protection (see Jack Cohen, Ph. D.);

Forest Unlimited has, and especially now, views all mature trees as highly valuable and urges the County of Sonoma to move forward a comprehensive and climate appropriate protection policy.

We look forward to a successful update process that is based on the applicable climate science.

Sincerely,

Larry Hanson
President of the Board of Directors
Forest Unlimited

From: [Sara](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Cc: [Sheryl Bratton](#); [Jennifer Klein](#)
Subject: A Plea for Tree Sanity Plans
Date: November 03, 2021 1:27:02 PM

EXTERNAL

Hello to you all, Eric, Caitlin, Lawrence, Jacquelynne, Kevin, Sheryl, and Jennifer,

My husband and I live in the Green Valley Creek Watershed, in Forestville. He has lived here over 40 years and I have enjoyed this land for about 30 years, so as you can see, we are Elders who have invested deeply in our land and community over careers and now into retirement.

There is no shortage of science emerging about the incredible importance of trees to our entire well-being, on every level. Just cutting down a lot of trees does not reduce fire danger. That is simplistic thinking along the lines of the “If the only tool you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail” approach.

Large trees impart information to their offspring, provide habitat for many other creatures, absorb rainwater, prevent erosion, cool the surrounding areas, sequester carbon, protect streams and water sources and have a right to stand just on their own terms. Plus, we all love to look at and walk with beautiful trees!

Many of us ordinary citizens have wanted to believe that Cal Fire and the Forest Service are looking out for trees, the environment, and us in an intelligent and scientific manner. However, it is becoming apparent that this is not necessarily so. We do appreciate how complex these issues are, but we also see many other interests gaining ground over sound decisions made to care for the earth, as the conditions change.

As taxpayers, we would like to add our voices to a request that a temporary time-out be called on removing any more of our woodlands until a truly visionary, science-informed, wise and comprehensive tree ordinance /policy is passed. Good decisions take time. Please align with the groups who have the passion and information you need to make this kind of wise policy. Keep working with the Community of Family Farmers, Forests Unlimited, Daily Acts, Protect our Working Woodlands, and others to design a policy that will truly become your inspired legacy to the earth and to all of us who live here.

You can make history as well as a huge contribution to your children and grandchildren.

Thanks for reading,
Sara Harris and Ken Smith
Forestville
under microscope

wood stem





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From: [Michael Krikorian](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: comments on ORD21-0001
Date: November 01, 2021 3:56:24 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commission staff,

I am writing in regards to the proposed tree and woodland protection ordinance (ORD21-0001). As a 50 year resident of Sonoma County, I have watched as our landscape has changed as a result of population growth and the changes and expansion of agriculture. While I am always sad to see natural areas taken out, I also understand that there is a balance that has to be found between the needs of natural flora and fauna and the needs of man. Now, with the onset of global warming and rapid climate change, that balance needs to be rethought and rethought right now. Trees sequester CO2 and mature trees and forests sequester the most CO2 and at a higher rate than saplings. Trees also reduce temperatures, add water vapor to the atmosphere, and support wildlife. We need to take a Time Out from authorizing further tree removals from any development, especially removal of mature trees or removals of sections of mature forests. Business as usual cannot continue at this time because we are in a climate emergency. We all share the same atmosphere and the same need for water, if we don't do what is necessary now, Sonoma County may become unlivable in the future.

Sincerely,

Michael Krikorian

738 Willowood Way

Windsor, CA 95492

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From: [jayantii Lawless](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001.
Date: November 03, 2021 7:34:13 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Commissioners and Staff,

Tomorrow is your meeting to discuss **woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001**.

At this point, a tree protection ordinance is of utmost priority and importance to me as your constituent. I would like to put my vote in and demand you put a TIME OUT to Tree Removal in Sonoma County, most especially for new "land development." It is time the Planning Commissioners create a strong and expansive ordinance for tree & forest protection and create an extensive plan for ecological security.

The loss of forest is something we cannot afford for our climate, air, and water security and safety.

