

CVPA Newsletter

QUARTERLY No. 28

JANUARY, 1998

CUMMINGS MOUNTAIN LOGGING

The Cummings Valley Protective Association arranged for Mr. Brian Rueger, registered professional forester, to inform members and other interested area residents about the conduct of logging operations in California and specifically about the current logging program on Cummings Mountain. Mr. Rueger is a consultant to the landowner, Cummings Enterprises, with the responsibility of ensuring that the logging conforms to the permit which must adhere to the California Forest Practices Act. The permit took a year to complete under the scrutiny of the California Department of Forestry (CDF), the Department of Fish and Game and the water Resources Board.

Mr. Rueger prepared the logging plan and personally selects the trees to be cut. His and the landowner's goals are the same - to harvest a reasonable number of trees while leaving a healthy viable forest for the future. He described how each group of trees is a challenge for him to decide which tree or trees get the paint stripe and which will be most beneficial to leave. He often chooses trees with top damage or signs of disease and leaves those that are the best seed sources even though they may be bigger and more valuable for lumber. Opening up the canopy to benefit seedlings and young trees is also a consideration. A CDF forester makes periodic inspections to see that the conditions of the permit are being met.

No clear cutting is being done and none of the openings created by tree removal is large

enough to require reforestation plantings. No new roads were required as there was an adequate road system already in place. Cut logs are skidded to the roads for loading onto trucks. An average of two truckloads per day are transported to the sawmill in Terra Bella south of Porterville.

In some of the steeper areas where there are no roads, and road building would be costly and destructive logs are being lifted and transported to loading sites by helicopter. More use of the helicopter is planned in the next few weeks.

Unwanted limbs or slash is being scattered on the forest floor with the objectives of helping to prevent erosion and for soil improvement as the limbs decompose. Slash crews follow the operation to scatter limbs and cut some of the side branches to lower the profile and put more material in contact with the soil.

Mr. Rueger discussed protection of drainage and erosion control as required by the permit. He specifically pointed out that the drainage on the western side of the mountain is not being affected, allaying concerns of a number of Stallion Springs residents who have been giving a lot of thought to El Niño.

After the meeting CVPA president, Joe Fontaine, said "It is gratifying that so many interested people came, and I think they left feeling reassured that the beautiful forests of Cummings Mountain are being well managed."

PUBLISHED BY:

CUMMINGS VALLEY PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

17851 TEJON DRIVE TEHACHAPI CA 93561 (805) 822-3478

YELLOW STARHISTLE

The two test strips in Cummings Valley have been weeded and sprayed with Roundup to prepare for seeding with grass. A hardy group of CVPA members turned out on a windy November 18 to shovel and rake dirt on the Pellisier strip to bring the ground level up closer to the level of the pavement (to prevent pavement edge breakoff). Thanks to Tom Dye, Joe and Bugs Fontaine, Joe Fontaine Jr., Les and Jo Anne Huckins, Chuck Mccollough, John Mester, Ben and Laurie Rude and Al Swingle. Thanks also to Superior Sod for loaning two of their good workers.

Thanks to John Mester and his seeder, the Pellisier strip was planted December 31. He and Chuck McCollough then raked the seed in, and now we hope for just the right amount of rain. The sign at the north end of the strip which had a strong westerly lean from the wind was re set at a better spot and solidly planted. Three native annual varieties, California Brome, Arizona Brome and Blue Wildrye were planted as a mixture on the Pellisier strip and will be planted separately on the Bailey Rd. strip in order to assess their individual characteristics.

The objective is to see if long term control of Yellow Starthistle and other weeds as well as a reduction in maintenance costs can be achieved by establishing a thick grass cover. This should suppress weed growth, and require only an annual mowing. Grading of shoulders which spreads and stimulates weeds as well as causing erosion could be discontinued.

The Tehachapi Resource Conservation District (TRCD) is taking the lead in Yellow Starthistle control throughout the Tehachapi area. CVPA expects to participate in the TRCD program in Cummings and Brite Valleys as appropriate.

MISTLETOE REMOVAL PROGRAM

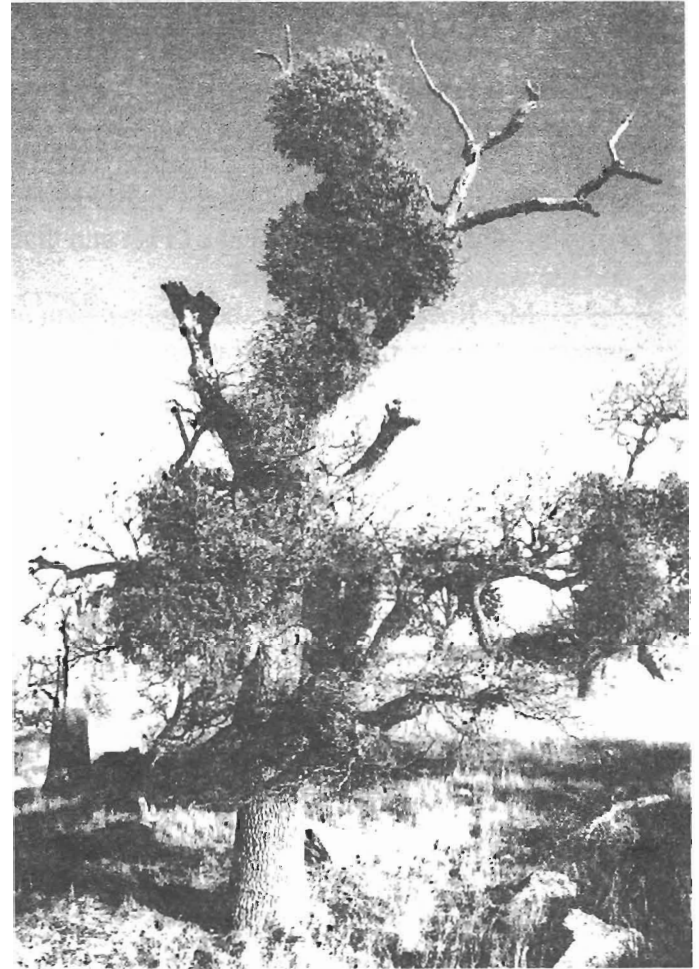
Mistletoe is a parasite that feeds on the nutrients in the cambium layer under the bark of a tree. Root-like haustoria penetrate as much as two feet under the bark. Although our oaks can tolerate mistletoe for years, many are eventually weakened and killed by it. Arborists agree that the health of trees will be improved by removal of mistletoe.

