

# Native Tree Management Guidelines

## for San Luis Obispo County

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide assistance to urban and rural landowners in the management of native trees on private property. It is primarily and foremost a voluntary plan for the private landowner to enhance, protect and properly utilize the native trees in the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County.

### The guidelines are intended to:

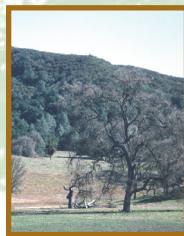


- Maintain healthy native trees without unduly burdening the landowner
- Reforest native tree species through reasonable means where appropriate

- Plan for replacement of trees
- Remove trees which present a fire or safety hazard

### To enhance range and native tree management:

- Protect trees from farm animals, especially when they are pastured in confined areas
- Use reasonable means to replace trees with like species, or species represented in the immediate area
- Utilize local sources of replacement stock and materials
- Encourage natural regeneration from sprouts and seedlings
- Leave clumps of natural, undisturbed vegetation
- Reduce overcrowding by selectively thinning



### To protect native trees when making improvements to real property and cropland:



- Balance the value of native trees and consider benefits such as erosion control, shade and cover in crop and livestock management decisions
- Protect existing native trees during construction and replace trees using reasonable means, if removal is unavoidable
- Avoid root compaction by limiting the use of heavy equipment in the root zone, generally measured by one and one-half times the crown width
- Minimize cutting roots during road construction, building foundations or septic systems
- Avoid grade changes in the drip-line zone of native trees
- Avoid landscaping which requires or allows irrigation within the drip-line of the crown of native trees
- Re-seed with grass, fertilize and/or mulch on disturbed ground just prior to the fall rains following disturbance of the soil, where appropriate



### To enhance wildlife development and protection, where appropriate:



- Maintain diversity of plant and animal species
- Develop scattered openings and undisturbed patches of plants
- Retain thermal cover in the riparian system
- Retain scattered dead and cavity trees for nesting, cover and feed purposes
- Retain scattered, large, downed decaying logs
- Provide scattered, small brush piles for habitat
- Develop water sources

### To reduce a fire hazard near structures:

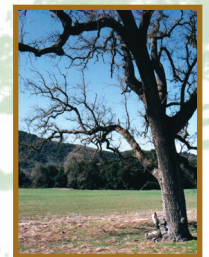
- Prune branches and limbs of native trees, where located near structures
- Remove brush and debris from under the drip-line of native trees, where appropriate
- Create and maintain fuel breaks, remove, push aside, pile and/or burn any unwanted plants
- Control unwanted sprouts by manual, biological, mechanical or lawful chemical means

### Alternatives for disposal of unwanted vegetation:

- Utilize unwanted vegetation, if at all possible
- Chip or compost vegetation as mulch
- If burning is necessary, reduce smoke by burning only dry material
- Burn only on designated burn days—call 800/834-2687
- Comply with applicable laws and regulations including permits from your fire department and quarantines established by the California Department of Food and Agriculture

*We can look to San Luis Obispo County with pride in knowing we are doing something about safeguarding and promoting our native trees, particularly the oaks. Our Board of Supervisors are to be commended for their insight in adopting a voluntary program for the betterment of the native woodlands.*

*When the need for tree removal or pruning occurs, the guidelines herein may be useful and will aid the landowners of woodlands in the proper and responsible way to accomplish their projects. There are certain rules to be followed when developing or in the building of homes, importantly, your rights along with those of your neighbors need to be considered.*



—The Native Tree Committee of SLO County