

From: [Lauren Alegre](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: he FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 12:31:14 PM

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

Thank you,

Lauren Alegre

From: [Lauren Alegre](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: he FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 12:31:10 PM

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

Thank you,

Lauren Alegre

From: [Nora McCartin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Radio appearance re EBH-EIS project
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 12:19:29 PM

Hi,

This is Nora McCartin from *Forum* at KQED, the NPR station here in San Francisco. We're putting together a show about the Berkeley/Oakland hillside tree removal plan and were hoping someone from FEMA/the EBH-EIS project could join our panel discussion. The show is set to take place tomorrow (6/6) from 9:30-10AM. Please let us know at your earliest convenience.

Thanks, and all the best,

Nora McCartin

Forum

415.553.2320 T

415.553.2241 F

2601 Mariposa Street

San Francisco, CA 94110-1426

www.kqed.org



From: [Pete Harleman](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Project for Strawberry and Claremont Canyons
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 11:53:20 AM
Importance: High

Gentlemen:

I am writing to you to express my opposition to plans to cut all eucalyptus, Monterey pine and acacia trees in Strawberry and Claremont canyons. While the project has been publicized as a project to mitigate fire risk, it actually creates more risks with the use of toxic herbicides, and the projected 24 inch layer of chips on the ground. It's clear that this project has not been properly planned to address the many concerns everyone would have about the virtual destruction of an entire habitat for very vague fire prevention purposes. I urge you to proceed very cautiously, and to require substantially more planning and investigation to justify such radical action. To my knowledge, this proposed project has more detrimental environmental impacts than any project in the canyons since anyone can remember.

I would implore you to move very cautiously, and to explore every possible alternative to what is simply wholesale destruction with many, many risks—herbicides, loss of animal habitat, etc.

Please let me know if there is anything that I can do to assist you in a thorough review and assessment of this very dangerous project.

Sincerely,
Peter J. Harleman
9 Canyon Road
Berkeley, CA 94704
415 999-3235

From: robvincent1@gmail.com on behalf of [Rob Vincent](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: east bay hills project
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 11:51:46 AM

this project makes no sense.
thousands of us use the hills and their wonderful trails every day and we just cant allow the damage this project will bring to the integrity of the woods that offer so much to everyone who lives in both the east bay and in the san francisco area.

surely fema has better things to do with our tax dollars.
surely.

please reconsider your priorities. nature is doing pretty well for itself, all human interactions considered. the hills can stand alone.

thanks. now just go home.
rob vincent
551 58th st
oakland ca 94609

From: [Diana VERGIL](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: add to maillist
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 11:37:09 AM

Please add my name to the mailing list i live in the canyon in the EB hills--Diana vergil dvergil@gmail.com

Diana Vergil
Administrative Assistant
The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000

dvergil@library.berkeley.edu
(W) # **510-643-8389** (F) # 510-643-4313

*Love all, trust a few and do wrong to none.
William Shakespeare April 1564 ~ April 1616*

From: dolan_eargle
To: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Subject: Fw: Don't let them get away with this
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 11:09:27 AM

Removal of a large number of trees of ANY designation is an insult to the environment. Trees are not just an ornament; they are living things that give back to us oxygen and shade and enjoyment. I can not imagine any reason to remove large numbers of trees without a very compelling reason.

I have spent a large amount of my time in raising and planting trees of several types. Please do NOT support any such tree clearance as has been proposed here.

Dolan Eargle
Director, Trees Company (San Francisco)

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Hills Conservation Network <noreply@list.moveon.org>
To: dolaneargle@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, June 4, 2013 12:28 PM
Subject: Don't let them get away with this

Thanks to you the folks that had hoped to push through this enormous deforestation project in the dead of night have been exposed! But we still urgently need your help.

Now we are seeing increased attacks and increased obfuscation of the issues by those who would have preferred that the public would not find out about these projects until they heard the chainsaws buzzing and saw the trees falling.

The good news is that there has been an incredible outpouring of support for our efforts to cause FEMA to not fund massive deforestation projects that will do nothing to reduce fire risk, but will:

- expose us to massive amounts of herbicides
- destroy raptor habitat and the habitat of many other forest creatures
- release huge amounts of sequestered CO2
- destabilize steep hillsides
- waste almost \$6 million of taxpayers funds that could be used for real fire risk mitigation

We can't let up the pressure now. We need to continue to rally support to save this ecosystem so important to all of us.

Here's what you can do:

1. Send FEMA a comment letter. Tell FEMA how the removal of close to 100,000 trees will impact you. Try to be as specific as you can. The deadline is June 17 at 4:30 p.m. Here are some ideas for letters:

Email your comments to: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov

Please cc your comment letter to HCN: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

2. If you know anyone who has not yet signed the HCN petition, ask them to do it. Please add the link to your Facebook page and please tweet this information!

http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-the-deforestation-3?mailing_id=12766&source=s.icn.em.cr&r_by=870099

3. Send a message to Barbara Boxer. You can copy/paste the sample below, but we recommend that you personalize it. Send it to Senator Boxer via: <http://www.boxer.senate.gov/en/contact/policycomments.cfm>

or by USPS, send a letter to: Office of U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, 112 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510

Sample email or USPS letter:

Dear Senator Boxer, I am concerned that FEMA will approve the Environmental Impact Study that is now in the public comment stage. UC, the City of Oakland and East Bay Regional Parks District have requested grants of approximately \$7.5 million of taxpayer money to log the Berkeley/Oakland Hills extensively and poison the tree stumps with toxic herbicides. I believe the the Environmental Impact Study is seriously flawed, and is neither adequate or accurate. The plan as it stands allows for a huge clear-cut of a vibrant ecosystem with tall, healthy non-native trees (eucalyptus that have been here for more than 100 years, Monterey pines and acacias). These forests are home to raptors, endangered species and other animals, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for residents throughout the East Bay. The logging would severely change the ecosystem by removing critical raptor habitat. Without the hawks and owls, the rodents would overrun the hills becoming a huge nuisance and a possible public health risk. The EIS does not adequately look at alternatives to this damaging plan. The current plan does nothing to decrease fire risk in the hills. It will, in fact, create more fire danger because the type of vegetation (oak-bay savannah or grassland with an occasional oak or chaparral brush) that may eventually replace the non-native trees is known to be more ignition-prone and will support more dangerous fires that produce flame lengths triple the length of flames in the present forests of tall, non-native trees. This is a bad plan.

Thousands of residents in the East Bay are as outraged by it as I am. Please join me in opposing FEMA's acceptance of this project before it is too late. The public comment period will end on June 17th. Sincerely,
(Your name) Thanks so much for your support of this important cause!

4. Send a message to Barbara Lee. You can copy/paste the sample below, but we recommend that you personalize it. Send it to Representative Lee via: <https://lee.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>

or by USPS, send a letter to: Office of U.S. Representative Barbara Lee 2267, Rayburn HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515

Sample email or USPS letter:

Dear Representative Lee, I am concerned that FEMA will approve the Environmental Impact Study that is now in the public comment stage. UC, the City of Oakland and East Bay Regional Parks District have requested grants of approximately \$7.5 million of taxpayer money to log the Berkeley/Oakland Hills extensively and poison the tree stumps with toxic herbicides. I believe the the Environmental Impact Study is seriously flawed, and is neither adequate or accurate. The plan as it stands allows for a huge clear-cut of a vibrant ecosystem with tall, healthy non-native trees (eucalyptus that have been here for more than 100 years, Monterey pines and acacias). These forests are home to raptors, endangered species and other animals, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for residents throughout the East Bay. The logging would severely change the ecosystem by removing critical raptor habitat. Without the hawks and owls, the rodents would overrun the hills becoming a huge nuisance and a possible public health risk. The EIS does not adequately look at alternatives to this damaging plan. The current plan does nothing to decrease fire risk in the hills. It will, in fact, create more fire danger because the type of vegetation (oak-bay savannah or grassland with an occasional oak or chaparral brush) that may eventually replace the non-native trees is known to be more ignition-prone and will support more dangerous fires that produce flame lengths triple the length of flames in the present forests of tall, non-native trees. This is a bad plan. Thousands of residents in the East Bay are as outraged by it as I am. Please join me in opposing FEMA's acceptance of this project before it is too late. The public comment period will end on June 17th. Sincerely,

(Your name) Thanks so much for your support of this important cause!

5. Check out the HCN website @ <http://www.hillsconservationnetwork.org>

Sign up for RSS feeds as we post new stuff or just check back periodically. Please post our website link to your Facebook page.

thanks for all your support! With your help we can win this!

HCN

This message was sent to Dolan Eargle by Hills Conservation Network through MoveOn's public petition website. MoveOn.org Civic Action does not endorse specific campaigns or the contents of this message.

To unsubscribe or report this email as inappropriate, click here: <http://petitions.moveon.org/unsubscribe.html?i=12766-870099-wsBbgw>

From: Natalie.Horner@kp.org
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Damn it - do not spray Round-Up in the Berkeley-Oakland hills!!!!
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 10:50:59 AM



Natalie Horner, RN, CPHQ

Managerial Consultant

Quality and Operations Support

The Permanente Medical Group, Inc.

1800 Harrison St., Oakland, CA 94612

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From: Natalie.Horner@kp.org
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Subject: Damn it - do not spray Round-Up in the Berkeley-Oakland hills!!!!
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 10:50:59 AM



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From: [Rebecca Egger](mailto:Rebecca.Egger@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](mailto:EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Draft EIS for vegetation management project in East Bay (CA) hills
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 10:02:06 AM

Dear FEMA administrators:

The FEMA Draft EIS for University of California, Oakland, and East Bay Regional Parks District vegetation management projects in the Berkeley/Oakland hills is unacceptable for a number of reasons. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider a variety of important issues that have been overlooked or inaccurately analyzed:

The EIS does not adequately address the effects of this project on greenhouse gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from the cutting-down of 100,000 tall trees.

The EIS does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed.

The EIS does not address the effects of the loss of shade canopy.

The EIS does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them.

The EIS does not adequately address the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan.

The EIS relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison, as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. I ask that you modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, rather than to a completely meaningless state.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Egger
3126 College Avenue

Berkeley, CA 94705

From: [Brittany Oleta-Jeanne Adams](mailto:Brittany.Oleta-Jeanne.Adams)
To: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA draft EIS
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 9:12:41 AM

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Thank you,
Brittany Adams

From: [T.Noonan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comment from Berkeley resident
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 8:49:37 AM

I live four blocks from the trailhead to Claremont Canyon and for the past twenty years, often frequent the hills as a hiker, runner, picnic-er, Tilden mom with kids (in camp, ponies, carousel, little train), camper, cyclist, golfer, equestrian, driver, swimmer in Anza...I've been out there A LOT! :) The twenty years before that, I regularly came to Berkeley several times a year with my family for Cal football and basketball games and I know as well as anyone what the Blue Gum represent. It is almost Berkeley and the hills themselves. For me, it was especially their perfume, which reminds me so much of those early days.

That said, I am FOR the smart, sensitive, and *managed* removal of the Eucalyptus. We can leave habitat for the fauna who have evolved and counted on it for over a hundred years, like the Great Horned Owl who I hear regularly at dusk. We can leave shade groves for over-heated :) pedestrians, like at Inspiration Point just before the two mile mark. We can *sensitively* move in and cut a large percentage of the trees because it is, at bottom, the right direction to head: they are non-native and a real and present fire hazard, not to mention expensive for the parks to maintain and clean-up every year after storms. But we can and must cull sensitively, as stewards of this land.

However, I am strongly AGAINST the use of herbicide that is in any way toxic. It isn't enough to say that it will be a localized treatment. We know all too well that even local applications spread a chain of toxin into the ecosystem in predictable and unpredictable ways and will without a doubt contaminate an extremely valuable and cherished watershed. As an alternative to herbicide, look and find other solutions: natural pathogens to the eucalyptus that won't harm the watershed or its fauna. There ARE alternatives. (I recently heard that the water from boiling stinging nettle is an effective bug repellent.) Synthetic herbicide that is harmful *in any way* to the local birds and animals simply *cannot* be the solution. When it is proposed, it cannot be accepted: "Gong. Does not compute. Try again." As Wendell Barry says, "Ask questions that go beyond the available answers." Find something else to stamp out the trunks after cutting. Look to the volunteer force who cares about such things. They can help.

Best of luck in doing **what is right for today and future generations**, something the generations a hundred years from now will be proud of!

From: [Lynn Bartsch](mailto:Lynn.Bartsch@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](mailto:EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: I'm a resident and I object to the proposed cutting & poisoning of trees in the hills of Oakland California
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 8:47:37 AM

Dear FEMA,

I am resident of the hills in Oakland, California and I am writing to say that I object to the plan to cut thousands of trees and spread a tremendous amount of herbicide in my hills. For the reasons detailed below, and because I and my neighbors don't agree with this reckless and dangerous plan, that is wrongly being proposed in the name of fire prevention, and want less destructive and harmful methods devised - methods that will actually protect the hills and its residents from fire (which this plan won't even do).

The plan, as proposed will have severely harmful effects, including the following:

- expose residents and visitors to massive amounts of herbicides
- destroy raptor habitat and the habitat of many other forest creatures
- release huge amounts of sequestered CO₂
- destabilize steep hillsides creating great dangers when the rainy season approaches in the fall
- waste almost \$6 million of taxpayers funds that could be used for real fire risk mitigation

The Environmental Impact Statement evaluated by FEMA is inadequate and unacceptable and cannot be relied on to accurately evaluate the costs and benefits of this proposed project. The EIS is unacceptable for several reasons including the following:

- The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.
- The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.
- The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any

serious analysis.

- The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

- The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

As a resident, a mother, and a caring community member I cannot accept this plan to mutilate and poison my beloved hills. The plan will make my home unsafe for me, my husband, our children and our animals. Between massive amounts of herbicides, destabilized land, threats of mudslides and the loss of an ecosystem I can't number the dangers this plan poses for health and well-being. There are better ways, ways that don't involve cutting over 100,000 trees and poisoning the land with a terrible amount of herbicide - there just has to be. Let's find it and not just take the easy way out.