During recent international climate summits, International Criminal Court hearings, and other international and UN meetings, **ecocide** has become a more widely discussed topic as a crime against peace. At this point, ten countries now recognize Ecocide as a crime within their borders. "Activities that might constitute ecocide in these nations include substantially damaging or destroying [ecosystems](#) or by harming the health and well-being of a [species](#), including humans." It is not considered an international crime yet, but there are many leaders in the school of law creating the documentation to submit this into law in the near future. I share this information as a way of showing how not only important for environmental protection this act of saving trees/forests/and other lands is, but also that it is an issue of peace.

On November 4th, at 1:30pm, please think of what that means to you. Peace is protecting these trees, and having a strong and meaningful ordinance that will hold up as many companies and corporations attempt to amend it or find a way around it. I put my faith in your Planning Commission, to do the right thing, what your constituents want, which is to have local environmental advocacy, on all our behalf.

I CALL FOR A TIME OUT OF TREE REMOVAL, AND FOR GETTING AN ORDINANCE ON YOUR AGENDA RIGHT AWAY.

Please email me if you would like to discuss this further. I am available Monday through Friday. I work with children in Sonoma County as an outdoor educator, and I need to know you are keeping the children in mind, as you make decisions that will effect our land and water for generations to come.

Thank you kindly,
Jayantii Lawless

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From: wildflower@everyactioncustom.com <wildflower@everyactioncustom.com> on behalf of Karin Lease <wildflower@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 4, 2021 9:29 AM
To: Jacquelynne Ocana
Subject: I am writing to you today to urge you to protect Sonoma County trees and Forests

EXTERNAL

Dear 3rd District Jacquelynne Ocaña,

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we have about ten years to radically change our practices in order to prevent dangerous temperature rises. New technologies are slowly emerging that have the potential to absorb carbon from the environment, but they are expensive, have their own carbon footprints, and raise numerous social equity issues.

The potential of woodlands to do the same work for free is now available and currently working today. If woodlands are cut down, replanting them reduces our ability to rapidly reduce carbon in our atmospheres within the time frames needed. The best “technology” we have today that can help on a wide scale is protecting our mature trees.

A recent study by scientists working for the Center for American Progress shows that almost 9,200 acres of natural lands were developed in Sonoma County between 2001 and 2011. Yet, we have NO tool to prevent or systematically track how much of this rapid development is a loss of our beloved Sonoma County oak and forests lands.

In light of these fact I am requesting that the County of Sonoma:

- Place an immediate, temporary halt to major tree removal approvals in Sonoma County until our Tree Protection Ordinance is updated to recognize the global importance of forest lands in climate mitigation;
- Keep allowances for removing trees for critical issues such as fire protection near houses and defensible community areas.
- Update the County Tree Protection Ordinance, based on the most up-to-date climate science and community input;
- Protect trees as a way of reducing the worst effects of climate change on vulnerable communities;
- Protect trees to help vulnerable populations contend with the worst impacts of climate change.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,
Karin Lease
6860 Evergreen Ave Sebastopol, CA 95472-4510

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From: [Charles Little](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Time-Out for Tree Ordinance
Date: November 01, 2021 11:49:23 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Planning Agency Members,

I am writing to encourage you to order a hiatus in tree removals in the county while a new tree and woodland protection ordinance is being considered. As I'm sure you are aware, trees play a variety of critical roles in Sonoma County, and the world, the most critical these days being the carbon they absorb and capture. In addition, as Margaret Renkl pointed out in the "New York Times" on September 20th of this year:

"Trees absorb rainwater, prevent soil erosion, filter greenhouse gases from the air, cool the surrounding area, provide both habitat and food for wildlife, and improve the quality of life for human beings. Trees are also at the center of efforts to promote environmental justice within cities by making their allocation of green space more equitable. For now, it's still possible to measure the relative wealth of an urban neighborhood [simply by counting its trees.](#)"

Given the enormous value to Sonoma County, and all people, of living trees, I would ask that during a pause in tree removals you consider the following:

1. Design the new ordinance so that it is built on science, not politics.
2. Protect mature trees as they are the ones that sequester the most carbon.
3. Strongly consider the impacts of tree removals on communities, particularly lower income neighborhoods, which already have fewer cooling, shade-giving, and simply life-enhancing trees.

