

NEWS RELEASE

CAL FIRE SAN LUIS OBISPO UNIT

Unit Chief

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INVASIVE Goldspotted Oak Borer Detected in Ventura County; Threat of Major Tree Losses Prompt Upcoming GSOB Blitz Public urged to help protect California's oak woodlands

Ventura County, CA —

CAL FIRE and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) have confirmed multiple new detections of the invasive goldspotted oak borer (GSOB) in Ventura County, marking a significant expansion of the destructive pest's presence in the state of California.

The first GSOB-infested coast live oak in Ventura County was identified in August 2024 along Box Canyon Road at the eastern edge of the county. That tree was removed and disposed of properly to curb further spread. A second dead, GSOB-infested oak was found in Santa Susana in April 2025, followed by several additional injured and dead coast live oaks showing GSOB signs and symptoms (see cover images) along Las Llajas Canyon Road in May 2025.

Since its discovery in **San Diego County in 2008**, GSOB has killed more than 200,000 mature oak trees across **San Diego, San Bernardino, Riverside, Orange, and Los Angeles counties**. The invasive beetle continues to spread largely through the **movement of infested firewood**.

Oak woodlands—some of California’s most iconic and ecologically important habitats—are highly vulnerable once GSOB arrives. Large oaks can die within just a few years of infestation. With **Ventura County now on the front line** of the insect’s northward spread, CAL FIRE, University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR), the Ventura County Fire Department, the Ventura County Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures (VCAWM), and partner agencies are encouraging residents to be aware of this forest pest, when possible inspect local oaks for signs of GSOB and to **avoid transporting firewood** from GSOB infested areas.

“Healthy oak woodlands are critical to California’s ecosystems and communities,” said **Kim Corella, CAL FIRE Forest Pest Specialist**. “By participating in a GSOB Blitz, residents become part of the solution—helping detect infestations early, addressing local hazards while preventing the spread to neighboring communities and counties like Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo.”

Ventura County GSOB BLITZ

Participants will receive hands-on training from UC researchers and CAL FIRE foresters on identifying GSOB symptoms, collecting samples, and reporting findings.

Why It Matters

Raising public awareness, reporting suspected oak trees with symptoms and signs of GSOB infestation, and following best practices for firewood movement are the most effective actions the public can take to preserve the state’s oak woodlands

Date: February 13, 2026

Location: Ventura County (final details to be announced)

Who Should Attend: All residents, landowners, and community members interested in protecting local oak trees

Learn More & Register: www.gsob.org

Learn how to detect and report suspected GSOB and about firewood movement:

- [Learn more about GSOB](#)
- [Report suspected oak trees](#)
- [GSOB best management practices](#)
- [“Buy it where you burn it”](#)
- [“Don’t move firewood”](#)

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