Thank you,
Lynn Bartsch
Oakland, CA

From: [Mitchel Michiels](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Re: removal of Eucalyptus trees
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 7:49:23 AM

I strongly regard this plan of deforestation of the listed areas of Eucalyptus groves with great consternation and horror.

Without any intention of replanting new trees and relying on the existing trees to somehow "fill in" is a very misguided and inadequate disastrous idea.

We are talking about the removal of a huge amount of trees and the use of a very toxic herbicide along our beautiful, tranquil trails and wildlife habitat.

This is a big mistake and will have horrible environmental consequences.

I.E. nothing is going to be done to offset the effect of disappearing that many trees.

My heart is breaking as I can only imagine what will remain of the beautiful, shady trails leading into Sibley, let alone all the other pristine areas.

It is difficult to predict how global warming will impact the Bay Area and what kind of toll will be taken on our ecosystem.

I strongly urge you to keep these trees and consider less drastic measures and precautions for fire prevention.

Use the funds to clean up around the trees.

I am convinced that we need these trees now and in the future.

Respectfully,

Kris Johnson Michiels

5449 Modoc Ave. Richmond, CA 94804

kjm@inkimage.net

From: [Charles Cassels](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 7:00:00 AM

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

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>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed project(s) on air quality.

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From: myetskeezix@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: UC Oakland vegetation management
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 4:51:23 AM

Dear Administrator,

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

Thank you.

Anne-Marie Cantwell

From: lunainside@gmail.com on behalf of [Premadasi](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#); inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 1:31:12 AM

Hello,

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation.

I was horrified when I found out that the removal of close to 100,000 trees

- destroys raptor habitat and the habitat of many other forest creatures
- will release huge amounts of sequestered CO2
- destabilizes steep hillsides
- wastes almost \$6 million of taxpayers funds that could be used for real fire risk mitigation

Please do the right thing. People care.

Premadasi Amada

From: [Cecile Pineda](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: removal of 100, 000 trees
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 11:44:12 PM

Sirs:

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

The plan relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

As a resident of the affected area, I demand that you exercise more responsibility, accountability, and downright sanity before imposing ill-thought "safety" notions on people who have not been consulted.

Sincerely,

Cecile Pineda

Author of Devil's Tango: How I Learned the Fukushima Step by Step
available from Wingspress.com
Read My Blog at <http://devilstangobook.blogspot.com/>
Follow Me @DevilsTango
LIKE My Page on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/DevilsTango>

"Repeatedly expecting a sane response from those who are insane is an exercise in madness." - Paraphrasing Einstein

We Americans are locked in an asylum for the criminally insane with the criminally insane, and they are armed to the hilt. - Charles Sullivan

Let your struggle talk. — Iori Mochizuki, Fukushima Diary

NOTICE: Due to Presidential Executive Orders still not rescinded by President Obama, the National Security Agency may have read this email without warning, warrant, or notice, and certainly without probable cause. They may do this without any judicial or legislative oversight. [Click here to learn more about current US laws and your rights.](#)

From: [Jamie Manley](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects complaint
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 10:20:10 PM

Dear FEMA ,

The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

Sincerely

--

From: olenes@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: RE: Against
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 10:12:30 PM

RE: Article in San Francisco Chronicle,

I am against the cutting down of so many trees that provide habitat for bird life and wild animals. I am against the use of herbicides that affect birds, animals and humans for an undetermined length of time. It is difficult for me to grasp the thinking behind the idea which isn't based on common sense or environmental protection. Sounds familiar to the cut and slash programs that have proven destructive in South American countries. Sounds like the cut and clear operations that removed old redwoods long ago. Sounds like a bunch who love to use cutting machines. Sounds ignorant and lacking in common sense. Sounds like creation of a blight-looking area.

Olene Sparks
Point Richmond, Ca.

From: [Shelly Ottenheimer](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Stop East Bay Hills Nonsense
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 10:02:24 PM

Dear FEMA,

I am ardently opposed to the deforestation planned for the East Bay Hills and am disgusted by the possibility of such a large amount of money being used to execute a bad and destructive plan. It is wrong for many reasons, and the Bay Area will not sit back and stand for any part of this.

How can 6 million dollars justifiably be spent to eradicate ecosystems and to bring harm to people (me) living in the area and to animal and plant habitats. Those poisons will wash downhill into the Bay—further polluting our Bay, and the destruction along the way will be immeasurable.

Not only will poison wash downhill, but so too may houses and remaining landscapes. It will destabilize the terrain, which is certain to cause destruction to homes and roadways. Every repercussion from this sneaky, sinister plan (in the name of fire control) stands to cost taxpayers so much more in many ways—not just financially.

There are many other cost-effective ways to increase fire safety measures and to lessen hazardous risks of fire, but this has to be the most unacceptable possibility, and we will not stand for it. Please spend our money doing something necessary and worthwhile and do not put a cent toward this project.

Sincerely,

Shelly Ott'

From: mullypeg@gmail.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: [Conservation Efforts](#)
Subject: Oakland hills clearcutting
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 9:16:47 PM

I live and recreate in and around the Oakland Hills. I enjoy the birds, the sound of the wind in the trees, the scent of the trees, the breezes and clean air afforded by the trees. The forests are a very magical place for me and my family and my dog. I object to you using monies that are the hard earned right of the people of Oakland. What will be the outcome? This has been done before and has created much devastation. Water and air pollution, mud slides, destruction of public parks, decline in moral, broken hearts, depression, change in nature scape. I seriously object to your plan and would like you to rethink it and consider Oakland, a community that needs clean air, beautiful parks, clean water and we need to see the total picture and respect the earth and the beauty it affords us. Please think and act in the best interest of all the people. Thank you, Peggy Mulligan

Sent from my iPad

From: [Kristie Lavelle](mailto:Kristie.Lavelle@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](mailto:EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland and EBRPD
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 8:40:25 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

Our family spends time in this area every single day and are devastated to hear about this thoughtless plan to cut down trees and use herbicides in our backyard.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Sincerely,

Kristie, John & Neal Lavelle
Oakland, CA

From: [Viki Maxwell](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: I OPPOSE the "East Bay Hills Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction" plan - There are better ways to reduce fire risk
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 7:55:09 PM

I am an Oakland resident and I OPPOSE the current plan to clear-cut non-native trees in

1. Soil Erosion can be expected on steep slopes and large clear cut areas when the trees are destroyed and their roots are killed with herbicides. Soil productivity will be reduced, caused by wood chips nitrogen demand and blocking light.

2. Sedimentation of streams, such as the creek that flows through the Botanical Gardens, and destruction of water habitats.

3. Toxic herbicide runoff into streams with the potential to reach the Bay. Dousing our public lands with thousands of gallons of toxic herbicides will **endanger the public**. Spraying thousands of gallons of herbicide on the hills will create a real public safety hazard, and **destroy wildlife on site and downstream** by herbicide poisoning.

4. Destruction of wildlife habitat.

5. There are no plans to replant the barren clear cut areas with native vegetation. Non-native vegetation like broom, thistle, and hemlock will likely be the occupants of the unshaded barren ground.

6. Significant visual impact along the trails of the parks.

This project will more likely **increase the risk of wildfires** than reduce that risk:

1. By distributing tons of dead wood onto bare ground.

2. By eliminating shade and fog drip which helps to moisten the forest floor.

3. Soil erosion, lowering of the water table, and destroying the windbreaks, will all contribute to even drier and more desiccated local areas.

4. The area will be even more vulnerable to soil impact and further erosion from hikers that will make additional unwarranted 'short-cut' trails across dry barren land.

Instead of this misguided project, I recommend:

1. THIN TREES IN SMALL AREAS, AT A REASONABLE SLOW PLACE. Do not clear cut large areas. Clear and thin small areas in a step-wise sequential manner, replant with natives. Do this over a time framework that would allow the native trees to begin to grow and allow wildlife to relocate and adapt. Leave the mature Monterey pines.

2. REPLANT WITH NATIVES. An ESSENTIAL part is replanting with natives and habitat restoration, such as reseeding with native grasses and annuals, and planting oak trees and redwoods.

3. CREATE LOCAL JOBS: for ongoing maintenance, such as cutting back unwanted sprouts. **This would replace the need for and use of toxic herbicides. DO NOT USE HERBICIDES.** Maintenance workers would also care for the planted saplings of redwoods and oak trees, and do trail maintenance to prevent further erosion.

I am a frequent user of East Bay and Berkeley parks and nature areas (at least once a week). This is a very important issue for me.

Thank you for your time.

Viki Maxwell
469 Rich St
Oakland, CA 94609

From: [Joel At SBC](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Don't fund the east bay forest devastation
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 7:04:39 PM

Hello FEMA

Please do NOT fund massive deforestation projects in the California East Bay hills that will do nothing to reduce fire risk, but will:

- expose us to massive amounts of herbicides
- destroy raptor habitat and the habitat of many other forest creatures
- release huge amounts of sequestered CO2
- destabilize steep hillsides
- waste almost \$6 million of taxpayers funds that could be used for real fire risk mitigation

Pay attention to real disasters and leave our forests alone, please..

Thank you

Joel and Laine Barbanell Schipper who vote 100% of the time.
San Francisco, CA 94131

Copy separately to Nancy Pelosi

Sent from my mobile device.

Sent from my mobile device.

From: [Joyce Cochran](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA & the Oakland Trees
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 6:55:07 PM

Dear FEMA Representative,

Please, please, can you postpone implementing FEMA's current plan to cut down the Oakland trees as a response to fire danger? Trees actually protect, in the long run, but they don't have a chance to survive with this type of short-sighted human intervention. We need a better plan than massive deforestation. Or, let's rename Oakland, Desertland!

We Californians need our trees and so do all Americans, even those of us who are 'city dwellers.'

Thank you so much for your consideration,

Joyce Cochran

San Francisco, CA

94118

p.s. What is wrong with the FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills. It is unacceptable because it:

1. does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

X is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

2. does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

3. does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

4. relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire

danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

From: [Leni Siegel](mailto:Leni.Siegel)
To: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Cc: inquiries@hillsconversationnetwork.org
Subject: Fema proposal to clear cut down close to 100,000 trees and apply herbicides (FEMA Draft EIS for UC and Oakland)
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 6:50:35 PM

As a long term resident and homeowner, I oppose this fraudulent waste of taxpayer money. Clear cutting trees and applying poisonous herbicides is a misguided policy.

Specifically, these are my reasons why I think the FEMA Draft EIS for UC and Oakland is flawed:

1. It does not meet its own stated goal of reducing flame lengths to 2 feet. The proposed treatments will result in an environment with flame lengths of between 14 feet and 69 feet, based on the same data set that was used to construct the EIS. This flame length is worse than what could be expected with the trees that exist currently. I ask that FEMA retract the EIS and rework it to develop a proposal that actually fixes the problem.
2. It does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration which will result from these projects. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,00 tall trees.
3. It is unacceptable as currently written as it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with herbicide use that is being proposed. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.
4. It is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyse the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.
5. It is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.
6. It is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.
7. It is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that will exist the day after the 100,000 trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison, as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this condition. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will begin to increase. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to include a fire model that analyzes the expected end result vegetation rather than an essentially irrelevant state.

Thank you.

From: [David Widelock](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comment on EIS
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 6:14:26 PM

I have looked in vain for any reference to active revegetation of native flora. It seems that the EIS assumes that native oaks and understory vegetation would repopulate the areas once they are cleared of Eucalyptus and other non-native trees and shrubs. Do you have evidence that this would occur, especially given deer browsing on young oaks and other vegetation.

David Widelock

--

David Widelock Landscape Design
CA RLA #3577
4685 Commonwealth Dr.
Oakland, CA 94605
510-638-8660
widelock@earthlink.net

From: [celeste mclean](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: [HCN:](#)
Subject: The Hills
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 6:13:27 PM

Regarding the FEMA/UC Berkeley Tree Clear-Cutting Plan

In the Oakland and Berkeley Hills, there are many trees that do pose a fire hazard. But, the current plan presented is not wise. There is a "cut & tarp" method that needs more consideration than using toxic substances. These poisons only hurt the environment and our children. We really need to rethink this mode for supporting a safer situation. Thank you!

Many best wishes.....

From: [Elizabeth](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Oakland EIS
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 5:35:35 PM

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

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>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

From: jessie.ortiz
To: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Bad Plan: Cutting Down Trees in the East Bay Hills of California
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 10:29:16 PM

To whom it may concern at FEMA:

The FEMA draft proposal (EIS) calls for eradication of thousands of trees in the East Bay hills of California. It is a flawed plan and needs to be revised.

We, residents of the East Bay, are really worried about the level of herbicides, and the change to our air quality when so many trees are removed.. The trees are holding our hills together - removing so many will put us at risk for landslides and erosion. This is 6 million dollars to destroy habitat for birds and animals. There are better ways to prevent fires.

Below are better-written criticisms and analysis.
But the feelings and frustration are the same.
Please do NOT go ahead with this plan to remove so many trees.
I'm an Oakland resident, and often take hikes in the parks where you plan to cut down the trees. It will be horrible and devastating if you proceed.

Jessie Ortiz

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

From: [Catherine Rinaldo](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: east Bay regional parks non native species deforestation
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 8:18:49 PM

.I walk these East Bay hills Daily .. It is the Eucalytus and pine trees that create a canopy of shade on the ground of the east bay hills. Clear cutting them will bring more fire danger to the area. Also The strawberry canyon river and all the of the creatures it nourishes would suffer greatly with the use of the toxic roundup. And don't you think we humans are getting enough exposure to cancer causing chemicals without purring roundup into our environment.. Thankyou, I have faith that you will make the best decision forth sake of our planet. . Catherine Rinaldo Oakland CA
Sent from my iPad

From: [Adam Walter](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comment
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 6:43:20 PM

I would like to officially state my opposition to this outrageous proposal.