Thanks for your attention to my concerns,

Charles S. Little
754 Bantam Way
Petaluma, CA 94952

415.342.2720

"...I do not think I know when I do not know." (Socrates, Apologia.)

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From: [The Lochners](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: item number 2 and ORD21-0001
Date: November 01, 2021 10:20:39 AM



Regarding this item, **item number 2 and ORD21-0001, I strongly recommend a time out as per Forests Unlimited.**

Jan Lochner

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From: [The Lochners](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: item number 2 and ORD21-0001
Date: November 01, 2021 10:31:07 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I strongly recommend while this the tree ordinance goes forward that there be a **Time Out for tree removals** permitted for development.

Priorities as per forests unlimited:

What we want

We want an ordinance that is **science based** and not politically based.

We want an ordinance that **protects mature trees**. These are the ones that sequester the most carbon, have higher fire resistances, store more water, more wildlife, and have more developed roots and canopies

The best available science says that we have less than 10 years to rein in our green house gas emissions. Based on the fact that older trees and woodlands sequester the most carbon, **trees and woodlands of that age or older** should not be cut down. We cannot afford to lose significant amounts of sequestering time.

Thank you ,
Jan Lochner

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From: [Johanna Lynch](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: random tree removal throughout Sonoma County
Date: November 02, 2021 1:25:20 AM

EXTERNAL

To whom it may concern

Re current random tree- removal regulations

I am a devout tree lover and was raised to respect and care for trees—especially the very big ones.

Too often the chainsaw brigade is out in multil locations eyeing the shade trees and grumbling, “That one has a huge crown and is about to fall on someone,” the chain-saws were turned on.

A few summers ago outside Shutterbug on Santa Rosa Avenue two men in dungarees were discussing how dangerous the crowns were on two trees. "They could fall over and kill someone." I ran into the store and yelled for the manager to come outside fast. He stopped them and explained about shade on overheated Santa Rosa Avenue and how beneficial the big trees were. "A haircut about three feet would make the crowns less noticeable."

In my humble opinion most of the chainsaw brigade including Davy Tree and PG%E crews can't tell an Alder from an Oak and dont give a hoot about learning about the different and miraculous to survive in this county of Sonoma trees at all.They love to bulldoze the dangerous Willows near creeks and destroy most of the bird habitats throughout this county.

What happened way back when?

Photos cross my desk of happy gatherings around the Russian River, whose trees were close together and happy with damp mossy ground around the trees. Some of those damp spots sprouted wild orchids and moss everywhere; Not any more.

Back when kids knew that trees do better close to each other and that “thinning” heats up the ground. They knew that shady trees were happy and healthy with damp bottoms! We all knew that if a tree was cut down the others close to it started to die. The thinned, now dry as a bone, trunks burned fast and furious whn a tossed cigarette butt landed near one of them on a hot, windy day.

One tossed cigarette butt would start a burn immediately.

No one has wisdom or knowledge about trees. Nothing is taught in the failing public schools. The war on trees is killing the birds by the hundreds; also the random use of Roundup!

My neighbor who can;t grow daisies wants to be a “Gentleman Farmer.” He hates weeds and sprays regularly to get rid of them.

His ignorance extends to his pathetic attempts to become a gentleman farmer and his olive trees have a drip system running 24-7.

No weeds! No birds. Their main source of food is gorgeous weeds that can look fine and nurture the earth and attract birds.

No birds—the bark diseases flourish. Farmer Brown, my name for Mr Olive harvest yet to happen, has dying trees. The giants are riddled with bark beetles. He has yet to harvest anything alive and healthy and for over 7 years wonders what is going wrong for him and his wormy dead olives and dying trees.

