

"Planning Among Oaks" Speaker Session: Comments & Responses to Q&A

Date	Commentor Name	Meeting #	Comment or Question	Response	Responder
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	Is there one place we can find community based urban forestry volunteer events? Is this something the County would consider developing, sharing and maintaining?	In the Tree Hub , on the "Tools & Resources" page, there is a section called "Upcoming Events". Right now, it is specifically related to County mapping efforts, but we can provide links to other organizations' Events page. A couple of examples are for Tree People (https://treepeople.org/events/), and Theodore Payne (https://theodorepayne.org/learn/classes-workshops/).	Daniel Hoffman
			In Southern California, California sycamore and California black walnut are also considered ecological keystone species essential to ecological function and biodiversity health.	Protections for California sycamore and California black walnut already exist in the Santa Monica Mountains Local Coastal Program, the Santa Monica Mountains North Area, and in Significant Ecological Areas throughout unincorporated LA County:	
			Has the County given any thought to also mapping, protecting and restoring these two species [California sycamore and California black walnut] in addition to oaks?	SMM Local Coastal Program: https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/santa-monica-mountains-local-coastal-program/ SMM North Area Community Standards District: https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO_DIV10PLARCOSTDI_CH22.336SAMOMONOCOSTDI	
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A		Significant Ecological Areas: https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/significant-ecological-areas-program/ and https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT22PLZO_DIV5SPMAAR_CH22.102SIECAR For now, we are focusing on creating a feasible process to integrate tree geo-coordinates and other tree data into an online map and Oak Tree Permit dashboard as we are updating the Oak Tree Permit. Ultimately, we would like to identify all tree species , including keystone species such as the California sycamore, California black walnut, and Western Joshua Trees from remote sensing data LA County already owns. We currently lack resources and expertise to achieve this.	Caroline Chen

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10/30/2025	Laura MacMorran	Webinar Q&A	Does the Tree Universe Data include incorporated locations?	Currently, the Tree Hub "quilt" map shows only department-specific data within unincorporated areas. For example, the data from LA County Public Works shows only trees in the public rights-of-way in unincorporated areas. However, the Landcover dataset is countywide. Certain data layers in the Tree Hub are also of incorporated areas. For example, Tree Hub contains a 2015 community-sourced map of Engelmann oaks in South Pasadena .	Daniel Hoffman
10/30/2025	Stephanie Landregan	Webinar Q&A	Daniel, the urban area includes the cities of LA, Glendale, Burbank, etc?	Yes, the "2022 Urban Trees" dataset I showed during the presentation covers those and other cities.	Daniel Hoffman
10/30/2025	Drew Ready	Webinar Q&A	Daniel, the Tree Hub is a great resource! Thanks for sharing and making this available to all of us. Are private property trees currently included and if not, any thoughts on how they might be in the future?	<u>Some tree datasets on private property are already represented:</u> For example, we have some datasets mapping trees on private property that were affected by the Gold-spotted Oak Borer . The "2022 Urban Trees" dataset shows all trees in urban areas, including those on private property. In the future, a dataset of oak trees mapped for Oak Tree Permits will also be added.	Daniel Hoffman
10/30/2025	Drew Ready	Webinar Q&A	Any chance a future function could allow the public to submit images to the tree records? Or link a Inaturalist observation? Could this also be a place where people report illicit pruning or removals?	It is up to each department / city / conservation group to design a survey to collect information from the public, including images to be combined with tree records. Some cities do have ways to report issues (like LA City's MyLA311), and we can maybe look into posting a link to this as a resource for people on the Hub. LA County also has a similar app called "The Works" : https://pw.lacounty.gov/explore-public-works/the-works/ The Invasive Pest Management Subgroup of the LA County Tree Committee is currently working on enabling the reporting sick trees, hazardous trees, or potential tree violations such as illicit pruning or removals (with optional photo uploading) with "The Works" app. We can certainly provide a link to iNaturalist – probably in the "Tools and Resources" section. The company that makes our GIS software, Esri , hosts iNaturalist data and they also have some apps where you can view the data interactively.	Daniel Hoffman
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	Are any agencies or organization doing outreach to oak tree property homeowners that shares best practices (for pruning, plant health care, pest ID, etc)? How do we work together to get best practices to the people who own land where they live?	There are a variety of local groups doing such outreach but there is always room for more! Check out websites for RCD of the Santa Monica Mountains , CA Wildlife Foundation , California Native Plant Society , LA County for a start. Asking all the cities to mimic the County in providing important oak preservation and conservation information when folks apply for permits would help! Many of them already do this as well.	Rosi Dagit