It really is unbelievable that we would devote so much time and resources to cutting down trees and replacing them with woodchips and round-up. How dare you.

In this era of increasing climate change and environmental degradation that CO2 the trees remove from the atmosphere is ever more valuable to our environment and the health of a planet.

Leave the trees alone!

Adam Walter
Campbell, CA

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Sam Foster](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Proposed Fire Reduction Measures in the Oakland and Berkeley Hills
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 5:01:59 PM

I would like to take a minute to voice my concerns over the proposed clear cutting of nonnative trees and use of pesticides as a means to reduce the threat of wildfires in Strawberry Canyon and adjacent areas in the Oakland and Berkeley Hills.

My initial thoughts on this proposed plan is that it's very extreme. While I can understand the concern surrounding overgrown forested areas near homes, the UC Berkeley campus and research facilities, this recommended plan of action seems to ignore key features of sane, safe and sustainable forestry. The overly liberal use of pesticides, the apparent misunderstanding of how forests and animals adapt to invasive species and the threat of erosion are the main points I'd like to address.

First, as far as the use of pesticides, I've read different figures regarding the amount of pesticides that will be used to prevent nonnative trees and brush from growing again. But the one thing these different figures have in common is that they are all absurdly high. Dumping tens to hundreds of thousands of gallons of herbicide in the proposed areas poses a grave threat to the wildlife who make their homes in these regions. Moreover, in an era where pesticide use has been proven to contribute to the massive loss of vital insect and amphibian populations and is being fiercely debated in other parts of the state and the country (i.e. the ongoing debate over the role of herbicides in the collapse of key bee colonies), this liberality with highly toxic chemicals seems very short sighted. The sheer numbers are mind numbing. Dumping these large amounts of herbicide could have larger unintended consequences affecting local animal and human food chains and industry in ways we cannot grasp at present.

Secondly, the plan to destroy nonnative species is in itself flawed, as it fails to account for how plant and animal species adapt to 'invasive' species over time. While in general I support conservation efforts to preserve and restore Native California plant and animal species, I also believe these efforts needed to be guided by reason. In the areas where the proposed tree removal will take place, plant and animal species have been adapting for at least a couple centuries. This change commenced with the advent of the first Spanish settlers and continues to this day. For the most part this adaptation has been a gradual process, working over long periods of time. Suddenly gutting the forest of nonnative trees and toxifying the forest to ensure their ultimate death would be a much more sudden and dramatic change that, again, could alter these tenuous ecosystems in ways we can't predict. More importantly, it would upset the balance adapting species have patiently pursued over the last couple centuries by destroying key habitats.

Lastly, the plan as it stands seems to assume that, once trees and plants are removed, the earth and soil will just of its own accord stay put. Forests and hillsides are in a constant state of flux, and it's often only the deep network of a healthy forest that keeps a hillside from sliding. The plan as it stands would be like an architect

deciding to suddenly rip up the foundations of a structure without any sort of contingency. We'd all agree that such a contractor had lost his mind. While this analogy may not play out in the short term, in the long term the proposed plan is essentially as crazy. Even the slight contingency written into the proposal doesn't seem to account for the fact that forests and hillsides are mobile, living entities and not static, and so take very little account of the possibilities of drastic erosion and hill slides over longer periods of time.

There's more I object to in the proposal but these are the salient points. I also firmly believe that all the objectives sought after - as far as reducing the danger of wild fires - could just as easily be obtained by more traditional forestry methods, without resorting to the mass destruction that herbicides would undoubtedly wreak upon these natural resources.

Thank you,

Sam Foster

(snail-mail hard copy to follow)

From: [Nancy Kates](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: clear cutting and deforesting plans for East Bay region parks, CA
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 4:54:25 PM

Dear East Bay Regional Park District and FEMA--

I have read about the plans to clear cut a number of trees in the park, as well as using pesticides on other trees in the region. As a frequent hiker in a number of East Bay Regional Parks, I am strongly opposed to these proposals.

It would be better for the region to limit the number of houses and structures on the edge of parks, and if necessary, let them burn naturally if they catch on fire. Destroying the parks in order to save them from the threat of fire is

not a good idea. In fact, it is dumb and inappropriate.

thanks, Nancy Kates

From: [Joseph Michelson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland and EBRPD vegetation management projects
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 4:41:54 PM
Attachments: [347.png](#)

Dear FEMA:

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy. [Well, you can kill the poison oak if you want. 😊]

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately consider the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Thanks for your consideration, -- Joseph ("Randy") Michelson

PS: I live a few blocks west of the Claremont Hotel, and vividly remember the Oakland Hills fire of 1991. I do not think cutting down SO MANY trees is sensible!

From: [George B. Streissguth](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: I'm against harmful deforestation, especially in my San Francisco Bay Area.
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:58:25 PM

FEMA,

Please do not fund massive deforestation projects that will do nothing to reduce fire risk, but will:

- expose us to massive amounts of herbicides
- destroy raptor habitat and the habitat of many other forest creatures
- release huge amounts of sequestered CO2
- destabilize steep hillsides
- waste almost \$6 million of taxpayers funds that could be used for real fire risk mitigation

Sincerely,
George B. Streissguth
150 Francisco Street, #118
San Francisco, CA 94133-2069

Home: (415) 693-0669
Mobile: (415) 971-0669
Email: geos@sbcglobal.net

From: [Rashid Patch](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable for several reasons:
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:58:05 PM

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable for several reasons:

It does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

It does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

It does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

It does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

It relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the next day after 100k+ trees are cut, without consideration of the quick regrowth of more flammable weed and brush.. The EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this the clean-cut state. Shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will rapidly increase as more flammable weed, /brush, and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

As an Oakland resident, the removal of near 100,000 trees from steep hillsides will increase the already serious problems of storm runoff drainage in my own neighborhood, as well as detracting considerably from the quality of life for myself and my neighbors.

I strongly urge serious reconsideration of this plan.

Imam Rashid Patch

3100 Coolidge Ave.

Oakland, CA 94602-2765

From: [Patricia Thompson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:52:26 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I have written a letter, but fear it won't be opened. I wish such a drastic move, cutting 85,000 trees in the East Bay Parks, could be put before a public vote. We fought hard to fund and save our parks over the years and now we hate to see them destroyed. We are completely against the tree removal and herbicide project being proposed. I was born in Oakland and my husband and I have been Montclair residents for 45 years.

Pat and Dan Thompson
5757 Balboa Drive
Oakland, CA 94611

From: [Diana VERGIL](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: dvergil@gmail.com
Subject: Fire danger in the canyon
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:30:16 PM

Thank you, Please cut those trees down, I want all those oil cans (pines and eucalyptus trees gone) they are just preventing the oak trees from growing, I live on Bernhard Ave and my elderly father spends the day alone everyday, i pray we do not have any fires while i am away from home, I've lived over 50 years in this area and our number one worry is fire.

Thanks for all the preventative work to keep us safe

Diana Vergil

Administrative Assistant
The Bancroft Library
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-6000

dvergil@library.berkeley.edu

(W) # **510-643-8389** (F) # 510-643-4313

*Love all, trust a few and do wrong to none.
William Shakespeare April 1564 ~ April 1616*

From: [Hills Conservation Network](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: 4,759 signers: Stop the deforestation of the Berkeley/Oakland Hills petition
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:18:34 PM

Dear FEMA,

I started a petition to you titled [Stop the deforestation of the Berkeley/Oakland Hills](#). So far, the petition has 4,759 total signers.

You can post a response for us to pass along to all petition signers by clicking here: http://petitions.moveon.org/target_talkback.html?tt=tt-42455-custom-21317-20130619-q7b=U6

The petition states:

"The current Draft EIS is unacceptable as it will inflict enormous environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, destabilize steep slopes, and actually increase the risk of hazardous wildfires. FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen."

To download a PDF file of all your constituents who have signed the petition, including their addresses, click this link:

http://petitions.moveon.org/deliver_pdf.html?job_id=885261&target_type=custom&target_id=21317

Thank you.

--Hills Conservation Network

If you have any other questions, please email petitions@moveon.org.

The links to download the petition as a PDF and to respond to all of your constituents will remain available for the next 14 days.

This email was sent through MoveOn's petition website, a free service that allows anyone to set up their own online petition and share it with friends. MoveOn does not endorse the contents of petitions posted on our public petition website. If you don't want to receive further emails updating you on how many people have signed this petition, click here: http://petitions.moveon.org/delivery_unsub.html?e=xH6bm7btHgt1XQnAc8fwEiBFQkgtRUITLUZFTUEtUkiYQGZlbWEuZGhzLmdvdg--&petition_id=42455.

From: [Carol LaPlant](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Opposition to Proposed East Bay Deforestation
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 2:17:18 PM

I am a longtime Berkeley resident and a frequent visitor to the parks of the East Bay hills. These parks would be decimated if FEMA awards funds for the present proposal to clear cut vast areas of forest and saturate these areas with a toxic herbicide. The areas slated for destruction are filled with magnificent towering trees, generally a mixture of eucalyptus, bay, oak and pine. Some of these trees are native and some were introduced over a hundred years ago, but together they constitute the iconic forests of the East Bay hills, they line hundreds of miles of trails that are beloved by runners, bicyclists and hikers, including myself, and they provide a habitat for raptors and other wildlife that is both precious and irreplaceable.

The Environmental Impact Statement that seeks to justify the destruction of our forests is based on unsubstantiated premises concerning the necessity and the consequences of the proposed deforestation. The purported necessity is that eucalyptus trees present an insurmountable fire hazard that can only be eliminated by the wholesale destruction of entire forests. However, the EIS fails to consider the less drastic and far more reasonable alternative of clearing underbrush, even though underbrush is the principal source of fuel in a forest fire. The EIS also fails to consider the alternative of providing additional funding, equipment and support to the firefighters who guard these areas. The existing firefighting teams have successfully protected us and preserved our property and parks for the past 22 years since the Oakland Hills fire.

The EIS fails to address the consequences of the proposed deforestation and application of herbicide. Instead, the EIS assumes that native trees, such as oak and redwood, will just naturally spring up to replace the destroyed forests. How or when this fortuitous outcome may happen is not explained. Instead, the proponents of this project point to Claremont Canyon, where non-native trees were removed in a relatively small area and replaced by redwoods. The replanting of this area of Claremont Canyon, however, was the result of years of work by local residents and student volunteers to plant and cultivate those redwoods. There is no provision whatsoever in the EIS for the development of new forests after the proposed clear cutting and saturation with herbicide. Instead, the EIA is ludicrously optimistic that nature will eventually provide redwood and oak forests.

When the desired reforestation may happen, or if it will ever happen, is mere speculation. What is not speculation are the immediate consequences of the proposed plan. The destruction of trees, mainly eucalyptus, on University property has already destabilized embankments and caused trails such as the Jordan Trail in Strawberry Canyon to be more muddy in wet weather. The EIS makes no provision for stabilization of land following clear cutting, or any other type of amelioration or restoration. Instead of dealing with the irreparable damage that will be caused by the loss of trees that are essential to the enjoyment of the East Bay trails, as well as to the health of the environment and the wildlife that depend on these trees, the EIS blithely concludes that the eventual result will be positive. Further, the EIS proposes to saturate the deforested areas with a herbicide, Roundup, which will render the deforested areas toxic to humans, animals and plants,

but here too the EIS minimizes or disregards the long and short term consequences of poisoning the land, air and environment.

The requested funding should be denied because the proposed clear cutting and poisoning would turn our majestic forests into vast wastelands. The proposed destruction is an excessive and unnecessary response to the theoretical danger of a major fire, while the harm that this proposal would cause to people, wildlife and the environment is tremendous and certain. The risks greatly outweigh the benefits.

From: [Barry Corcoran](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Support of EIS for East Bay Hills
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 1:46:43 PM

Dear FEMA,

I strongly support the wildfire hazard mitigation projects for the East Bay Hills and feel that they have been studied long enough. I believe the EIS findings of improved fire safety and likely long-term improvements to the native landscape should move forward without delay. We Claremont Canyon residents know only too well that, when ignited, the eucalyptus canopy will spread wildfire dramatically during our windy fire season. With removal of invasive trees and yearly follow-up to discourage re-growth and weeds, native vegetation will thrive. Thank you for supporting this important work. Please approve the EIS as soon as possible.

I'd like to see strict enforcement and supervision of the herbicide application to mitigate or negate unintended consequences.

Best Regards,

Barry Corcoran
30 Vicente Place
Berkeley, CA 94705

From: [mramato](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay hills tree removal
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 1:46:03 PM

I am disturbed by news of the UC Berkeley plan to clearcut 70,000 trees, and then spread herbicide in the East Bay hills for fire prevention. It is my understanding that the major cause of ignition and spread of wildfires is the over accumulation of underbrush, rather than the large mature trees. An ongoing program to clean up and reduce the fuel on the ground, while not as lucrative and easy to do for the large tree cutting firms that may benefit from this proposal, would make more sense. Furthermore, with nothing left but stumps and poison, the next winter's heavy rain would wash toxic mud down into homes and creeks. The eucalyptus are not native, and were a mistake, but it is too late to fix that now. (most Bay Area residents are not native either) I prefer a grove of eucalyptus to a bare washed out hill of stumps when I'm up there bicycling or hiking, and I'm sure the wildlife in the area would agree.

Mike Amato
3863 Enos Avenue
Oakland,CA

From: [Rose Lifschutz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Deforestation of Oakland/Berkeley Hills
Date: Wednesday, June 05, 2013 1:28:10 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

Please reconsider the funding of the deforestation of the Berkley and Oakland hills in California. The proposed logging is ill-conceived and will have dire consequences.