He is also addicted to burning and gets easily the paperwork to burn and smoke trees felled

and burning for over 8 days.

The smoke is deadly and blankets acres of three 40 acre land parcels. His stupid oldtime skills have produced nothing but dead trees and fires. Help!

His drip system is a sure sign of ignorance about growing olives. Grapes and olives do not like their roots to be wet at all,

In Spain and France the olive trees are neglected. They struggle and look for dampness locked in the levels of clay. Kids in those regions know that olive trees are not watered at all. The olives and grapes are smaller, but intense and not watery like some of the grapes overwatered in Sonoma County. We need more gardeners, We don't need fire lovers and tree haters Help us save the forests Stop hacking down redwoods to make toilet seats and card tables.

I am begging Someone in the Sonoma County political arena to insist that schools and workplaces educate everone who has power to cut down our trees. This county is famous for its chainsaw approach to prepare a site for a hateful condo-village scraped and free of trees and full of despair due to no trees allowed!

Stop the Thinning; Train and educate workers about bird habitats, disappearing fast, and stop assuming a big tree starts fires.

Don't we all know that cigarettes start fires.

Summer cookouts and hot ashes blowin in the wind and arsonists randomly burning California covertly? and often.

Campsites need to invest in commercial-biz movable Barbecue ovens that can be shut down and cool off safely; Cigarette smoking should be banned during the hot weeks during the summer months. Locally at least four workers with Calfire are cigarette smokers....

Use small cameras throughout the coastal forests and never assume it is OK to let the ridges burn.

Dead dry timber left and nowhere for the birds to nest at all.

The policies are put together by ignorant individuals, most of whom do not know anything about ancient DAMP forests,

What the trees do to improve towns and cities all over this county can help everyone get through summer heat periods and sustain desperate bird families. Toss out the chainsaws and do not encourage the nutters to burn anything. The brush-clearing grant-happy crews some addicted to burning for days at a time. One in charge of a "brush-clearing" work party was smoking a joint, drinking whisky and lighting up a cigarette now and then. His slurring and jokng about how big his "burnpile" was made his stoned helpers giggle too.

It wa approximately 3 stories high and looked like a red pine tree burning hot and under a canopy of Oaks. Someone from the county offices should show up and take notes to stop these inebriated burners. Give us a chance to live in a wooded-cool town and not sweat out another summer in dangerous heated cabins, houses and condos.

Thanks for listening.

Johanna Lynch (Brazen Tree lover)

rrtimes@sonic.net

707 847 3190

Russian River Times

PO Box 226

Cazadero Ca 95421

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From: [Bill Montgomery](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Item 2 and Ord21-0001
Date: November 03, 2021 7:58:59 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Planners:

Regarding the tree/woodland ordinance that is in planning, I strongly supporting tree protection in Sonoma County while that ordinance is in preparation. Trees are currently one if the best ways of sequestering carbon to keep it from contributing to our growing climate crises. With the urgent need for action this is not time for business as usual!

Please do not allow removal of mature trees for future development! There is need for an immediate time out on tree removal until the appropriate ordinance is complete

Thank you,

William Montgomery
2170 San Antonio Dr
Santa Rosa 95405
Montgw2170@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

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From: [Kristine Norton](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Time out
Date: November 03, 2021 2:41:32 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Commissioners and Staff,

