## CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**OFFICIAL NOTICE**
**PLEASE READ IMMEDIATELY**

# PROCLAMATION OF AN EMERGENCY PROGRAM AGAINST THE ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID

On October 19, 2011, the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), a serious exotic pest, was detected in the City of Chula Vista, San Diego County. Emergency action is needed to protect California from the negative environmental and economic impacts this pest will cause. This pest transmits via feeding action, a devastating disease known as huanglongbing (HLB) to citrus trees. HLB is considered one of the most deadly diseases of citrus in the world. The causal agent of HLB is the phloem-inhabiting bacterium *Candidatus liberibacter*. Although HLB has not been detected in California, it has been detected in Florida, Mexico, and Brazil. HLB cannot move from tree to tree independently; it is solely dependent on ACP for its transmittal. Therefore, without mitigation measures, such as quarantines and eradicative treatments, ACP would spread on infested host plants or by natural dispersal to infest all the citrus-growing areas of the State. If HLB were to be introduced into the State, ACP will transmit HLB throughout the State. The resulting decline and death of citrus trees will have severe consequences to the California citrus industry and to the urban landscape. In addition, without the California Department and Food and Agriculture's (CDFA) actions to eradicate ACP populations before they spread or as soon as they are detected, commercial and residential citrus producers would increase pesticide use in order to control ACP infestations.

The emergency program is based on recommendations developed in consultation with the California HLB Task Force, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Primary State Entomologist, and the Primary State Plant Pathologist. Based on these recommendations, the program includes insecticide treatments to control all life stages of ACP. Pursuant to Sections 5401-5405 and 5761-5763 of the Food and Agricultural Code (FAC), the Secretary is mandated to: thoroughly investigate the existence of the pest; determine the probability that the pest will spread; adopt regulations as are reasonably necessary to carry out the provisions of this code (Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations; Section 3591.21); abate the pest from the established treatment area; and, prevent further economic damage.

In accordance with integrated pest management principles, the CDFA has evaluated possible eradication methods and determined that there are no mechanical, biological, or cultural control methods available to eradicate the ACP. To comply with FAC mandates, the treatment plan for ACP eradication in San Diego County is as follows:

- Tempo® SC Ultra (cyfluthrin), a contact insecticide for controlling the adults and nymphs of ACP, will be applied to the foliage of host plants; and
- Merit® 2F (imidacloprid), a systemic insecticide for controlling the immature life stages of the ACP, will be applied to the soil underneath host plants.

Both insecticides are applied from the ground using hydraulic spray equipment.

**Public Information:**
Residents of affected properties will be invited to a public meeting where officials from CDFA, the Department of Pesticide Regulation, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the San Diego County Agricultural Commissioner's Office will be available to address residents' questions and concerns. Residents are notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance of any treatment in accordance with FAC Section 5779. After treatment, completion notices are left with the residents detailing precautions to take and post-harvest intervals applicable to the citrus fruit. Please contact CDFA's toll-free telephone number at 800-491-1899 and staff will be able to assist with any questions related to this project. This telephone number is also listed on all treatment notices.

Enclosed is the Proclamation of an Emergency Program, ACP Work Plan, host list, a map of the treatment area, alternative treatment methods analysis, and the pest profile.

# PROCLAMATION OF AN EMERGENCY PROGRAM REGARDING THE ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID

On October 19, 2011, a population of the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), *Diaphorina citri* Kuwayama, was detected in the City of Chula Vista, San Diego County. Based on the survey data, pest biology, information from California's Huanglongbing Task Force, recommendations provided to me by the Department's Primary State Entomologist and Primary State Plant Pathologist, and experience gained from the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) control efforts in the southeastern United States, I have determined that an infestation of ACP exists.

The ACP is an exotic insect that is originally from Asia. It has been introduced into Central and South America, the Caribbean, and Mexico. In the United States, ACP has been found in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, and California (San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Imperial, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties). ACP feeds on members of the plant family Rutaceae, primarily on *Citrus* and *Murraya* species, but is also known to attack several other genera. The most serious damage caused by ACP is due to its vectoring the phloem-inhabiting bacterium *Candidatus liberibacter* the causal agent of huanglongbing (HLB). HLB is considered one of the most devastating diseases of citrus in the world. Symptoms of HLB include yellow shoots with mottling and chlorosis of the leaves, misshapen fruit, fruit that does not fully color, and fruit that has a very bitter taste making it unfeasible for human consumption. The psyllids cause injury to their host plants via the withdrawal of large amounts of sap as they feed and via the production of large amounts of honeydew, which coats the leaves of the tree and encourages the growth of sooty mold, which blocks sunlight from reaching the leaves.