The deforestation will remove vast amounts of wildlife habitat, expose residents to massive amounts of herbicide and destabilize steep hillsides.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

I am no longer a resident of Oakland but feel such a strong connection to my experiences in the natural beauty and wonder of the Oakland and Berkeley hills that I feel compelled to write from Savannah, GA.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Rose Lifschutz

From: [Beja Alisheva](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#); inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Fwd: Don't let them get away with this
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 12:40:40 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am opposed to the FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD project's plan to "manage" vegetation in the areas near my home. My greatest concern is that I do not want Monsanto's herbicide sprayed or laid on any land that I call home. It will not only wipe out unwanted vegetation, but will wipe out plants that we do want and will have a negative effect on the land and the surrounding people. I also feel that it does not adequately address the impacts on air quality and long-term fire risk.

I believe that there are many alternative plans that could be considered that would be safer for our vegetation, land and residents.

Thank you,
Rebecca Tinsley
Oakland, CA 94608

--

Beja (Rebecca) Tinsley, RYT, MFTi
[Art, Work, White Noise & Prisoner Letterwriting Project](#)

Each of us is put here in this time and this place to personally decide the future of humankind. Did you think you were put here for something less? ~ Chief Arvol Looking Horse

From: [Charles Nisoli \(Chuck\)](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 12:38:45 PM

Hi FEMA Staff,

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Regards,

Charles

From: kristinimages@gmail.com on behalf of [Christina Hernandez](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Stop deforestation of our hills
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 12:34:56 PM

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

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--

Christina Hernandez, Nightingale Photography
nightingalephotosblog.com, nightingalephotos.com
[Check out my Yelp reviews](#)
Call: + 1 510-338-2997



From: janinemoves@comcast.net
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: tree cutting by FEMA
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 12:16:11 PM

Hello,

I am writing to adamantly request you reconsider the proposed removal of some 85,000 trees from East Bay communities.

My reasons for opposing it are many, some of which are:

1. Surely I do not have to remind the powers that be that one of the few mitigators of carbon that remain with us is trees.

Wangari Matthai, my mentor, received the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize for her work on the planting of trees globally in this

interest and would be appalled at this plan which does just the opposite.

2. At Wildcare Wildlife Hospital, we serve over 8,000 patients brought to us who are victims of human thoughtless and

greed. I invite anyone to visit the hospital or any other wildlife facility, speak with professionals and inform themselves

of the unspeakable destruction this plan will impose. Removing 85,000 trees abruptly will leave untold thousands of wild animals with whom we share this landscape homeless, those

homes removed forever. In addition, we are in a

migratory path with migrating birds depending on established landscapes.

3. Few informed citizens will feel comfortable with a plan to douse our communities with herbicides particularly at the scale

recommended. Will you be living there with your children and domestic animals while this is being done for years?

Thank you for reconsidering this and for doing the right thing for all concerned. Return to the drawing board and present a plan for fire remediation that considers all parties affected please.

Respectfully,

Janine Boneparth
10 Liberty Dock
Sausalito, CA 94965
Wildcare Wildlife Hospital
San Rafael, CA

From: mary_loomis
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: mary_loomis
Subject: Please remove Eucalyptus from East Bay Hills
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 11:40:52 AM

To FEMA: I am a resident of Berkeley and live very close to the East Bay Hills. Mitigation of fire danger is extremely important to me and to the many other people who live in this area. An essential fire-mitigation project is the removal of eucalyptus from the East Bay Hills, as described in the pertinent EIS. This project will reduce the risk of serious wildfire, which threatens the homes, livelihoods, and lives of thousands of people. The risk has been demonstrated and the proposed actions are reasonable and prudent. Please approve the draft EIS as soon as possible so that funds can be released and projects to mitigate fire danger in the East Bay Hills can begin.

Respectfully, Mary E.S. Loomis
2951 Linden Avenue, Berkeley CA 94705
mloomis117@gmail.com

From: [Woo, Madeline](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: [Frew, Steven](#)
Subject: EBMUD Support ofr East Bay Hill EIS
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 11:15:04 AM
Attachments: [FEMA East Bay Hills EIS.pdf](#)



June 4, 2013

FEMA Region IX East Bay Hills EIS
PO Box 72379
Oakland, CA 94612-8579
By email: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov

Dear FEMA Region IX Administrators:

Subject: Support for East Bay Hills EIS

As the Manager of Security and Emergency Preparedness for the East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), my responsibilities include prevention of emergencies whenever possible and preparing EBMUD for responding to emergencies if they occur. As such, I work with the police and fire departments and County Operational Area offices in each of the six counties in which the District owns and operates critical infrastructure and key resources facilities, and with the city and county governments and other special districts that have Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP).

The goal of the projects in this EIS is to reduce or eliminate harm to people and damage to structures from hazardous wildfire. EBMUD has facilities and watershed land in and around the areas addressed in this EIS. Wildfires can potentially damage our facilities and land which could impact water service to our customers in the Bay Area. The methodology proposed under the EIS presents long-term, cost effective actions to reduce the risk that a hazardous wildfire will occur. Therefore, I encourage your support of the approval and funding of the projects in the referenced EIS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steven G. Frew'.

Steven G. Frew
Manager of Security and Emergency Preparedness
East Bay Municipal Utility District

SGF:sf

W:\Security\Emerg Ops - Federal Emergency Management Agency - FEMA/EIS_Letter_06_04

From: [kim.venturino](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comment regarding plans for strawberry and claremont canyons
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 10:31:42 AM

To whom it may concern,
My name is Kimberly Venturino, I am a resident of California, and I strongly oppose the plans to remove trees from the Strawberry and Claremont Canyon areas and Oakland. I am especially appalled by the part of the plan that involves applying herbicides to the area afterwards, to prevent new growth. This is a crime against the people who live in this area, as it has been widely documented that these chemicals, notably glyphosate, the main ingredient in Roundup, are making their way into the watersheds and unsafe levels are being found within the bodies of the people in surrounding areas. I care about my fellow Californians, and my fellow humans in general, and actions like these are without a shadow of a doubt harming us, often, disturbingly, in the guise of help.

From: [angel](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Tree Cutting Berkeley/Oakland
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 10:19:32 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a resident of the Oakland Hills and I am writing to share my dismay and rejection of your plan to cut down the trees for the following reasons:

* These projects are more likely to **increase the risk of wildfires** than to reduce that risk.

By distributing tons of dead wood onto bare ground

By eliminating shade and fog drip which moistens the forest floor, making ignition more likely

By destroying the windbreak that is a barrier to wind driven fires typical of wildfires in California

By expanding the oak-bay woodland being killed by Sudden Oak Death, thereby adding more dead wood

* These projects will **damage the environment** by releasing hundreds of thousands of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from the destroyed trees, thereby contributing to climate change.

* These projects will **endanger the public** by dousing our public lands with thousands of gallons of toxic herbicides.

* **Erosion** is likely on steep slopes when the trees are destroyed and their roots are killed with herbicides.

* **Non-native vegetation** such as broom, thistle, and hemlock are more likely occupants of the unshaded, bared ground than native vegetation which will not be planted by these projects.

* **Prescribed burns** will pollute the air and contribute to the risk of wildfire, endangering lives and property.

* These projects are an **inappropriate use of the limited resources** of the Federal Emergency Management Agency which are for the expressed purpose of

restoring communities destroyed by disasters such as floods and other catastrophic events and preparing communities for anticipated catastrophic events. Most of the proposed projects in the East Bay are miles away from any residences.

Thank you for your time.

--

. . . Angel Clifford

From: [angel clifford](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: I'm the 61st signer: "FEMA: Stop the destruction of Berkeley's Historical Strawberry and Claremont Canyons!"
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 10:06:31 AM

Dear Alessandro Amaglio,

I just signed a petition addressed to you titled [FEMA: Stop the destruction of Berkeley's Historical Strawberry and Claremont Canyons!](#). So far, 61 people have signed the petition.

You can reach me directly by replying to this email. **Or, post a response for MoveOn.org to pass along to all petition signers by clicking here:**

http://petitions.moveon.org/target_talkback.html?tt=tt-43334-custom-21799-20130618-YstXdm

The petition states:

"Stop the FEMA plan to clear-cut 85,000 historical Berkeley and Oakland trees! This destruction will be unrepairable for decades!"

My additional comments are:

FEMA = disaster relief - save your \$ for when you will need it.

To download a PDF file of all of your constituents who have signed the petition, including their addresses, click this link: http://petitions.moveon.org/deliver_pdf.html?job_id=883609&target_type=custom&target_id=21799

angel clifford
Canyon, CA

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From: [Amber](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: I'm the 60th signer: "FEMA: Stop the destruction of Berkeley's Historical Strawberry and Claremont Canyons!"
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 9:56:27 AM

Dear Alessandro Amaglio,

I just signed a petition addressed to you titled [FEMA: Stop the destruction of Berkeley's Historical Strawberry and Claremont Canyons!](#). So far, 60 people have signed the petition.

You can reach me directly by replying to this email. **Or, post a response for MoveOn.org to pass along to all petition signers by clicking here:**

http://petitions.moveon.org/target_talkback.html?tt=tt-43334-custom-21799-20130618-YstXdm

The petition states:

"Stop the FEMA plan to clear-cut 85,000 historical Berkeley and Oakland trees! This destruction will be unrepairable for decades!"

My additional comments are:

protect our environment, protect our health!

To download a PDF file of all of your constituents who have signed the petition, including their addresses, click this link: http://petitions.moveon.org/deliver_pdf.html?job_id=883599&target_type=custom&target_id=21799

Amber
berkeley, CA

This email was sent through MoveOn's public petition website, a free service that allows anyone to set up their own online petition and share it with friends. MoveOn does not endorse the contents of petitions posted on our public petition website. If you have any questions, please email petitions@moveon.org. If you don't want to receive further emails updating you on how many people have signed this petition, click here: http://petitions.moveon.org/delivery_unsub.html?e=r9qg6n6KYrWzHTupgIRoCkVCSC1FSVMtRkVnQS1SSVhAZmVtYS5kaHMuZ292&petition_id=43334

From: [Barbara Thompson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: eucalyptus in Berkeley
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 8:56:22 AM

thanks for helping to prevent the next terrible fire!

Barbara Thompson
Berkeley, Ca

From: [John & Laurie Slama](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Against tree removal plan
Date: Tuesday, June 04, 2013 8:18:44 AM

To whom it may concern,

According to concepts learned during acquiring my Range and Wildlands Science degree from UC Davis, I believe the plan for Hazardous Tree Removal is fire-ecologically unsound and will actually result in a higher fire hazard, increasing as time goes on. The current Draft EIS is unacceptable as it will inflict enormous environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, and destabilize steep slopes.

FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires.

Sincerely,

Laurie Slama

From: [Doug Giancoli](mailto:Doug.Giancoli)
To: baha-pac@yahoo.com; EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Subject: Re: [BAHA PAC] Re: Draft EIS for the UC Berkeley/Oakland/East Bay Regional Park Deforestation Plan
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 12:31:48 AM

Susan,
This is a great response. Thank you so much.
Arlene

-----Original Message-----

From: sdinkC <sdinkC@aol.com>
To: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX <EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov>
Sent: Mon, Jun 10, 2013 7:11 am
Subject: [BAHA PAC] Re: Draft EIS for the UC Berkeley/Oakland/East Bay Regional Park Deforestation Plan

Susan Cerny
860 Keeler Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94708

June 9, 2013

EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov

Re: UC Berkeley/Oakland/East Bay Regional Park Deforestation Plan

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in response to the Draft EIS for the UC Berkeley/Oakland/East Bay Regional Park Deforestation Plan.

Table 1-1

Comment: The total of 993.3 acres is huge and spans most of the ridges of the East Bay Hills. Cumulatively this will have a significant impact on wildlife habitat. The loss of so many trees and underbrush will have a huge negative impact especially on birds.

2.1 Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to substantially reduce hazardous fire risk to people and structures in the East Bay Hills and the vicinity of Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline.

Comment: While fire is a threat and reality, the type of clearing described in your plan CAN NOT guarantee that no fires will ever occur. In fact by creating much more open hillsides, grasses will grow and these also catch fire and get out of control. Even your own DEIS states--- # 3.3.1.3 Keeping Grass Short Keeping grass short by mowing or grazing, especially along roads, is a basic element of an effective wildfire hazard reduction program. Grass was not the fuel that made the fire so destructive, however. It [the fire] was fed mainly by trees, brush, and houses (emphasis added).

3.4.2.1.1 Strawberry Canyon-PDM

Non-native trees, including all eucalyptus, Monterey pine, and acacia,

would be cut down. Eucalyptus and acacia would be prevented from resprouting by application of herbicides to the stumps.

Comment: The use of herbicides is unacceptable. Please address the cost and the risks associated with the herbicide use

DEIS: The objective is to leave all downed material on site.

Comment: After reading this I ask: how would this be accomplished? It gives me the impression that a serious fire hazard would be created. 24 Inches of wood chips and tree limbs scattered about? If a fire should begin in the wood chips please explain why this wouldn't cause a smoldering and potentially fire dangerous situation.

3.4.2.1.2 Claremont-PDM

Three— 12 foot wide 2600 foot long roads? The roads would mainly follow existing logging roads created during work done in 1974 and 1975 when the site was last cleared.

Comment: So this enormous and destructive endeavor, costing the tax payers millions was last done nearly 40 years ago---? Why didn't that clearing produce permanent results? Why would this clearing be better? You have not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation.

In conclusion, The FEMA Draft EIS for UC Berkeley, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects is unacceptable. It relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed. The EIS does not explain how the project will be maintained in the future. After the clearing projects are complete, the fire danger will continually increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation grows--- as it obviously did after the 1974-5 clearings.

Clearing dry underbrush and dry grasses is mandatory for keeping hillsides safe from fire. But this needs to be regular maintenance, every year. Such regular maintenance has not been done--- always the excuse of lack of money---

The FEMA grant should be for some clearing of dry underbrush and dense tree group etc. --- and then be spread out over 10 years for regular maintenance. Wholesale stripping of the hillsides will only temporarily reduce fire hazard--- the denuded hillsides will re-sprout and become renewed fire hazards because, again, there will not be any regular maintenance.