Tomorrow is your meeting to discuss **woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001**. At this point, a tree protection ordinance is of utmost priority and importance to me as your constituent. I would like to put my vote in and demand you put a TIME OUT to Tree Removal in Sonoma County, most especially for new "land development." It is time the Planning Commissioners create a strong and expansive ordinance for tree & forest protection and create an extensive plan for ecological security. The loss of forest is something we cannot afford for our climate, air, and water security and safety. During recent international climate summits, International Criminal Court hearings, and other international and UN meetings, **ecocide** has become a more widely discussed topic as a crime against peace. At this point, ten countries now recognize Ecocide as a crime within their borders. "Activities that might constitute ecocide in these nations include substantially damaging or destroying [ecosystems](#) or by harming the health and well-being of a [species](#), including humans." It is not considered an international crime yet, but there are many leaders in the school of law creating the documentation to submit this into law in the near future. I share this information as a way of showing how not only important for environmental protection this act of saving trees/forests/and other lands is, but also that it is an issue of peace. On November 4th, at 1:30pm, please think of what that means to you. Peace is protecting these trees, and having a strong and meaningful ordinance that will hold up as many companies and corporations attempt to amend it or find a way around it. I put my faith in your Planning Commission, to do the right thing, what your constituents want, which is to have local environmental advocacy, on all our behalf.

I CALL FOR A TIME OUT OF TREE REMOVAL, AND FOR GETTING AN ORDINANCE ON YOUR AGENDA RIGHT AWAY.

Please email me if you would like to discuss this further. I am available Monday through Friday. I work with children in Sonoma County as an outdoor educator, and I need to know you are keeping the children in mind, as you make decisions that will effect our land and water for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Kristine Norton

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From: [victoria.power](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: ATTENTION: woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001.
Date: November 03, 2021 2:24:09 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Commissioners and Staff,

Tomorrow is your meeting to discuss **woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001**.

At this point, a tree protection ordinance is of utmost priority and importance to me as your constituent. I would like to put my vote in and demand you put a TIME OUT to Tree Removal in Sonoma County, most especially for new "land development." It is time the Planning Commissioners create a strong and expansive ordinance for tree & forest protection and create an extensive plan for ecological security. The loss of forest is something we cannot afford for our climate, air, and water security and safety. During recent international climate summits, International Criminal Court hearings, and other international and UN meetings, **ecocide** has become a more widely discussed topic as a crime against peace. At this point, ten countries now recognize Ecocide as a crime within their borders. "Activities that might constitute ecocide in these nations include substantially damaging or destroying [ecosystems](#) or by harming the health and well-being of a [species](#), including humans." It is not considered an international crime yet, but there are many leaders in the school of law creating the documentation to submit this into law in the near future. I share this information as a way of showing how not only important for environmental protection this act of saving trees/forests/and other lands is, but also that it is an issue of peace. On November 4th, at 1:30pm, please think of what that means to you. Peace is protecting these trees, and having a strong and meaningful ordinance that will hold up as many companies and corporations attempt to amend it or find a way around it. I put my faith in your Planning Commission, to do the right thing, what your constituents want, which is to have local environmental advocacy, on all our behalf.

I CALL FOR A TIME OUT OF TREE REMOVAL, AND FOR GETTING AN ORDINANCE ON YOUR AGENDA RIGHT AWAY.

Please email me if you would like to discuss this further. I am available Monday through Friday. I work with children in Sonoma County as an outdoor educator, and I need to know you are keeping the children in mind, as you make decisions that will effect our land and water for generations to come.

Thank you kindly,
Victoria Power
victoria.c.power@gmail.com

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From: [Jeff Rooney](#)
To: _____
Subject: Regarding item number 2 and ORD21-0001 - public comment for Nov 4 2021
Date: November 02, 2021 3:29:10 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Planning Commission,

I am writing this message in regard to the upcoming Sonoma County Planning Commission meeting on November 4, 2021 **item number 2 and ORD21-0001**. Thank you for your planning on how best to meet our ecological obligations with regard to the climate crisis upon us.

I strongly advocate, as I know do others in this community, to maintain all the mature trees in our local environment and systematically plant more in accord with the understanding that these trees are an important part of the urgent efforts to mitigate the climate crisis. In this context I urge that:

- **There be a time out for tree removals in Sonoma County.**
- **That we follow the best science and not bow to political or economic concerns.**
- **That the ordinance specifically protect the mature trees that do the most to sequester the most carbon, have higher fire resistances, store more water, foster more wildlife, and have more developed roots and canopies.**

Please seek out the best and most scientific advice on making the best possible plans and ordinances to meet our objectives in the years ahead.