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10/30/2025	Levi Brewster	Webinar Q&A	What impact will fire code restriction on vegetation have on the development of residential habitat gardens? Thanks so much for this great presentation!	The Zone 0 conversation is ongoing and it is not really clear yet what the final resolution will include. We should all be advocating for the retention of ember catching oaks! Appropriate spacing between the roof and house does not require removal!	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Laura MacMorran	Webinar Q&A	Thank you. Your work is very interesting.	Thank you for joining!	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	Oak trees, in their native habitat, branch to the ground and do not generally have an exposed trunk (main stem). How does the 'pruning up' impact the trophic levels that require lower and midrange vegetation?	The limbing up of oaks to provide understory clearance can impact the biodiversity of the area below but if a mulch layer is retained, I suspect that much of that understory diversity can persist. A wonderful graduate thesis topic!	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Kunyu Zhang	Webinar Q&A	Hi Rosi. Dr. Jim Downer of UCANR Ventura talked about the frying of leaves of the Coast Live Oak (<i>Q. agrifolia</i>), during heat waves. Have you seen it in person? What would be your understanding? Your NASA map indicates that Coast Live Oak is still climate ready. Could you please discuss more?	Yes we have observed the impacts of extreme heat events on especially the new shoots of Coast Live Oak (CLO) in 2018 and again in 2023. This appears to take a toll on available energy as the tree then either has to regrow or just hold tight for that season. We have not seen long term impacts yet but since CLO usually have large stored energy reserves, I would expect those impacts to show up sometime in the future. Coast Live Oaks are very climate ready! Their distribution throughout a range of temperatures provides adaptations that can see them through the project shifts. An interesting project would be to take acorns from trees in really high temp areas and plant them in places that we anticipate will get hotter to see how they do. Adaptive migration is worth further thought and testing.	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	Please discuss how oak trees actually help with the spreading of embers and fires.	The dense leafy canopy of our oak species intercept the embers and cause them to either get tangled in the canopy or drop. There are numerous examples coming from the recent Palisades and Altadena fires showing that the trees actually prevented house ignition.	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	India Brookover	Webinar Q&A	Are there any trade-offs for planting oaks as street trees? ie root damage etc	The key to street tree planting success over time is to provide sufficient space for the roots. In communities like Pasadena, there are numerous roadways lined with oaks that are doing quite well because there is space.	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	Please discuss how oak trees actually help prevent the spreading of embers and fires.	The dense leafy canopy of our oak species intercept the embers and cause them to either get tangled in the canopy or drop. There are numerous examples coming from the recent Palisades and Altadena fires showing that the trees actually prevented house ignition.	Rosi Dagit