Sincerely,

Susan Cerny

CC <http://www.boxer.senate.gov/en/contact/policycomments.cfm>

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From: [Rebecca Spence](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: I oppose the FEMA Draft EIS
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 9:09:48 PM

I am a long term resident of the Berkeley Hills. I understand the risks that come with living so close to Tilden Regional Park. Reading the proposed project brought me to tears, as it destroys what I consider my second home.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects is NOT a long term solution to forest fires. Rather than achieving its stated goal of reducing flames to 2 feet, the data set used to construct the EIS shows that the proposed treatments will result in an environment with flame lengths of between 14 feet and 69 feet. This flame length is worse than what could be expected with the trees that currently exist.

This project relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that will exist the day after 100,000+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison, as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this condition. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed the fire danger will begin to increase. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to include a fire model that analyses the expected end result vegetation rather than an essentially irrelevant state.

Furthermore, the plan does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland and EBRPD vegetation management projects is environmentally toxic. It does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. Additionally, it does not adequately analyze the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. Nearby residents (such as myself) will be consistently exposed to smoke from the debries burning. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down, and burning, 100,000 tall trees.

Furthermore, this proposed project does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. There is increasing research that suggests Roundup is far more harmful to individuals and the environment than originally thought. The repeated spraying after the clear cutting will result in continued exposure of local residents to toxins as well as continued pollution of our creeks and watersheds. Removal of the eucalyptus roots is more effective than ongoing spraying of the clear cut areas. I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

I STRONGLY oppose this plan, and I ask that you consider my opposition in reworking a new plan.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Spence, RN, MSN

From: [Michelle MacKenzie](mailto:Michelle.MacKenzie@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](mailto:EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland and EBRPD
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 8:40:54 PM

To Whom it May Concern

I am greatly concerned about the FEMA decision to remove close to 100,000 trees in the East Bay.

The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

Please reconsider and leave this mature landscape intact.

Sincerely,

Michelle MacKenzie
San Carlos, CA 94070

From: gdavis@sonic.net
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: UC Berkeley, Oakland, EBMUD grant proposal for wildfire mitigation
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 8:18:25 PM

From: Gregory H. Davis, 3043 Benvenue Ave., Berkeley CA, 94705
June 9, 2013

This wildfire risk reduction proposal for the San Francisco East Bay hills is simplistic and ill-considered. As a resident and taxpayer in Berkeley, CA, part of the area included in the proposed project, I fear the effect of the project will be to unnecessarily destroy natural beauty and wildlife habitat, destroy the integrity of a popular recreation area used by UC Berkeley students and Berkeley residents, and simplify the environment in question in ways which will be harmful and could be avoided with a more discriminating and site-specific approach. The proposal, in effect, is taking a meat axe to a problem which should be solved in a more discriminating and selective way. Areas in Berkeley have been included in the high global past burn statistics although the incidence of fire in those particular places has been either non-existent or extremely low. A case in point is the beautiful grove of eucalyptus trees at the southeast end of the Clark Kerr student resident complex, which has had considerable daily recreational and great aesthetic value for the community over many decades. Non-chemical brush control in that area has effectively been implemented by the University bringing in a goat herd periodically to graze the underbrush. The most beautiful trees in the entire designated clear-cut area are Monterey pines and eucalyptus, and there is a variety of wildlife in that area. The idea that the pines and eucalyptus, which are found widely in the Bay Area and other parts of northern California, should be indiscriminately sacrificed in the proposed area because they are "non-native" is arbitrary and ridiculous, since they have been there for close to a century and are the most beautiful trees in the area. Rather than clear-cutting any trees of this type, they should only be culled in high-risk spots. Proposed chemical spraying for a prolonged period of logged areas with Roundup to control growth of underbrush will have unforeseen consequences for existing wildlife, including foxes, rabbits, squirrels, snakes, birds, deer, plus likely harmful effects for cats and dogs who live adjacent to the areas. The lessons of the harmful effects of such heavy-handed practises as clear cutting and chemical treatment in southern U.S. pine forests should be taken into account. Some insect populations, kept in check by existing insect predators and birds, may proliferate after cutting and spraying with unlikely effects on gardens of adjacent residences. Some bird species such as hawks, owls, jays, juncos, flickers, pigeons, crows, etc. may no longer have prey or plant food in the area and disappear or decline in populations. With less trees in the area due to clear-cutting, water runoff in storms from the designated areas may cause flooding and weaken soil bases of gardens and houses in lower-lying adjacent areas. With less trees to absorb solar heat and generate oxygen, air quality and surface temperatures in the designated area may be adversely effected. The project as conceived is designed to convert beautiful and ecologically valuable area into a denuded, chemical environment. FEMA should not be in the business of creating environmental disasters.

Any FEMA project should involve a more balanced approach and take into consideration the different levels of wildfire risk in various parts of the designated area and the existing value of these parts in terms of beauty, recreation, ecology, etc. A mix of different approaches should be combined to preserve as many benefits as possible of the existing environment. Announcement of a public hearing on the grant proposal,

unfortunately, was tardy and not disseminated to the greater community. If this heavy-handed and simplistic project goes forward as proposed, it will have regrettable negative consequences, some foreseeable and others not, which will impact my community of Berkeley for years. signed, Gregory H. Davis

From: [Kerrih](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please do not cut the trees and use herbicide
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 7:02:57 PM

Hi,

As a nature lover I am familiar with fire safety alternatives to cutting trees and using herbicide. Clearing underbrush routinely would be effective, as one example. Cutting the trees would be so sad for so many of us. Using herbicide would make the woods unusable for many people and many animals. This is an unnecessary over-reaction. Please do not fund this ill-conceived plan.

Thanks,
Laurel

From: [Chuck Scurich](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: important letter
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 6:50:37 PM

To: FEMA

P.O. Box 72379

Oakland, CA 94612-8579

Re: Support of EIS for East Bay Hills

Dear FEMA,

As a resident for the past 20 years, I support the wildfire hazard mitigation projects for the East Bay Hills. Also I feel that they have been researched and looked at enough. I believe the EIS findings of improved fire safety and likely long-term improvements to the native landscape should move forward without delay. Please, we residents of Claremont Canyon and the Berkeley and Oakland Hill understand very well that the eucalyptus trees, when ignited, will accelerate fires in a very dangerous way during our frequent windy fire season. If we remove these invasive trees and follow-up annually, it will discourage re-growth and weeds, and then native vegetation will thrive. Thank you for supporting this important work. Please approve the EIS as soon as possible.

Yours very truly,

Chuck Scurich
55 Spyglass Hill
Oakland, CA 94618

From: [Susan Mickiewicz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees In Berkeley
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 5:04:05 PM

Dear Fema ,

Please don't cut down the trees in Berkeley.

I hike in the hills and would hate to have the "non-native" trees, which have been around for a long time, removed. I also hate the thought of using Round Up. Why ruin a paradise? Why endanger the wild life ?

Please do't cut down the trees.

Thank you!

sincerely,

Susan Mickiewicz

2225 Parker St

Berkeley, CA

From: [Parkside](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: EIS for Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction Comment
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 3:56:46 PM

I am an Oakland homeowner.

I support the removal of non-native trees throughout the East Bay. However, I am strongly opposed to "treatment of stumps and re-sprouts with herbicides"

Yours,

David Weisman

From: [Mark Rauzon](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Pro FEMA PProject
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 3:23:33 PM

Now is the time to choose the landscape of the future. I was reminded of how important this is when I went to the Grand Opening of the Oakland Museum's Natural History of California. Around the corner from our Sausal Creek exhibit, is a history of the fires of the last century or so in the East Bay Hills. The museum has old photos of the hills, and damages and details the costs in terms of human life and money and other fire facts. What is obvious is that in the early days of the 20th century the hills was relatively tree-free and fires repeatedly occurred. About every 15 years, there is another fire and now the hills are clothed in more flammable trees than ever before and the hills have never been more at risk.

We are over due for an urban fire, a major earthquake, and if this drought cycle continues, and there is a greater chance it will than there is it will not, more droughts will put more risk in the hills. One big fire will add more pollution to the atmosphere with many more toxins than the risk of Garlon overdosing, create more erosion than all the logging, eliminate carbon dioxide sequestration that the existing trees supply and destroy all the ecosystems in the affected area. The costs of a huge firestorm are unthinkable, with some fire houses closed, first responders overtaxed with regular issues, this could really set back the region. For these reasons, I am going to support FEMA (who has shown up before the disaster!) and hope for the best outcome, knowing the collateral damage will occur and recognize that agencies and citizens working together can create better conditions than now exist.

Mark J. Rauzon
Laney College
Geography Dept.
900 Fallon St.
Oakland, CA 94607
mjrauz@aol.com

From: [Nancy Mennel](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills Fuel Reduction EIS
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 1:13:04 PM

Dear FEMA Staff,

Thank you for the careful study of this issue. I am writing to support the draft as written. It carefully weighs all the salient issues. There has been too much misinformation disseminated about this plan. I lost my home in the 1991 fire and have been a longtime East Bay resident. I know the eucalyptus trees to be aggressive growers that crowd out less volatile trees and quickly establish sterile forests uninhabitable by native species.

Please approve the plan for the safety and environmental health of generations to come.

Sincerely,
Nancy Mennel
116 Vicente Rd
Berkeley, 94705

From: JSNav@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: tree removal in Strawberry & Claremont Canyons
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 11:27:30 AM

To whom it may concern:

I wish to express my deep concern regarding the proposed removal of trees, particularly in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons. In regard to fire hazard control, there are other effective means to employ that do not involve anything close to complete removal.

These two canyons contain viable, thriving biological communities which contribute to the environmental health of the Bay Area. While I am a strong proponent of native plants in our environment, we must face the fact that, in our urban environment, a vibrant plant community which has interfaced beautifully with its urban surroundings and nourished the human population should be destroyed so that a partially native community could develop. Given the fact that a tremendous infusion of toxics are planned as part of the removal, given the fact that the removal will displace numerous animal species necessary for the native plants to take hold and thrive, given the fact that--considering the volume of non-natives in the surrounding area--a host of non-natives will invade anyway, no matter what the hopes are, a utopian native community is a fantasy. Meanwhile, the urban environment will be without its current source of erosion control, animal habitat, oxygen production, recreation, beauty, and much more.

Please consider all this, and set aside the plans for the removal of trees in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons. Thank you for your stewardship of nature in the urban community.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Shaw Navarrete

From: cniw@comcast.net
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Proposal for removal of trees from Claremont Hills
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 10:57:50 AM

I've discussed this proposal with neighbors in my area. I live at 56 Roble Road. My neighbors directly above me lost their homes in the Hills Fire of 1991. My home was saved because the firemen used it as a lookout over the fire when it jumped the freeway. My neighbors below ran for their lives.

Thus, I am fully aware of this danger. Although I was not living here at the time, I have heard many stories about this terrible event.

There does appear to be some reason to cut back some growth, especially the eucalyptus, which is fire prone.

On the other hand, there appears to be a plan for clear cutting and the use of herbicide on the soil.

I believe that is a poor way to control the problem. I would favor a selective cutting of the eucalyptus. I realize that the Monterey pines are not native to this area, but they are native to Northern California. I cannot see why, if they are not flammable as the eucalyptus, that they should be cut down. They do not seem to be the problem. So why cut them down?

As for clear cutting everything on a stretch of land, that seems very destructive. It would leave the soil loose and it could cause a mud slide in a heavy rain period. This is the kind of thing that happened when I lived in the Los Angeles area.)

Please consider a more modest approach to this situation than clear cutting and use of herbicide.

Claire Isacs Wahrhaftig
56 Roble Road.
Berkeley, 94705

From: gdespres1@verizon.net
To: EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX; mhovland@mindspring.com
Subject: Stop the deforestation of the Berkeley/Oakland Hills
Date: Sunday, June 09, 2013 6:58:22 AM

Hi,

The Hills Conservation Network has been fighting to prevent FEMA from allowing UC/Oakland to use federal disaster mitigation funds to clearcut ALL of the tall trees in the hills. They are targeting eucalyptus, pines, and acacia for complete eradication, not because of a fire risk, but because these species are despised by the native plant restoration community. They have dismissed proposed "species neutral" fire mitigation strategies that would be cheaper, would use far fewer herbicides, and would be far more effective in lessening fire risk because the native plant restoration agenda wouldn't be advanced.

That's why I signed a petition to FEMA.

Will you sign this petition? Click here:

http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-the-deforestation-3?source=s.icn.em.cp&r_by=8026592

Thanks!

From: [Emmanuel Gomez](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Deforestation
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 11:22:19 PM

Dear Fema,

I dont think that your plan on cutting down 800,000 trees in the Oakland Hills is a good idea. Do you want to contribute to human and animal deaths? Do you want to become the cause of a major landslide, and kill thousands of native species, contaminate the grantable, and kill our beautiful landscape? I hope you don'g go through with this proposal.

Emmanuel Gomez
California Polytechnic State University - San Luis Obispo
Landscape Architecture Undergraduate Student
emmanuelgomez510@yahoo.com
(510)332-9048

From: [Kim Kapoor](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Opposition to tree-removal plan - East Bay Hills
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 10:13:52 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

I deeply oppose the current plan to clear cut tall trees in the East Bay Hills. In addition to the strongest possible emotional attachment, the following points summarize some of my issues with it. I have NEVER in my life written a letter on behalf of a cause, but feel that this plan must be stopped.

1. These projects would permanently alter the Berkeley/Oakland hills ecosystem. UC and Oakland will clearcut tens of thousands of mature, healthy trees, some more than 100 feet tall and more than 100 years old.

2. The fire danger would be increased. The landscape would be transformed to easily ignitable chaparral (including scrub oaks), weeds, grass, hemlock, thistle and broom.