Thank you for your sincere deliberations on behalf of the natural world and our place within it as this crisis continues to unfold. I am now 66 years old and it pains me to know that the young and the planet's most vulnerable are bearing the weight of our historic inaction thus far!

Warmly,

Jeff Rooney
44 Sequoia Circle
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
(707) 480-6678

--

“Roots tell us

through the flowers,

what the Earth is like on the inside.....”

Humberto Ak’abal

Jeff Rooney

Posture Alignment Specialist

Certified Massage Therapist

707-480-6678

<http://empoweredbodysolutions.com/>

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From: [Ruth Schlesinger](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Tree removal
Date: November 03, 2021 2:51:34 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Sonoma County Commissioners and Staff,

Tomorrow is your meeting to discuss **woodland/trees, item number 2 and ORD21-0001**.

At this point, a tree protection ordinance is of utmost priority and importance to me as your constituent. I would like to put my vote in and demand you put a TIME OUT to Tree Removal in Sonoma County, most especially for new "land development." It is time the Planning Commissioners create a strong and expansive ordinance for tree & forest protection and create an extensive plan for ecological security. The loss of forest is something we cannot afford for our climate, air, and water security and safety.

On November 4th, at 1:30pm, please think of what that means to you. Please protect these trees, and create a strong and meaningful ordinance that will hold up as many companies and corporations attempt to amend it or find a way around it. I put my faith in your Planning Commission, to do the right thing, what your constituents want, which is to have local environmental advocacy, on all our behalf.

I CALL FOR A TIME OUT OF TREE REMOVAL, AND FOR GETTING AN ORDINANCE ON YOUR AGENDA RIGHT AWAY.

Thank you so much for all you do and I hope you hear how important this is.

Ruth Schlesinger

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From: [Ari, Alex, Becky, and Chris Thomas](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Comments on item number 2 and ORD21-0001 for the Nov 4 Planning Commission Agenda
Date: November 01, 2021 4:14:20 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Commissioners and Staff;

I strongly support protection for trees in Sonoma County, particularly those that are currently mature enough (and those near enough to maturity) to sequester atmospheric carbon in these next pivotal years ahead. If we are going to have any chance at avoiding the most severe consequences of climate change we simply must stop taking down trees that are contributing to carbon sequestration efforts for the next several years. It is my hope that not only do we stop taking out these trees for as many years as necessary to begin to reduce annual net CO2 emissions in an ongoing way but also that we can actively reforest public and private lands at unprecedented rates.

Reading the staff report, it looks like an update about work in progress for a draft ordinance to be presented for your review in early 2022 and Board of Supervisors consideration in late summer or fall. Please ensure staff direction from you reinforces the need to protect trees, particularly oaks, for the near term. I understand that the overarching goal is to balance natural resources with sustainable development and at this time the priority must be for the former or there won't be a latter. If the property can't be developed now without taking out or harming the current oak woodland *at all*, then it is not time to develop that property in that way. Period. And please ensure that just because the focus is on oak forest and woodland, we don't lose sight of other trees in Sonoma County. The staff report seems to indicate that oak forest and woodland is the key gap in a series of current regulatory protections and that work is being done to confirm that assertion (among other things), but it was not clear if the work has been completed to confirm it and/or if the analysis is broad enough to support that conclusion. The best available science indicates interrelationships with many many other species and the effects of climate change already upon us may highlight additional key relationships for longer term health and growth of oak woodlands and others. Please establish the burden of proof that no harm will be done to any carbon-sequestering trees on the developer and set as high a bar for that proof as can be supported with the best science available, even if that science itself is not fully tested. For the time being, we must do as much as we can imagine to protect our CO2 sequesters and biodiversity in our remaining lands in the county. With that direction, when the draft ordinance comes back to you, please recommend to the Board of Supervisors a science-based tree ordinance that supports healthy forests going forward for at least the next generation, preferably the next 7 generations.