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10/30/2025	Gabriel Barreras	Webinar Q&A	Great topic and good to see everyone.	We are starting to integrate AI with some of our processes. An example of this is in the fire rebuilding efforts and having an AI plan-checker to make sure all conditions are met.	Daniel Hoffman
			Have there been any examples of AI tools integrated with LA County's GIS, like the Merlin bird tracker, to give more context or data points on changing ecology?	Another example is how a planning and design firm called Houseal Lavigne has developed an AI assistant that allows people to ask if they can do certain things on their property and the AI looks through the zoning and building code, and uses GIS data to provide a specific answer to their question.	
			Do you anticipate planners being able to use data/tools like this to assist or streamline CEQA reviews or help use identify areas need more planting? Thank you."	AI is becoming more integrated with GIS software, so certainly we will have the ability to do some powerful analysis for CEQA streamlining and finding ecological opportunity areas in the future.	
10/30/2025	Megan Horn	Webinar Q&A	Many groups only recommend planting small oak saplings. As a lanscape professional we see value in planting larger trees, and had a lot of success with - curious what the experts say?	We have done a few experiments using acorns, D slip size, 1 gallon, 5 gallon, 15 gallon and 24 in box trees planted at the same time. Five years later, the acorns, D slips and 1 gallon trees are bigger than the 24 in box. This probably has to do with the impacts to the roots in the box trees that take longer to become established.	Rosi Dagit
			(Great webinar Caroline and County Planning team)	In general, planting small allows the roots to become better established over time. And as you probably know, oaks grow pretty fast when in a good location! We have wildland trees over 15' tall within 5 years typically, and these are getting the bare minimum of watering!	
10/30/2025	Kunyu Zhang	Webinar Q&A	Hello. I heard that some cities in LA county have concerns about the mature Coast Live Oak in the urban forest.	Please no more crepe myrtle! Lovely flowers but little shade producing canopy and almost no benefits for wildlife.	Rosi Dagit
			As we all know that not all urban trees reach their genetic potential in the built environment.	Coast live oaks should be our go to tree wherever there is sufficient space in the urban environment, and we should make sure we MAKE more space to accomodate them. Not only do they provide year round shade and are drought tolerant once established, our oaks are keystone species supporting literally thousands of other species. Incorporating native oaks and other native trees can reduce the fragmentation of habitat and support biodiversity, all while moderating temperatures, capturing air pollution particulates, and moderating storm water runoff. Definitely should be used as much as possible!	
			Would you say that Coast Live Oak is urban compatible? And should we plant more?		
10/30/2025	Kunyu Zhang	Webinar Q&A	Or we should really just plant Craple Myrtle, the No.1 planted ornamental tree? Craple Myrtle is an industry		Eric Wood
			Any studies done on non-native oaks?	We do!	
10/30/2025	Kunyu Zhang	Webinar Q&A	Those being "assisted migrated" species from Texas & Mexico?	Non native oaks are still useful for wildlife, but not at the level of the natives. (The Wood Lab at Cal State Los Angeles: https://eric-wood-rd1p.squarespace.com/.)	

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10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	To Dan and Rosi, there has been a call to plant oaks from neighboring floristic provinces, is there any concern that hybridization could have negative impacts? Could there be positive impacts? Do we know if these trees from say, northern Mexico or Southern Arizona/Texas also provide food sources and habitat?	This is a really interesting question that we partly address in the Priority Tree Planting Plan (2019) https://www.rcdsmm.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Los-Angeles-County-SMMNRA-FINAL-Native-Tree-Priority-Planting-Plan-12.13.19.pdf. Since oaks are most often wind pollinated, hybridization is happening all the time. Oaks from other regions can provide many of the same benefits as local oaks, but since we have such great locals, working to expand their planting might be better, although I am not aware of much research one way or another. Another great graduate thesis waiting to be done!	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Laura MacMorran	Webinar Q&A	What are some top actions and requirements for tree canopy growth and a local tree ordinance?	Actions to support tree canopy growth usually means paying attention to the root zone and ensuring that the protected root zone at least provides optimal growing conditions. Tree Protection Ordinances that promote retention of trees, supports planting and protection of diverse age stands, and encourages providing space for trees to reach their potential are actions that can help.	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Stephanie Landregan	Webinar Q&A	It would be fabulous to have a 'reporting' function!	Thank you for your comment!	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	Dan, could Tree Hub track permitted removals due to disease (gsob and other, phytophthora - root rot, etc). This data could be really useful to researchers if so.	The pilot project that I showed in my presentation of mapping / monitoring impacted trees related to Oak Tree Permits could be a way to track these kinds of removals. In the Oak Tree Permit update, we are adding a question about whether or not oak trees show signs of invasive pests for the tree inventory component of the Oak Tree Report. Thus, if the reason for the permitted removal is GSOB, these data will be captured and mapped in Tree Hub. As I stated, this mapping effort is still in its testing phase, but the intention is to have this be a part of the digital permitting process. Also, the digital mapping of the Goldspotted Oak Borer is expanding and would serve as a good indicator of threats to oak trees.	Daniel Hoffman
10/30/2025	Stephanie Landregan	Webinar Q&A	Thank you Caroline and Mark, a great webinar.	Thanks for joining us!	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Stephanie Landregan	Webinar Q&A	My seedlings have been gathered by the squirrels.	:)	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Wendi Gladstone	Webinar Q&A	How do we determine if our saplings have <i>Phytophthora</i>	Please contact the LA County Agricultural Commissioner / Weights and Measures. They may schedule a site visit and test the saplings for <i>Phytophthora</i>. Invasive Tree Pest Division: (562) 622-0426 APEPQ@acwm.lacounty.gov	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Anonymous Attendee	Webinar Q&A	For future convenings, I would hope the moderator would not take such extreme liberty with our questions. They are missing a lot of nuance. Reading the questions verbatim would lead to more direct answers.	Thank you for your comment.	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Lynda Hikichi	Webinar Q&A	Thank you!	Thanks for joining us!	Caroline Chen