3. 7 million dollars of taxpayer money would be wasted on destroying forests miles away from any residences. This is money that could and should have been spent on creating defensible space around houses and other structures, which is what FEMA originally intended that it be used for.

4. To prevent trees from resprouting, the hills would be drenched with massive amounts (30,000 + gallons) of toxic pesticides. In addition, pesticides will be sprayed throughout the watershed to knock down the weeds, hemlock, poison oak, thistle and broom that will emerge with the loss of canopy. Toxic sediments will seep into our creeks and could permanently alter the watershed.

5. Trees would be chipped on site, leaving up to 24 inches of chip litter on the ground. Additional risks: The danger of subterranean fire under the chips, as well as spontaneous ignition in the hot sun. Worst of all, this approach has been shown to not work, with massive invasion of hemlock, thistle, broom and poison oak where it has been tried.

6. An enormous amount of habitat would be destroyed; the tall trees favored by raptors such as owls and hawks would be lost forever. Without raptors to keep them in check, the rodent population will undoubtedly increase.

7. Without tree roots to hold the soil in place, erosion and landslides will increase.

8. Significant amounts of sequestered CO2 will be released. adding not only to global warming, but also to local climate changes: more wind, more dry air, less fog, more air pollution. Big trees are needed to store carbon. No other type of vegetation stores as much carbon as tall hardwood trees. Ongoing carbon sequestration capabilities will be reduced from what they are now, and will never recover.

9. Visual blight, daily road closures, and constant chainsaw noise for 3 years will accompany these projects that are the most expensive, wasteful and ineffective way to reduce the potential for fire in our hills.

10. HCN has proposed an alternative that is less expensive, less environmentally destructive, and more effective at reducing the risk of fire. It was dismissed out of hand. We want FEMA to consider less destructive alternatives. The natural environment and the landscape that we love are at stake.

PLEASE immediately reconsider the current plan, and do something that we can be proud of for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Kim Cooper
263 Hillcrest Avenue
Berkeley, CA

94705

From: kyra@lmi.net
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Berkeley Oakland Hills -- FEMA Environmental Impact Statement
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 2:00:15 PM

I am submitting comments to FEMA and the North Hills Community Association regarding the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed fire abatement of the north Oakland and Berkeley hills.

UC Berkeley's proposal to take down over 40,000 eucalyptus trees and saplings, chip everything less than 2 feet in diameter resulting in nearly 2 feet of bio-mass over the timbered areas, and spraying Round-Up on the stumps of cut trees is way beyond the state and city parks recommendation for fire abatement. It is important to ask why.

Some residents really want to get rid of all eucalyptus and return to native species. But native species restoration and fire abatement are two separate issues.

There are a few points that MUST be addressed in FEMA's Environmental Impact Statement:

- 1) Massive cutting of ALL eucalyptus will leave no canopy, reduce shaded areas by those trees 100%, exposing the ground to harsh hot sun and increasing fire hazard. Up to two feet of wood chips exposed to harsh rays of the sun is FAR MORE of a fire hazard than the catastrophic jumping of flames over firebreaks that would happen if the understory were to catch fire. The canopy will not catch fire if the understory is maintained.
- 2) Tom Clapp from UC Berkeley stated that a concentrated Round-Up herbicide will be sprayed on all eucalyptus stumps and saplings. It takes a MINIMUM of three years for Round-Up to wash away and become benign enough for anything to grow in its wake, thus increasing the possibility of erosion, or fire hazard from so much dry wood chip bio-mass with no shade which needs to be addressed in the environmental impact statement.
- 4) Tom Clap stated that the UC Berkeley area that is proposed for this treatment is above the greater Berkeley watershed. He stated that up to 2.5 ounces of the herbicide Round-Up will be used. They have done a count of approximately 40,000 trees and saplings that they will spray with Round-Up. That is 40,000 saplings and trees x 2.5 oz. of herbicide = 100,000 oz. or potentially 6250 POUNDS of Round-Up that will be sprayed over watershed area. More than considerable amounts of Round-Up herbicide will wash into watershed and this needs to be addressed in the environmental impact statement.
- 4) The three years of Round-Up herbicide residue combined with 2 feet of wood chips will create a dead zone where nothing will grow for how many years? This needs to be addressed in the environmental impact statement. This creates far more fire hazard, potential land erosion, and water poisoning than a careful maintenance schedule that preserves a shady canopy of eucalyptus and restores a healthy understory that is not so aggressive and preserves the wildlife, watershed and other species.
- 5) UC also proposes 10 years of maintenance after the 3 year FEMA funded clear-cut and herbicide treatment. Will the 10 year maintenance include continued herbicide use? UC Berkeley's 10 year maintenance needs to be

addressed in the environmental impact statement if it includes herbicides that will wash directly into watershed and our Bay. They have already been caught using herbicides without warning or public signage.

Please be cautious of UC Berkeley using FEMA funds to clear areas for development under a disguise of fire abatement all while using the 'community' to back them up by using scare tactics and political language like "dangerous species" when referring to the eucalyptus, when it is human neglect or maintenance that creates the danger. Also by appealing to native species enthusiasts. Native species restoration is a SEPARATE ISSUE.

Thank you for this commenting period.
Kyra Rice

From: [Glenn Alex](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay hills tree removal: comments on EIS
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 1:20:04 PM
Attachments: [East Bay hills tree removal.EIS.nts1.docx](#)

Please see my 6/8/13 comments on the EIS for the East Bay hills tree-removal project. The comments are attached to this email in WORD format. A printed copy is being sent by mail.

June 8, 2013

2715 Alcatraz Avenue
Berkeley, California 94705

FEMA, Region IX
P.O. Box 72379
Oakland, CA 94612-8579
[\[EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov\]](mailto:EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov)

Re: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills, California

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction project, East Bay Hills. **The Draft EIS fails to analyze a reasonable range of alternatives, including deliberate sequencing, thinning, and replacement planting with fire-resistant native trees including redwoods; and misses several potentially significant environmental effects and their mitigations, as discussed below.**

For the past 24 years, I have lived about a mile from the bottom of Claremont Canyon, one of the proposed project sites most affected by the proposed project. I hike throughout the east bay hills. I run regularly on the track above the Clark Kerr campus of UCB, adjacent to a eucalyptus grove extending uphill towards Claremont Canyon. The residential evacuation line for the East Bay Hills Tunnel Fire of 1991 was just east of Claremont Ave., about 100 yards from where I live.

The EIS addresses four applications submitted to the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) by the East Bay Regional Parks District, the University of California at Berkeley (UCB), and the City of Oakland.¹ The applications are for grant funds to remove perhaps 70,000 eucalyptus and Monterey pine trees from 105 project areas, mostly in the East Bay hills, including in Claremont Canyon.

FEMA's involvement in the hazardous fire risk reduction projects invokes the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4327), which requires an evaluation by federal agencies of the potential environmental impacts of proposed actions

¹ Cal EMA is the official applicant, and UCB, Oakland, and EBRPD are subapplicants.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

and a consideration of the impacts during the decision-making process.² NEPA requires federal agencies to rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives and to discuss the reasons for eliminating any alternatives that were not developed in detail (40 CFR § 1502.14). Federal agencies must consider reasonable project alternatives.

Overview

The idea of the proposed fire-reduction project is, in general, to chop down perhaps 70,000 trees and then “let nature take its course,” anticipating that, in the ensuing decades, live oaks and bay laurels in the region may spread over a portion of the resulting barren land, stumps, and weeds. (But even these trees could be cut down as part of the project, where “overly dense.”) UCB alone proposes to eliminate approximately 22,000 eucalyptus, Monterey pine, and other non-native trees. (EIS § 7.2.1.) Oak and bay trees and other native vegetation present under the larger non-native trees would be preserved and “encouraged to expand.” The project proponents will apply herbicides extensively and repeatedly, up to two ounces per eucalyptus tree, repeated twice a year as needed.

Many areas would be left as grasslands—with non-native grasses that dry out and create a fire hazard. Yet, as the EIS acknowledges, many wildfires have begun in grass. The 1991 Oakland Tunnel Fire began in an area that was mostly grass. (FEMA 1991.) Removal of the trees will promote more growth of non-native grasses and weeds, creating the need for continued mowing or grazing, as the EIS states, and perhaps application of herbicides.

The existing trees don’t cause fires. They provide habitat for animals, shade in parklands, and a visual resource. They also sequester carbon. In Marin County, fires have more than once burned clear through Point Reyes, and Mt. Tamalpais is ready to explode—in neither case primarily because of eucalyptus or Monterey pine trees.

On the other hand, the trees in question in the East Bay hills can be more flammable than some other types, justifying the evaluation of potential actions. Thus, consideration of a project to reduce fire hazards is appropriate. But while at least several project alternatives readily suggest themselves, the EIS artificially evaluates and compares only the proposed project and doing nothing. This does not comply with the “all reasonable alternatives” requirements of NEPA, especially when the effects of the proposed project will be so significant.

² See also the Council on Environmental Quality’s (CEQ’s) NEPA implementing regulations in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500 through 1508, and FEMA’s NEPA procedures in 44 CFR Part 10.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

Project alternatives

Fire danger in the Oakland hills is not new, and the types of trees in question have been there for the past 100 years. As the EIS admits, even the drastic proposed approach to reduction in fire hazards will not eliminate the danger; fire danger can't be eliminated without eliminating all combustible material. There is a need for balance, and the issue is reasonable reduction. Tree removal does not have to be all or nothing, and more flammable trees can be replaced with fire-resistant trees. Here are some alternatives that should be discussed in the EIS with a comparison of their respective significant effects on the environment and proposed mitigation measures:

1. Remove the trees but actively plant fire-resistant natives, especially redwoods and live oaks, in a predetermined ratio (2:1, 3:1, etc.). This would reduce the fire hazard while replacing lost values such as habitat, shade, and visual qualities. At least some of the proposed project areas used to host redwood forests (see below). This alternative would thus undo some of the past human damage to the environment, instead of inflicting more.
2. Remove the trees area by area, sequentially over a long time, allowing recovery before moving on. This would allow bird nesting, and flora and fauna in general, to adjust. The time lag would also allow for evaluation and "adaptive management."
3. Remove trees from some areas, but not from others. The EIS notes a few areas in which not all trees would be removed, but lacks an analysis as to which areas could or should be treated in this way. The existing variation in the EIS seems to depend most on the proclivities of the particular project proponent, rather than on factors related to fire hazards or the environment.
4. Thin the trees, but don't clearcut any areas. This approach is proposed for the Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve (see EIS at § 3.4.2.2.6); contrast that with UCB's approach in the adjacent Strawberry Canyon. This shows that clearcutting is not necessary. Again, the existing variation in the EIS seems to depend most on the proclivities of the particular project proponent.
5. Remove the trees by uniformly thinning over time, slowly; progressively replant with native trees.
6. Remove some trees, but combine this with other fire-risk-reduction techniques such as removal of understory, duff, and low branches.
7. Implement the proposed project, but without herbicides.
8. Various combinations of the above.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

Significant environmental effects not considered or not adequately considered in the EIS

- 1. Oak and other native trees may not be able to colonize, or may not be able to sustain themselves, leaving permanently scarred and barren areas subject to erosion, landslides, and grass fires. The EIS fails to consider this.**

The EIS needs to consider factors that could limit or prevent colonization by native trees. These include sudden oak death (caused by the plant pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum*), other pathogens, insects, and climate change. Sudden oak death has already been found south of the UCB campus³ and has wiped out large groves of oaks in northern California. Sudden oak death spreads from bay laurel to oak, and could result in acres of denuded hills. Bay laurels, among other flora, are thought to harbor the disease.⁴

Further, the project itself may spread sudden oak disease or other diseases by means of people, equipment, and vehicles. Dead oaks or other remnant trees would add to the fire danger. The EIS needs to analyze the problem for significance and mitigate it, but has not. Similarly, the question of harmful insects that might spread from the cut trees to those remaining. (Oaks can be harmed or killed by two hundred different kinds of insects.⁵)

The effects of increasing climate change on area flora and fauna are also uncertain, with no guarantee that native trees will be able naturally to colonize or survive.

The project should mitigate some of these environmental effects by requiring planting of native species including redwoods.

- 2. Cutting trees without replacing them will cause the spread of non-native species of grasses and brush, with attendant fire danger.**

The EIS calls for creation and maintenance of grasslands in various areas where the project would eliminate trees.

According to the EIS, grasslands burn more frequently than scrub or shrub lands, scrub burn more frequently than some forests. EIS § 4.3.3.1.2. And grasslands can be very

³ See, for example, http://nature.berkeley.edu/blogs/news/2010/10/sudden_oak_death_plotting_traip.php.

⁴ Indeed, in Marin County, there has been discussion of removing bay laurels in a (probably misguided) effort to save the oaks.

⁵ http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/shirley/sec6.htm.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

ignition-prone and are dangerous because of the potential for rapid rates of fire spread. EIS § 4.3.3.2.7.

In the East Bay, “before the entrance of people into the region, grasslands were of limited extent. Native Americans played a major role in creation of grasslands through repeated burning and these disturbance-dependent grasslands were maintained by early European settlers through overstocking of these range lands with cattle and sheep.”⁶

From my own observation, removal of some of the eucalyptus trees between the entrance to Claremont Canyon on Stonewall Street and the running track above the Clark Kerr campus of UCB over the past few years has resulted in very significantly increased growth of weeds and thistles, which then die and dry out, providing fire fuel. A related result is long-term potential need for herbicides to suppress growth.

Instead of creating unnatural grasslands with potential fire danger and the need for continual maintenance, the project should mitigate the effect of non-native tree removal by requiring replacement planting of native species of trees including redwoods, whose fallen needles suppress undergrowth.