Under my statutory authority, as Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), I have decided, based upon the likely environmental and economic damage that would be inflicted by this infestation of ACP, that it is incumbent on me to address this threat. This pest presents a major threat to citrus grown within the State. California is the top citrus-producing state in the U.S., with total production valued at over $1.8 billion. Additionally, the establishment of ACP in California would increase the need for pesticide use by commercial and residential citrus producers, as well as require enforcement of quarantine restrictions. In a recent study in Florida, the presence of HLB increased citrus production costs by 40 percent (Irey, 2008). Because HLB has been detected in Mexico, the establishment of ACP in California will pave the way for HLB to spread. HLB would have severe consequences to both the citrus industry and to the urban landscape via the decline and the death of citrus trees.

My duty to act, and this decision, is based upon authority set forth in Sections 24.5, 401.5, 403, 407, 408, 5401-5405, and 5761-5764 of the Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) authorizing and mandating the Secretary to: thoroughly investigate the existence of the pest; to determine the probability that the pest will spread; to adopt regulations (Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 3591.21) as are reasonably necessary to carry out the provisions of this code; to abate the pest from the established eradication area; and, to prevent further economic damage. The enclosed project plan describes CDFA's actions that are necessary to mitigate the spread of this pest.

This decision to proceed with a treatment program is based upon a realistic evaluation that it may be possible to address the threat posed by ACP using currently available technology in a manner that is recommended by California's HLB Task Force. Treatment needs and environmental conditions are outlined in the attached work plan. In making this decision, CDFA has evaluated possible eradication methods. In accordance with integrated pest management principles, the following is a list of the options that I have considered for the eradication of this ACP infestation: 1) mechanical controls; 2) biological controls; 3) mass trapping; 4) cultural controls; and 5) the application of pesticides by ground equipment.

Based upon input from my professional staff, including memorandums from the Primary State Entomologist and Primary State Plant Pathologist, and the input of experts familiar with ACP, I have concluded that there are no mechanical, biological, or cultural controls that are effective to eradicate ACP that allow CDFA to meet its statutory obligations. To eradicate ACP from this area, I am ordering ground applications of pesticides be made to all ACP hosts within a 400-meter radius around the detection sites. If additional ACP or immature life stages are detected in the survey area, the treatment area may expand to an 800-meter radius around the infested properties. A description of the alternative treatment methods considered, and methodologies chosen, is contained in the attached work plan.

Sensitive Areas

The treatment area has been reviewed by consulting the Department of Fish and Game's California Natural Diversity Database for threatened or endangered species. Mitigation measures will be implemented as needed. CDFA also consults with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service when rare and endangered species are located within the treatment area. CDFA will not apply pesticides to bodies of water or undeveloped areas of native vegetation. All treatments will be applied to residential properties, common areas within residential developments, and other non-commercial properties.

Treatment Plan

The proposed project area encompasses those portions of San Diego County which fall within an approximate nine-square mile area around each property in which ACP has been detected. A map of the detection sites with the project boundaries and the proposed treatment work plan is attached. In summary form, the treatment plan consists of the following elements:

1. Delimitation. Yellow panel traps will be placed throughout the project area to delimit the infestation and to monitor post-treatment ACP populations. Yellow panel traps are placed at a density of up to 100 traps in the core square mile and 50 traps per square mile in the surrounding eight square miles. Additional traps may be added to further delimit the infestation and to determine the efficacy of treatments. These traps will be serviced on a regular schedule for a period equal to three ACP generations beyond the date of the last ACP detection.

2. Visual survey. All host plants will be inspected at all locations where traps are placed. Host plants will be surveyed within a 400-meter radius around the detection

site(s). Up to 100 properties per square mile may be inspected.

3. Treatment. Properties within the treatment area will be treated according to the following protocol: 1) Tempo® SC Ultra (cyfluthrin), a contact insecticide for controlling the adults and nymphs of ACP, will be applied to the foliage of host plants; and 2) Merit® 2F, an imidacloprid insecticide, will be applied to soil beneath the drip line of host plants to eradicate developing nymphs.

   Treatments will be repeated as per label instructions, for up to two life cycles beyond the last ACP detected (as determined by a life cycle model driven by accumulated day degrees). Both insecticides are applied by ground using hydraulic spray equipment.

