

BOARD OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

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News Release

GOLDSPOTTED OAK BORER ZONE OF INFESTATION EXPANDED

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SACRAMENTO—The California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection (Board) has ruled to enlarge the Zone of Infestation (ZOI) for the invasive goldspotted oak borer (GSOB), which expanded its reach in southern California in 2015. Updates to the ZOI include impacted areas of Los Angeles and Orange Counties as well as extending the zone in San Diego County to include all regions where host trees (coast live oak, California black oak, and canyon live oak) are present. Previously the ZOI covered regions of San Diego County where the beetle had been found through 2014 as well as the Idyllwild area of Riverside County.

GSOB has been found at elevations ranging from 1,000 to 6,200 ft, and it has no known natural predators in California. Susceptible oak species are found throughout much of the state. “The Board’s decisive action to help contain and minimize the impacts of GSOB will not only protect the communities and resources at risk in the affected counties, but throughout the State,” said Matt Dias, the Board’s Acting Executive Officer.

This declaration will allow State and local officials to take immediate action to mitigate new infestations. Over the last 3 years, government agencies, the University of California, and non-profit groups have worked collaboratively to slow GSOB spread. By establishing the ZOI in Orange and Los Angeles Counties, GSOB will gain greater public attention, while also raising awareness throughout the rest of the state. The ZOI also provides specific authority to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and agents acting under its authority, to control and limit the spread of the infestation under certain circumstances.

GSOB is now found in four counties* as well as the Cleveland and San Bernardino National Forests, with the Angeles and Los Padres National Forests at immediate risk. In 2015, GSOB was detected for the first time in Los Angeles County, approximately 130 miles north of the original San Diego County infestation. This well-

*San Diego, Riverside, Orange, and Los Angeles Counties

established, isolated infestation is in Green Valley on private land within the Angeles National Forest, less than 30 miles from the Los Padres National Forest. A new infestation north of Escondido in San Diego County was also discovered in 2015. A majority of San Diego County's woodlands are now considered to be infested. In Idyllwild, the number of GSOB-infested trees increased to more than 100, and infested oaks were found for the first time on adjoining San Bernardino National Forest land. The Orange County Weir Canyon infestation (discovered in 2014) remained localized, but increased to approximately 180 trees.

Initially found in California in San Diego County in the mid-1990s, GSOB has since killed tens of thousands of susceptible oak trees, resulting in millions of dollars of remediation costs and property value losses. Long-distance GSOB spread is believed to be the result of infested firewood movement.

For more information on the ZOI expansion, GSOB, or the risks of moving firewood and the Buy It Where You Burn It firewood campaign, contact Katie Harrell at (510) 847-5482 or kpalmieri@berkeley.edu.

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NOTE TO EDITOR

- The San Diego County GSOB ZOI was implemented in 2012.
- The Riverside County GSOB ZOI was implemented in 2014.