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10/30/2025	Genelle Watkin	Webinar Chat	Very important topic to highlight, thank you!	Thank you for your comment.	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Levi Brewster	Webinar Chat	What impact will fire code restriction on vegetation have on the development of residential habitat gardens?	The Zone 0 conversation is ongoing and it is not really clear yet what the final resolution will include. We should all be advocating for the retention of ember catching oaks! Appropriate spacing between the roof and house does not require removal!	Rosi Dagit
10/30/2025	Heather Anderson	Webinar Chat	Hello, DRP'ers! It is your former co-worker, Heather Anderson. Thank you for this awesome presentation! :)	Thank you for joining us! 🙌	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Drew Ready	Webinar Chat	So great to have Rosi here. She's a hero for many of us in conservation and urban forestry and real life Lorax!	Thank you for your comment.	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Wendi Gladstone	Webinar Chat	👏. She is my Hero!!!	Thank you for your comment.	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Alicia Gonzalez	Webinar Chat	Such an important presentation. Thank you, Rosi!	Thank you for your comment.	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Jim Crouch	Webinar Chat	Who can use thousands of oak seedlings we donate yearly.	Hi Jim, I just read an article about how you propagate thousands of Engelmann Oaks (Q. <i>Engelmannii</i>) each year in San Diego. Engelmann oaks are on the IUCN's Redlist of Threatened Species .	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Nick Franchino	Webinar Chat	This is a link to a good story map "Exploring the Redlining Maps of Los Angeles": https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a8f5a063fb664d2da64c576bc6b9cd1f	"Explore the Redlining Maps of Los Angeles": https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a8f5a063fb664d2da64c576bc6b9cd1f	Nick Franchino
10/30/2025	Ellen Walton	Webinar Chat	I like what Rosi said about planting more oaks.	Thank you for your comment!	Caroline Chen