In 1994 CVPA organized a group program of mistletoe removal for anyone in the Tehachapi area. Bids were solicited from 19 tree service companies. Venables Autumn Leaf Tree Service of Bakersfield was chosen based on price, capability and insurance coverage.

Prices were based on tree size and degree of infestation so a tree owner could determine what the cost would be, and the contractor would not spend time and resources making estimates and negotiating. This approach helped to keep costs low.

In the 1994 program 262 trees were cleaned out for 64 property owners.

Eldon Venable has agreed to do another program in 1998 at the same prices as before. The newsletter enclosure shows the prices and other information required for participation.



Small branches cling to life on this oak being consumed by mistletoe

GOOD THOUGHTS?

Excerpted from the Fresno Bee Nov. 17, 1997, Editorial "Valley needs regional planning"

Good land use planning - or rather its absence - has been a critical issue in the Valley for some time. A seminar held in Clovis this weekend offers a useful reminder that the problems are getting worse.

The Institute for Ecological Health, an offshoot of the Sierra Club, sponsored the day-long event in its ongoing effort to promote regionalism in planning. Several factors of good planning - and livable cities - were high-lighted:

- Cities and regions require a "sense of place," according to participants. They must also have a sense of history, an understanding of what caused the cities to be established in the first place, and what economic and political forces that spurred their patterns of growth.
- They must have a vision for the future, a solid idea of what sort of city and rural landscape we wish to leave to succeeding generations.
- There must be a commitment to planning on a regional scale. Ugly and dangerous cities are more often than not the result of bad planning decisions than any other factor.

AND A JOYOUS TRASH GATHERING IT WAS ...

Yes we do make a difference.

Many, many thanks to those faithful and concerned who continuously show up to help rid our Cummings Valley area of that putrescence more commonly known as - - trash.

On Saturday, October 4th, we fastidiously roamed the main avenues in Cummings Valley for at least two hours and happily discovered, after filling Benz' trash bin that it wasn't nearly as full as it had been in times past. There just wasn't nearly the litter to pick up this time.

Yes we do make a difference.

Gathering afterwards at the Old School House in Cummings Valley, we enjoyed some of Subway's finest, each leaving afterwards feeling that

Yes we do make a difference.

We will join again in 1998, in the springtime and continue to do this at least these two times a year.

Many, many thanks again.

Carol D. Wein
Ye Olde and Faithful Trash Lady...

FEBRUARY MEETING

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, February 5, 1998 at 7:30 PM at Cummings Valley School. The speaker will be Bill Sommermeyer who will tell us about the havoc wreaked by the 1952 earthquake on the Southern Pacific and Santa Fe Railroad in the Tehachapi area. He was intimately involved in repairing the damage and getting the trains running again.

Bill is a civil engineer who worked for the railroad for many years. He comes from a family that is related to a number of early settlers of Tehachapi. We think you will find his talk extremely interesting.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to the New Year. Your membership directly supports many critical areas which make up the wonderful environment and quality of life we have the good fortune to enjoy. If the date on your mailing label is 97 or before, your membership is no longer current. Please take a moment to send your check for \$12 annual dues or even better, renew for two years for \$24. Are you keeping CVPA a secret from your friends and neighbors? New members will increase our ability to represent our area on local, state and national matters which may impact our way of life. These range from unrestrained development and potential prison expansion to yellow star thistle infestation.

For a very limited time, *new members(only)* may join for just \$6.00. All you need to do is provide them with the application form contained in this newsletter. We would be delighted to provide you with additional application forms - just let us know.

Jo Anne Huckins Membership Chairman

CVPA Newsletter

Cummings Valley Protective Association
17851 Tejon Drive
Tehachapi CA 93561

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Tehachapi, CA
93561
Permit No. 10

CVPA NEWSLETTER

CVPA Membership Renewal Form

Yes, we (I) want to continue to support CVPA!

Enclosed is our (my) \$12.00 dues for July 1, 1997 through June 1998 membership year, or better yet, enclosed is \$24.00 which will carry through June 1999.

Name (s) _____ Mail to: Cummings Valley Protective Association

Address changes? _____ c/o Jo Anne Huckins, Membership Chairman

_____ 29260 Stallion Springs Drive

Phone no. current? _____ Tehachapi, Ca 93561

**Please send this form with your check to renew. Check your address label on the other side for accuracy.
If the year at top center is 97 or earlier, you owe dues for the 1997-1998 year.**