Thank you;

Sincerely,

Chris Thomas

1242 Meridian Circle, Santa Rosa, CA 95401

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From: [Beth Topczewski](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: ORD21-0001
Date: November 03, 2021 2:39:53 PM

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Agency,

I am writing to say that as a sonoma county resident I support Forest Unlimited's response to item number 2 and ORD21-0001 on the agenda tomorrow. I am hoping for an ordinance that protects mature trees in Sonoma County for both fire control and environmental impact reasons.

thank you,

Beth

--

Beth Topczewski

(414) 651-3821

www.bethtopczewski.com

Schedule with me: bethtop.as.me

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From: [LOU VALLA](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Subject: Time Out Item 2, ORD 21-0001
Date: November 01, 2021 7:07:53 AM

EXTERNAL

Dear Planning Members,

I'm writing in support of a Sonoma Co ordinance to protect old trees and woodlands with a temporary ban on cutting plans, the Time Out Ordinance to be discussed 11/4/21.

I am a homeowner of a cabin at 17501 Neeley Rd, Guerneville, that sits on a hillside directly below a proposed timber cutting plan seeking approval of Cal Fire authorities. So, in addition to all the scientific ecological reasons to oppose timber cuts in the Russian River region, I'm concerned as a resident of the neighborhood most at risk to damage and disruption from current forrest mining plans.

Please consider a countywide ban on timber cuts as outlined in Time Out.

Best Regards,
Lou Valla
17501 Neeley Rd., Guerneville, CA

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From: [Dewey Watson](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Cc: larryjhanson@comcast.net
Subject: Time out for tree removal for development
Date: November 01, 2021 8:58:33 AM

Dear Commissioners: I am Vice President of the Board of St. Dorothy's Rest Association, the owner of 380 acres of undeveloped forest in Camp Meeker. We purchased this property 10 years ago with the express intention of keeping it protected from development and are hopeful to now be able to turn title over to a public entity for public recreation. The pressure to develop this property has been intense during our ownership and we have resisted all efforts to do so. Not all landowner of forested land care about the importance of preservation of mature trees for carbon sequestration and we urge the Commission to adopt an ordinance that will create a time out for any mature tree removal for development. With the entire world facing this existential threat, please give these trees time to help us survive. They are a great deal more important than immediate profit. Thank you for your attention.

Dewey Watson
St. Dorothy's Rest Association
510-407-6777

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From: [christine hoex](#)
To: [Doug Bush](#)
Subject: Tree ordinance presentation
Date: Thursday, November 04, 2021 2:15:52 PM



Thank you for the presentation.

The detail of study and scientific data collection is great and I support that. However 10 months is too long to wait for this update to the ordinance. We need to protect as many trees as we can now. Even 1 acre lost of Oak habituate is to much. Please help the county find a way to protect these trees now!

Mitigation is not an option in my opinion. A newly planted tree is not the same as an older tree in the land scape.

The climate emergency plan calls for this action to protect trees now!

Thank you
Christine Hoex Santa Rosa
350 [Sonoma.org](#)

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From: [Loriel Golden](#)
To: [Doug Bush](#)
Subject: We cannot survive if we don't LOVE the EARTH enough to PROTECT ALL of the natural forms and systems remaining.
Date: Thursday, November 04, 2021 1:36:34 PM

Thanks, Doug. I am on the mtg now...

* Regarding all Trees: Please remember this: Only a very small percentage of functioning natural areas remain on Earth. All non-domesticated animals, birds, fish and insects are down to their last numbers. Trees provide many things: homes for the last birds, animals and insects, prevent drought by bringing down WATER, produce OXYGEN and provide Beauty and Inspiration. We cannot survive if we do not LOVE MOTHER EARTH, who gives us the ability to live on this plane.

* Please do ALL you can to protect the last forested areas in Sonoma County now. Please implement a permanent Tree cutting law to protect some of the last Trees on Earth now. Please be feel the despair of the young people of today who are very, very worried about their ability to survive and thrive on Planet Earth without enough LOVE from the people who understand the issues and are in charge of protecting the Life Force.