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10/30/2025	Alaina Mallette	Webinar Chat	When new development is proposed, does LA County/local municipalities require tree save areas? If so, does this occur during inquiry or pre-application phases? Would love to hear how existing stands are protected with all the development pressures that a municipality can experience.	Hi Alaina, Not sure what "tree save areas" are. But the LA County Oak Tree Permit ordinance regulates impacts to all oak trees (genus <i>Quercus</i>) over 8 inches in diameter, measured 4.5 ft from the ground, throughout unincorporated areas of LA County. Other native trees are regulated, too, in specific areas such as the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone, the Santa Monica Mountains North Area, and in Significant Ecological Areas. Any impacts to oak trees, countywide, or protected native trees in the areas mentioned above, require obtaining a permit from Planning before impacts are allowed. If a protected tree will be impacted by a proposed development, the applicant must obtain a permit to do so beforehand. The first step to obtaining a permit is to have a pre-application counseling session with a planner (so, yes, to your second question). Over the course of this session, the planner will help the applicant avoid and minimize impacts to oak (and/or other protected) trees. If all impacts to oak trees may be avoided by redesigning the project, then an Oak Tree Permit (or other Protected Tree Permit) is not needed. To learn more about the LA County Oak Tree Permit, here is a link to the existing ordinance: https://library.municode.com/ca/los_angeles_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId= TIT22PLZO_DIV8PERELEAC_CH22.174OATRPE Links to other Protected Tree Permits available in the "Response" column of the second row above. We are currently updating the existing Oak Tree Permit and more information on the proposed changes are under the "Meetings and Hearings" tab of the Oak Tree Program website: https://planning.lacounty.gov/long-range-planning/oak-tree-program/	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Alaina Mallette	Webinar Chat	Secondly, does the county or municipality recognize specific specimen as registered historical monuments, or have they considered that as a tool for protection?	Yes, it has been done. LA County has a Historic Landmark designation that can be extended to trees. Old Glory, an over 400-year old valley oak (<i>Q. lobata</i>) in unincorporated Santa Clarita, became the first tree ever to become a designated Historic Landmark in unincorporated Los Angeles County: https://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/195551.pdf More about Old Glory: https://scope.org/preservation/old-glory/	Caroline Chen

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10/30/2025	James Vayo	Webinar Chat	What are the main issues the public have with Oaks which resulted in their removal and the need for this session?	Good question. From the perspective of the Oak Tree Permit, the main issues relate to unintended consequences of regulation to preserve and protect oak trees. We learned that some property owners avoid planting oak trees because they do not wish to be regulated, choosing to avoid oak trees (and perhaps planting non-native trees instead) when given a chance to plant a tree. We also learned that some property owners remove oak saplings before they reach the trunk diameter threshold that would grant them protection (for the same aforementioned reason). We wanted to provide the reasons "why" oak trees are protected (Eric and Rosi), and "how" we can determine whether LA County's oak tree permit ordinance is effective by starting to map oak trees (Daniel on Tree Hub) so we can track their condition, distribution, and management over time.	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Drew Ready	Webinar Chat	[Re: "Oak trees are like a combo multifamily housing + multi-use development for animals. Density for biodiversity."] What a great metaphor Caroline! Also so great to have County planners in the most populous county in the Country, asking the hard questions about the past, present and future conditions, regulations, enforcement and encouragement needed to ensure that our oak woodlands (and other native forests and shrublands) thrive in the decades and centuries ahead.	Thank you for your comment, Drew!	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Nick Franchino	Webinar Chat	If you have any more Tree Hub questions (pests, data, maps) contact us: gis@planning.lacounty.gov	Tree Hub Questions: gis@planning.lacounty.gov	Nick Franchino
10/30/2025	Gina Natoli	Webinar Chat	When Planning requires oak trees to be planted for Oak Tree Permits, could some of the oak trees come from donations?	LA County allows documentation of volunteer saplings already growing on a site to count as mitigation as long as they are protected and cared for. Donating trees from another site brings along potential for transfer of soil pathogens, especially when from back yards rather than nurseries.	Rosi Dagit

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10/30/2025	Ellen Walton	Webinar Chat	Los Angeles County Fire Department nurseries have oak seedlings. Free.	The LA County Forestry Division has nurseries with FREE oak tree seedlings (open to the public by appointment only). Please call ahead to set up your visit. The Malibu Forestry Unit is located in Calabasas adjacent to Tapia State Park: 942 Las Virgenes Road, Calabasas, CA 91302, (213) 247-9830 The San Dimas Forestry Unit is located in the hills above the San Dimas Canyon Nature Center: 1910 Sycamore Canyon Rd, San Dimas, CA 91773, (909) 599-4615	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Drew Ready	Webinar Chat	Thank you all. Great workshop.	Thank you for joining us!	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Nick Franchino	Webinar Chat	Thank you!	Thank you for joining us!	Caroline Chen
10/30/2025	Bruce Chow	Webinar Chat	Thank you for Oak tree info	Thank you for joining us!	Caroline Chen