3. The EIS does not adequately address climate change.

Even if the EIS is correct in concluding that the climate change effects of the project are not individually significant, greenhouse gases are cumulative the world over and cumulatively extremely significant. The project can do a lot more to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, and indeed to sequester carbon, rather than releasing it. The EIS must properly analyze this issue and require adequate and readily achievable modifications to the project.

“Forest loss and degradation is in fact our second largest source of CO₂ emissions, contributing over a third of all emissions. . . . Forests are nature’s carbon banks. . . .”⁷

“There are three things we must do to enable forests to work for us rather than against us, in climate change. We need to: ¶ Reduce forest loss by conserving our existing forest land base; ¶ Restore these forests to more natural levels of carbon stocks and sequestration; ¶ Reforest former forests where possible. . . .”⁸

In other words, trees are vital to the fight against global warming. The project should seek to reduce the loss of trees where possible. But if the project removes tens of

⁶ http://www.met.sjsu.edu/~clements/met164_papers/Keely_SFBA_FireHistory.pdf.

⁷ *Forestlife*, Pacific Forest Trust, Spring 2013, at p. 7.

⁸ *Id.*, at p. 8.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

thousands of trees, the project must plant replacements. As it happens, redwoods, which are native, are especially helpful in sequestering carbon. “[C]arbon sequestration, is something California’s redwoods do better than just about any other species on the planet. When given the right conditions, redwood trees gain height and girth quickly. Underground, forest soils and root structures store even more carbon. Because redwoods live for thousands of years, they are a very long-term source of carbon storage.”⁹

The project provides for much of the cut material to be driven to Yolo County to be burned to generate power. Biomass burning is a significant source of atmospheric carbon,¹⁰ and hauling the large number of heavy loads 75 or more miles generates additional greenhouse gas emissions. Another portion of the biomass is to be burned on site. And some is to be chipped and left to degrade on site. All of these activities will release stored carbon to the atmosphere.

The EIS needs to analyze possible reductions in these emissions. First, shorter and fewer vehicle hauling trips should be sought. Second, alternatives to burning, whether for energy or for disposal of trees, should be explored. Many cities in the San Francisco Bay area have extensive local composting and mulching programs. Mulching itself can help reduce release of soil carbon to the atmosphere.¹¹

Also, conditions should be imposed on use of equipment and fuels. Low emission, well-tuned vehicles and equipment should be used, and idling should be expressly forbidden. Finally, turning chipped wood under the soil would reduce the fire danger from biomass left on site, and obviate the need for burning.

4. Herbicides from the project may be applied for up to ten years and will enter the environment. The EIS does not adequately analyze the effects on the environment and on people.

The EIS discusses intended herbicide use on eucalyptus stumps, and concludes that the effects on the environment and workers would be minimal with proper precautions. However, the magnitude, number of applications, and possible exposure of hikers and children are not adequately discussed.

If 50,000 eucalyptus trees are chopped down, and if two ounces are used per tree, twice a year, then herbicide usage would exceed 1,500 gallons per year. With the large number

⁹ http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=26107.

¹⁰ <https://sustainability.water.ca.gov/documents/18/3407623/Soil+carbon+sequestration+to+mitigate+climate+change.pdf>.

¹¹ Id.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

of applications, even if workers are properly protected, there is a likelihood that a few hikers or children, for example with short pants, will sit on stumps soon after herbicides are applied. Similarly, that small ground animals such as squirrels will ingest some of the chemicals and, in turn, be ingested by predators.

The EIS needs to discuss the breakdown of herbicide chemicals—how soon is toxicity lost, and what are the resulting chemicals and their effects? What are the short- and long-term effects of human and animal exposure soon after application? What are the short- and long-term effects of exposure to the residue? How do the chemicals dissipate into the environment and when?

Finally, the EIS needs to discuss alternatives. What happens if no herbicides are used? What are the likely environmental effects then?

5. The EIS does not adequately consider degradation of hiking and other recreational activities, and loss of aesthetics and shade.

Logging of 70,000 trees will provide some increased views of the San Francisco Bay from the hills, as the EIS notes. But the EIS understates the significance of the visual and aesthetic qualities of the project areas themselves. There will be stumps and loss of forests for decades, perhaps permanently, particularly in the absence of planting replacement trees. Residences and other built structures will also lose their screening, adversely affecting the recreational experience in these areas and exposing the residents.

Other types of exposure will occur as well. Hikers and others using the project areas will experience increased exposure to the sun. (As I know from personal experience, it is sometimes vital to health to find shade, particularly on hot days when ascending steep trails such as the trail in Claremont Canyon.) Certain animals will experience increased exposure to predators. Birds will lose nesting sites.

Herbicides will be applied widely and frequently (as discussed elsewhere in these comments.)

All of these project effects degrade recreational and hiking experiences. But at least some of these effects can be lessened or avoided by delaying some tree removal, especially along trails, until planted replacement trees have established. The EIS should address these problems and provide potential mitigations.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

6. The EIS does not adequately consider the alternative of restoring historic redwood forests as mitigation for the project's significant effects.

The EIS acknowledges the miles-long redwood forest that used to extend through the East Bay. (EIS § 4.8.2.3.2.) “Because of the extremely high demand, the East Bay redwoods were almost entirely logged over by 1860; not a single old-growth tree remains today (Bagwell 1982, Banks 1982).”¹² Id. “Until the early 1900s when all its redwoods were logged as part of the building boom that followed the 1906 earthquake, Oakland's famous old-growth redwoods were visible from all over the Bay Area. The famous Navigation Trees in the Oakland Hills were used as a landmark by early explorers and Gold Rush era ship captains as they entered the bay. . . . All those trees are long gone.”¹³

Redwoods are “exceedingly resistant” to fire and its effects.¹⁴ They are scenic, screen views, sequester carbon, provide habitat, and historically covered at least part of the East Bay hills. Active planting of redwoods in at least some areas where other trees have been removed should be considered as an alternative to the proposed project, or as required mitigation.

7. The EIS provides inadequate support for its conclusion about the effects of habitat loss or alteration.

The EIS acknowledges that alteration of habitat could result in short-term, significant and unavoidable impacts on wildlife. (EIS § 5.1.4.2.2.) The EIS goes on to state that “the transition of habitats from dense stands of non-native eucalyptus, Monterey pine, and French broom to woodlands, brushlands, and grasslands comprised mostly of native species would benefit wildlife in the long-term.” However, the EIS does not provide support for this assertion. Nor does it analyze the comparative effects of feasible alternatives, such as those proposed in these comments.

8. The EIS provides an inadequate analysis of the effects of project noise.

The EIS acknowledges that heavy equipment will cause significant noise impacts within the project areas and at the homes nearby. (EIS § 5.15.9.) To address this effect, the project would limit hours of work to 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and

¹² Actually, a single old-growth redwood does remain. See <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/EAST-BAY-The-Grandfather-of-Oakland-s-redwoods-2491122.php>.

¹³ Id., <http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/EAST-BAY-The-Grandfather-of-Oakland-s-redwoods-2491122.php>.

¹⁴ http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/shirley/sec6.htm, supra.

Comments on Draft EIS: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills

8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. This is not an adequate mitigation for those who work and sleep late. A later start should be prescribed.

The EIS also fails to evaluate the effects of project noise on wildlife and needs to do so.

9. The EIS incorrectly concludes that visual screening is not possible.

The EIS states that changes to prolonged views from homes and recreation sites are a significant adverse effect that cannot be avoided or mitigated; removal of vegetation required for fire-hazard reduction would reduce existing visual screening. (EIS § 5.8.4.) This conclusion cannot be supported without a proper analysis of alternatives. Some of the feasible alternatives proposed in these comments, above, would require the planting of native, fire-resistant trees including redwoods. This would decrease the fire hazard, while at the same time preserving visual screening.

Conclusion

Fire danger to residential communities in the East Bay can't be entirely eliminated. Indeed, if an earthquake breaks both gas and water lines, massive fires may result, having nothing to do with trees in the hills. While reasonable steps can and should be taken to reduce the danger from flammable types of trees, the draft EIS has failed to analyze many feasible alternatives that would have less significant effects on the environment, and has ignored many useful mitigation measures.

Reduction in fire danger can be accomplished in a balanced way that does not entail denuding the East Bay hills for generations and using herbicides, potentially for decades, to control resulting grass and brush, most of which will be non-native and will itself cause fire danger.

Instead, the project proponents should pursue an approach that will help restore the hills to their historic condition by actively planting fire-resistant trees, especially redwoods. This will not only address the adverse environmental effects of the proposed project on biological, aesthetic, and recreational resources, but will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and even foster carbon sequestration in aid of controlling climate change.

Yours truly,

Glenn C. Alex

From: [Carolyn Tipton](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: oppose clear-cutting
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 12:26:41 PM

Dear FEMA,

Please oppose petitions demanding the clear-cutting of trees in the East Bay Hills. I am a native of Berkeley. I am particularly concerned about Tilden Park, which I have enjoyed all my life. I go there at least 3 times a week. There are no residences in Tilden Park. People go there because of its trees, which provide beauty, oxygen, respite; we now live in a very crowded and dense urban area. People hike, picnic, walk their dogs in Tilden; they enjoy being up in the trees. The clear-cutting of trees would utterly destroy Tilden Park as we now know it--and the spraying of herbicide is the final insult: for years, we would be unable to enjoy our park--and this park is the only one of its kind; we all would have nowhere to go. You would be destroying a lovely park and leaving us with stumps, chips, and poison.

In addition to considering the people who actually live in this area and use the park, I think you should consider the disastrous consequences of clear-cutting and poison-spraying on the environment. Think of what it will do to the animals and the birds, to the air we breathe, and to the water in Tilden's streams.

Why don't you consider a less drastic plan? Why don't you consider thinning a few trees, taking out undergrowth, having goats eat the dry grasses, etc.? There are other less drastic means to attain fire safety!

Please do not destroy our trees!

Sincerely,

Dr. Carolyn L. Tipton

From: [Deborah Baldwin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: tree removal
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 12:11:18 PM

I am STRONGLY in favor of funding removal of eucalyptus trees from the Claremont Canyon and other areas of the Berkeley Oakland hills. I lost my house in 1991 and realized then how the trees I used to think were interesting and beautiful are in fact like torches that can spread fire far beyond their adjacent surroundings. When the updraft and right wind conditions are present even an 8 lane freeway is not a sufficient fire break!

It would be far better to encourage the growth of native species in these areas.....beautiful, safer, better habitat for native animals, a blessing for all those who live in the urban/wildland interface.

Deborah Baldwin

5740 Buena Vista Ave. I include my address because it is approx. 1 mile from where the 1991 fire began, yet the fire devoured our house within a very short time. Burning eucalyptus was a big factor in turning this fire into a huge storm!

From: [Amara Rothchild](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: cutting down trees in Oakland & Berkeley
Date: Saturday, June 08, 2013 11:07:28 AM

I have heard you are planning a massive tree cutting, including oaks and eucalyptus. While I understand the need to reduce the threat of major fires, I believe that pouring toxic herbicide over the stumps will lead to greater problems for the soil, air and water. Furthermore, what about the habitat for birds and other creatures?

I wanted to add my voice to the numerous citizens who are very concerned about this.

Thank you for your attention.
Amara Rothchild

From: [John Hinkle](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Re Removal of trees in Berkeley and Oakland and spraying Poison there
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 10:32:16 PM

Hello,

I am a resident of Berkeley and am very concerned and upset about this plan to cut these trees down and put poison into the natural environment and the watershed. This is a very misguided waste of taxpayer money and is deeply immoral, especially considering the new data out that clarifies the cancer and other diseases that roundup (one of the chemicals in the proposal) is causing. I am a tree farmer myself as well as a teacher and I have personal experience regarding the devastating impact that these chemicals have. There are other ways to prevent potential wildfires than killing these beautiful trees and poisoning our watershed. Stop this insane plan now!

John Hinkle
Berkeley, Ca

From: [James Holley](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Find an Option to Clearcutting
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 2:45:58 PM

Find a way to address the fire hazard without destroying trees in the Oakland hills.

Wishing You Love, Joy and Peace,
[J. Holley - East Bay Resident](#)

From: [Hills Conservation Network](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: 4,803 signers: Stop the deforestation of the Berkeley/Oakland Hills petition
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 2:27:58 PM

Dear FEMA,

I started a petition to you titled [Stop the deforestation of the Berkeley/Oakland Hills](#). So far, the petition has 4,803 total signers.

You can post a response for us to pass along to all petition signers by clicking here: http://petitions.moveon.org/target_talkback.html?tt=tt-42455-custom-21317-20130621-y8_rll

The petition states:

"The current Draft EIS is unacceptable as it will inflict enormous environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, destabilize steep slopes, and actually increase the risk of hazardous wildfires. FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen."

To download a PDF file of all your constituents who have signed the petition, including their addresses, click this link:

http://petitions.moveon.org/deliver_pdf.html?job_id=887483&target_type=custom&target_id=21317

Thank you.

--Hills Conservation Network

If you have any other questions, please email petitions@moveon.org.

The links to download the petition as a PDF and to respond to all of your constituents will remain available for the next 14 days.

This email was sent through MoveOn's petition website, a free service that allows anyone to set up their own online petition and share it with friends. MoveOn does not endorse the contents of petitions posted on our public petition website. If you don't want to receive further emails updating you on how many people have signed this petition, click here: http://petitions.moveon.org/delivery_unsub.html?e=xH6bm7btHgt1XQnAc8fwEiBFQkgtRUITLUZFTUEtUkiYQGZlbWEuZGhzLmdvdg--&petition_id=42455.

From: [Marielle Wilms](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Oak trees
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 2:23:47 PM

Daar reader,

Today I found out about the plans for cutting down the oak trees on the hills in Oakland and Berkeley. Please reconsider this decision. For all the reasons people already have pleaded for.

I do understand about the fire hazard. But I am convinced that there are other ways to reduce the fire hazard.

Without the trees the whole natural environment will change.....