Thank you for caring to read this and bring up these points at today's meeting. Thank you very much!

May **Courage**, Love and Common Sense prevail.

Loriel Golden

Protecting Our Last Ancient Forests

On Nov 4, 2021, at 1:28 PM, Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org> wrote:

Hello Loriel,

Please see below.

Doug Bush, MCRP

He/Him/His

Planner, Comprehensive Planning

County of Sonoma

www.PermitSonoma.org

Direct: 707-565-5276 | Office: 707-565-1900

<image001.jpg>

Due to the Public Health Orders, online tools remain the best way to access Permit Sonoma's services like permitting, records, scheduling inspections, and general questions. You can find out more about our extensive online services at PermitSonoma.org. The Permit Center has reopened with limited capacity Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday from 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM; Wednesday, 10:30 AM – 4:00 PM. Thank you for your patience as we work to keep staff and the community safe.

From: Loriel Golden <sequoiarising@sonic.net>

Sent: Thursday, November 04, 2021 1:21 PM

To: Doug Bush <Doug.Bush@sonoma-county.org>

Subject: Zoom link for today's mtg please!


Dear Doug,

Please send me the Zoom link for today's
Planning Comm. meeting on Trees. Thank you very
much!

May **Courage**, Love and Common Sense
prevail,

Loriel Golden

TIMELESS SOUND

Concerts for the Trees

*Protecting Our Last Ancient
Forests*

707-827-8353

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From: [Chelsea Holup](#)
To: [Doug Bush](#)
Subject: FW: I am writing to you today to urge you to protect Sonoma County trees and Forests
Date: Wednesday, December 22, 2021 1:47:10 PM

Hi Doug, please add this to the public comment on the Tree Ordinance.

Thank you,

Chelsea

From: Jacquelynne Ocana
Sent: December 22, 2021 12:57 PM
To: Chelsea Holup <Chelsea.Holup@sonoma-county.org>
Subject: Fw: I am writing to you today to urge you to protect Sonoma County trees and Forests

Hello Chelsea,

Please see below email sent only to me. Thank you for forwarding to all commissioners.

Jacquelynne Ocana

From: delyons@everyactioncustom.com <delyons@everyactioncustom.com> on behalf of Debrah E Lyons <delyons@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, December 17, 2021 8:45 PM
To: Jacquelynne Ocana
Subject: I am writing to you today to urge you to protect Sonoma County trees and Forests

EXTERNAL

Dear 3rd District Jacquelynne Ocaña,

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we have about ten years to radically change our practices in order to prevent dangerous temperature rises. New technologies are slowly emerging that have the potential to absorb carbon from the environment, but they are expensive, have their own carbon footprints, and raise numerous social equity issues.

The potential of woodlands to do the same work for free is now available and currently working today. If woodlands are cut down, replanting them reduces our ability to rapidly reduce carbon in our atmospheres within the time frames needed. The best “technology” we have today that can help on a wide scale is protecting our mature trees.

A recent study by scientists working for the Center for American Progress shows that almost 9,200 acres of natural lands were developed in Sonoma County between 2001 and 2011. Yet, we have NO tool to prevent or systematically track how much of this rapid development is a loss of our beloved Sonoma County oak and forests lands.

In light of these fact I am requesting that the County of Sonoma:

- Place an immediate, temporary halt to major tree removal approvals in Sonoma County until our Tree Protection Ordinance is updated to recognize the global importance of forest lands in climate mitigation;
- Keep allowances for removing trees for critical issues such as fire protection near houses and defensible community areas.
- Update the County Tree Protection Ordinance, based on the most up-to-date climate science and community input;
- Protect trees as a way of reducing the worst effects of climate change on vulnerable communities;
- Protect trees to help vulnerable populations contend with the worst impacts of climate change.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Debrah E Lyons

1684 Bloomfield Rd Sebastopol, CA 95472-5515

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