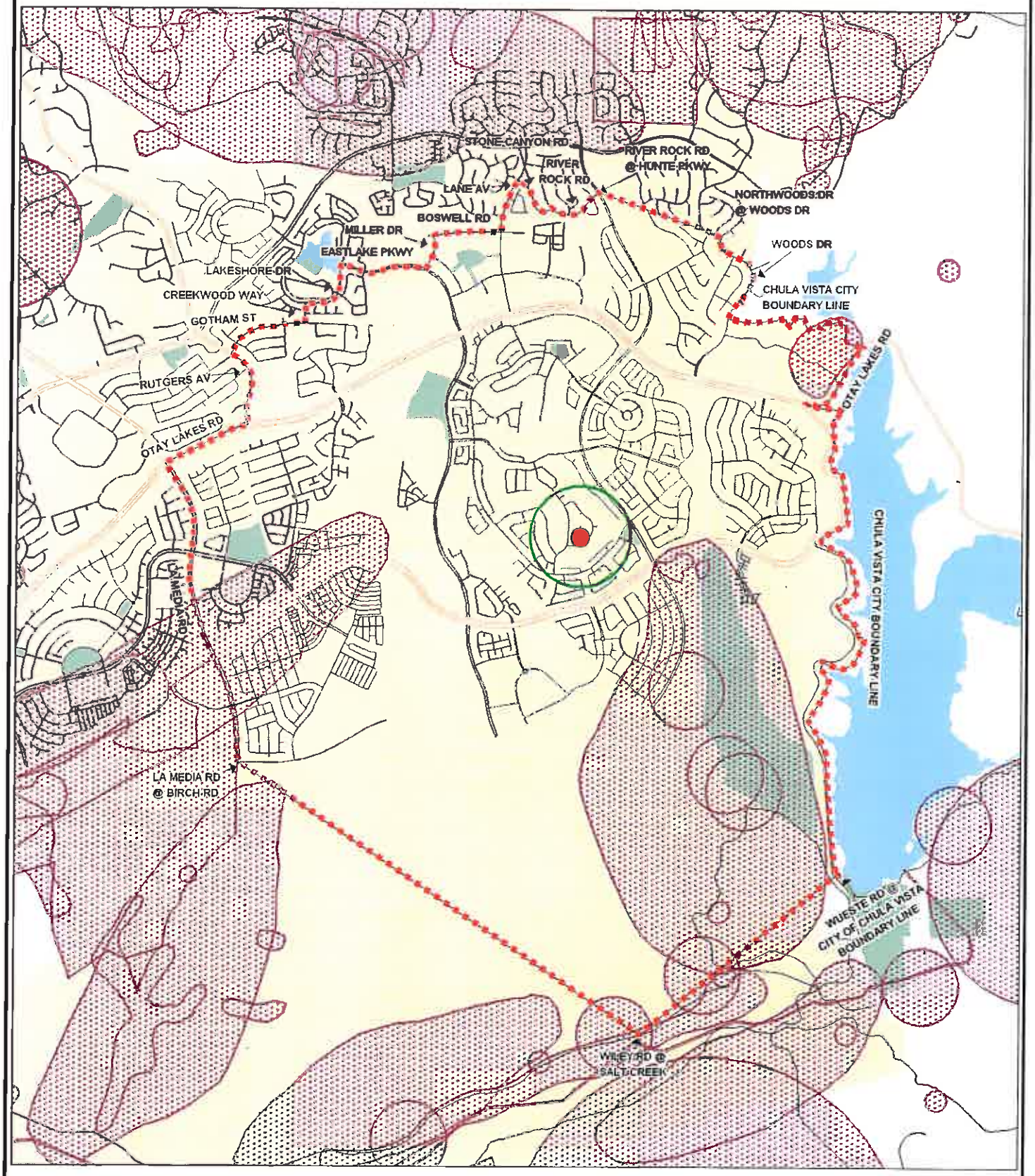
Public Information

Residents of affected properties are invited to a public meeting where officials from CDFA, the California Department of Pesticide Regulation, the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, and the County Agricultural Commissioner's Office are present to address residents' questions and concerns. Residents are notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance of any treatment in accordance with FAC Section 5779. After treatment, completion notices are left with the residents detailing precautions to take and post-harvest intervals applicable to the citrus fruit.

Public information concerning the ACP project will consist of press releases to the public and direct notification of project developments to concerned local and State political representatives and authorities. Press releases are prepared by the CDFA's information officer and the county agricultural commissioner, in close coordination with the project leader responsible for treatment. Either the county agricultural commissioner or the public information officer serves as the primary contact to the media.

If you have any questions related to this program, please contact John Hooper, Program Supervisor at (916) 654-1211.

**ASIAN CITRUS PSYLLID**
**CHULA VISTA, SAN DIEGO COUNTY**
**2011**




cdfa

DETECTION SITE

MAXIMUM PROGRAM BOUNDARY

PROPOSED 400M GROUND TREATMENT AREA

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREA NO TREATMENT