Marielle wilms

The Netherlands
Verstuurd vanaf mijn iPad

From: [Chen, Celena](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Subscribe
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 1:46:36 PM

Hello,

I'd like to subscribe to receive e-mail updates related to the Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction Environmental Impact Statement at the following e-mail address:
cchen@oaklandcityattorney.org. Thanks very much.

Celena H. Chen
Deputy City Attorney
City of Oakland
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, 6th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612
tel: (510) 238-7040 (direct)
fax: (510) 238-6500
<http://www.oaklandcityattorney.org>

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[v1.02]

From: [Felicia Freudiger](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 1:36:29 PM

I am appalled at your project to cut down thousands of oak trees in Oakland/Berkeley, California, as if they were pests. Don't you know that oak trees are endemic in California? We need to save every tree we can.

Using pesticide to get rid of them is even worse, so nothing will grow back. Concerned citizen Felicia Freudiger, East Bay California

From: [Jean Murfin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Tree removal
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 12:52:38 PM

I understand from a 12 yr. old girl that you are planning to cut down 85,000 oak trees in the Oakland/Berkley area. I think this would be a real tragedy for this area.

I have relatives that live in that area and we always comment what beautiful oak trees are there when we go to visit.

I would hate to see that many trees destroyed in one area. It seems that you are trying to keep this quiet for obvious reasons.

Please do not go through with this plan....trees are an important part of our existence and pleasure!

Sincerely,
Jean Murfin

Sent from my iPad

From: [Patricia510](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 11:08:01 AM

Re: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project

To Whomever:

This is an outrageous plan! Yes, I suppose you're right: Trees are a fire hazard..... But no excuse for cutting them down wantonly!! The trees in Strawberry and Claremont Canyon have been there for decades and hardly constitute a "hazard." I do not want open spaces turned into "park" environments.

I do not want our government funds spent in this way, and do not want Roundup used in any way.

I find it hard to believe that this could occur in the pro-environment San Francisco Bay Area. Please drop this plan.

Sincerely,

Patricia Howell
3044 Wisconsin St
Oakland CA 94602
Voting Taxpayer of Alameda County

From: [Jessie Delmar](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#); inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Environmental Impact Study
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 11:00:13 AM

To Whom This May Concern,

I am a concerned citizen of the Piedmont area in Oakland, CA. The Environmental Impact Study will be devastating for numerous wildlife and the enjoyment and health of people within and surrounding the bay area. As creatures on this Earth we have a responsibility to care for our environment, to nurture it, to protect it. The EIS proposes to do exactly the opposite and I cannot stand by and watch as these sentient giants are destroyed.

This proposal is unacceptable. It does not address the massive effect on greenhouse gas emissions, nor the ill effects of herbicides introduced on a large scale into our soil, our air, our homes, and water supplies.

Other options must be considered.

Sincerely,

--

Jessie Delmar

E-MAIL: delmar.jessie@gmail.com

"The wound is the place where the Light enters you." - Rumi

From: [Lauren Meyer](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees are precious
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 9:41:15 AM

Hi there,
I'm a tree hugger from Berkeley and I don't want FEMA money used to fell thousands of trees in the Berkeley hills. The birds need them and so do the hills for erosion control.
Use FEMA money for helping families in emergency situations.
Thank you for your public service.
Lauren

--

Lauren T. Meyer
www.painterdancer.blogspot.com

510 821-0204

From: [Barbara Voinar](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: STOP Deforestation
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 6:58:46 AM

I am concerned that FEMA will approve the Environmental Impact Study that is now in the public comment stage. UC, the City of Oakland and East Bay Regional Parks District have requested grants of approximately \$7.5 million of taxpayer money to log the Berkeley/Oakland Hills extensively and poison the tree stumps with toxic herbicides. I believe the the Environmental Impact Study is seriously flawed, and is neither adequate or accurate. The plan as it stands allows for a huge clear-cut of a vibrant ecosystem with tall, healthy non-native trees (eucalyptus that have been here for more than 100 years, Monterey pines and acacias). These forests are home to raptors, endangered species and other animals, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for residents throughout the East Bay. The logging would severely change the ecosystem by removing critical raptor habitat. Without the hawks and owls, the rodents would overrun the hills becoming a huge nuisance and a possible public health risk. The EIS does not adequately look at alternatives to this damaging plan. The current plan does nothing to decrease fire risk in the hills. It will, in fact, create more fire danger because the type of vegetation (oak-bay savannah or grassland with an occasional oak or chaparral brush) that may eventually replace the non-native trees is known to be more ignition-prone and will support more dangerous fires that produce flame lengths triple the length of flames in the present forests of tall, non-native trees. This is a bad plan. Thousands of residents in the East Bay are as outraged by it as I am.

Sincerely,
Barbara Voinar

From: [DHS Employee Communications](#)
Subject: Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Ends Friday, June 14
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 6:06:13 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)



Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Ends Friday, June 14

More than 31,000 employees have participated in the 2013 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey so far. The deadline for submitting your response to the FEVS is Friday, June 14, so please take this opportunity to make a difference and have your voice heard.

All employees who were selected are encouraged to participate. Your input is very important and will enable the Department to continue to attract, hire, develop, retain and reward our workforce well into the future. Visit Connect for more information on the survey and see how your responses are improving employee satisfaction and engagement.

Thank you for taking time to share your thoughts and opinions.

From: [John Kelly](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 1:15:11 AM

I've lived in Berkeley for over thirty years and spent much time in the East Bay hills. I'm writing to express my support of this project. I don't think it's perfect, but it looks like it will reduce both the wildfire fuel load and the number of exotic species clogging up the landscape, and the environmental impacts are being kept to a reasonable minimum.

Sincerely,
John Kelly
1409 Stannage Ave.
Berkeley CA 94702

--

John Kelly
jmkelly@ieee.org

From: [Yvonne St. John-Dutra](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: The trees must live!
Date: Friday, June 07, 2013 12:52:02 AM

To whom it may concern,

My name is Yvonne St. John Dutra and I live in the San Francisco Bay area. My 12 year old God Daughter, in fear and outrage sent me a letter and an article about the plan to cut down thousands of trees and to after spray poisons. I can hardly breath thinking about this. My husband and I are co-founders of a non- profit organization called Challenge Day that reaches millions of teens and adults every year. We plan to put the word out to educate all in what is about to happen.

I ask you please to email me to let me know if this is in fact still true before I jump into action to stop this outrages plan.

Please respond ASAP.

Sincerely Yvonne St. John-Dutra
Co-founder of Challenge Day
Mother
Wife
Daughter
Sister
Friend
Resident of earth
And
Concerned Citizen

From: [Kathryn Rile](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comment on East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 11:14:53 PM

The current Draft EIS is unacceptable as it will inflict environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, destabilize steep slopes, and actually increase the risk of hazardous wildfires.

FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen.

Kathryn Rile

From: [Kyle Miller](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Poison and Clear cutting in Berkeley, CA Hills
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 5:41:36 PM

Re: Poison and Clear cutting in Berkeley, CA Hills

Dear Friends

The University of California portrays possible good intentions, but the approach appears to be on a scale by far too dangerous to our Berkeley families and to the community. This unique natural habitat is virtually teeming with wildlife, which will be a devastating and unnecessary loss.

The incredibly large turnout to the recent meeting at Claremont Middle School is a testimony that bears our collective knowledge and awareness of this issue:

Biologists, engineers, urban planners, fire fighters, homeowners, citizens disabled from herbicide exposure, runners, hikers, artists, and survivors of the 1991 Fire were among the several dozens who spoke. Speakers presented **alternatives to reducing the risk of fire**, alternatives that are gentler, smaller in scale, more respectful of the hills and its inhabitants, and more effective in mitigating the risk of fire over the long term.

Thinning dense groves and pruning shrubs require manual labor, labor that could be provided by the currently unemployed who are eager to work to feed their families. They could be paid by the **funds** not being used on chainsaws and bulldozers or gallons of herbicide (Garlon is so toxic, it is not available to the public).

Please stop this massive destruction of 1,000 acres. Alternate plans deserve to be thoughtfully incorporated.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kyle Miller
35 year Berkeley Resident
Mother of two school age children
UC Graduate.

From: [Mitzi Hammond Perkins](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: clear cutting
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 5:27:52 PM

Stop clear-cutting forests. It harms the environment in many ways, and thereby harms humans.

Than you
Mitzi Perkins
Denton, Texas

--

"Wealth does not trickle down. It siphons up."

From: [Gilbert G. Bendix](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills grant application
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 4:56:43 PM

June 6, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I'm a resident of Berkeley, California, and have been such at the time of the 1991 "Tunnel Fire," and I'm a California-licensed fire protection engineer (also civil engineer and mechanical engineer). I served one term as a director of the Kensington Fire Protection District, and I'm currently a director of the Diablo FireSafe Council.

The Tunnel Fire resulted in twenty-five human deaths and the destruction of over three thousand housing units. Many factors contributed to the conflagration. Some of these factors (e.g. topography, weather) were essentially beyond human control. Other factors (e.g. loss of power to EBMUD pumping stations) were subject to one-time fixes and have been fixed.

Still other factors, including vegetation management, will require continuing attention for the foreseeable future, and that will be a burden on our posterity. It has been suggested that, instead of cutting eucalyptus, there should be periodic removal of underbrush. From my professional experience, that would be a recipe for another disaster; as we survivors of 1991 disappear, that proposed maintenance work would be subject to ever lengthening deferrals.

There is no silver bullet that will guarantee that there won't be another conflagration, but there is lots of opportunity to improve the odds against it happening. Since the Tunnel Fire, a great amount of resources and labor have been applied by numerous stakeholders from public agencies to neighborhood organizations towards that end. The work contemplated in the grant application now under consideration is the right next step at this time.

Sincerely,

Gilbert G. Bendix

California FPE 28, CE 14787, ME 11204

From: [Tom & Cindi](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: save trees in the Oakland Hills
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 4:45:44 PM

I am concerned that FEMA will approve the Environmental Impact Study that is now in the public comment stage. UC, the City of Oakland and East Bay Regional Parks District have requested grants of approximately \$7.5 million of taxpayer money to log the Berkeley/Oakland Hills extensively and poison the tree stumps with toxic herbicides. I believe the the Environmental Impact Study is seriously flawed, and is neither adequate or accurate. The plan as it stands allows for a huge clear-cut of a vibrant ecosystem with tall, healthy non-native trees (eucalyptus that have been here for more than 100 years, Monterey pines and acacias). These forests are home to raptors, endangered species and other animals, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for residents throughout the East Bay. The logging would severely change the ecosystem by removing critical raptor habitat. Without the hawks and owls, the rodents would overrun the hills becoming a huge nuisance and a possible public health risk. The EIS does not adequately look at alternatives to this damaging plan. The current plan does nothing to decrease fire risk in the hills. It will, in fact, create more fire danger because the type of vegetation (oak-bay savannah or grassland with an occasional oak or chaparral brush) that may eventually replace the non-native trees is known to be more ignition-prone and will support more dangerous fires that produce flame lengths triple the length of flames in the present forests of tall, non-native trees. This is a bad plan. Thousands of residents in the East Bay are as outraged by it as I am. Please join me in opposing FEMA's acceptance of this project before it is too late. The public comment period will end on June 17th. Sincerely,
Cynthia Johnson
Thanks so much for your support of this important cause!

From: [Arlene Merryman](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Preserve the Oakland Hills Trees
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 4:11:59 PM

Dear Gov Brown:

Please!

PLEASE!

Cutting and/or poisoning the stumps will also work a disaster on our ecosystem.

There are other, safer ways to prevent fire.

Arlene Merryman

From: [Sky Lovill](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Response to Eucalyptus Clear Cutting in Berkeley/Oakland hills
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 3:18:57 PM

Hello,

My name is Sky Lovill. I just got my degree at UC Berkeley in Environmental Earth Science, and am pursuing a masters degree in Fluvial Geomorphology (the study of how water impacts land over time) at Berkeley in the fall of this year. I was snooping around online and was shocked to hear that FEMA was trying to implement a plan to clear cut more than 80,000 eucalyptus trees in Strawberry and Claremont canyons. I bike and hike up in the Berkeley/Oakland hills consistently, and couldn't imagine this landscape removed of eucalyptus trees. If something must be done to limit fire danger, I suggest a selective removal of some of the trees within each grove as opposed to the clear cutting of whole groves, and pouring of 14,000 gallons of herbicide on these areas, mainly because of these areas susceptibility to debris flows and landslides in the upcoming years. These areas will be susceptible to because not only will you be removing the tensile root strength of the eucalyptus trees that keep the top layer of soil coherent, but by in introducing herbicide, you will stunt, or kill the growth of plants that would begin to root and help stabilize these areas. With climate change producing larger, and more severe rainstorms at less predictable times of the year, landslides and debris flows will be infinitely more likely in these areas for years to come.

I highly advise against the clear cutting of these trees.

Sincerely,

Sky

From: [Marla Mundis](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Don't destroy the trees
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 3:16:52 PM

Please please do not destroy the trees. This metropolitan area needs more trees and oxygen not less! THIS is a stupid, heartless short-sighted plan and does not truly address the safety issues at hand. Stop this madness at once!!!

Sincerely,
Marla Mundis

From: [Brenda Bailey](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills Fire Prevention plan
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 1:12:16 PM

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Brenda Bailey
Oakland

From: [pe ar](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 10:55:17 AM

Dear FEMA,

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

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thank you,

CLaire Brown

From: [Jean Circiello](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: info@claremontcanyon.org
Subject: I support the plan to remove eucalyptus trees in the Claremont Canyon
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 10:15:15 AM

This area is a wonderful addition to the wild lands around us. Removing these trees will help minimize dangerous wildfires. Please approve the EIS. Thank you.

Jean Circiello
5466 Shafter
Oakland CA 94618

From: [Mel Bearn](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Draft EIS
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 10:04:06 AM

I am writing to express my bitter opposition to the Draft EIS proposal that is thinly veiled as “fire protection.”

As a citizen of the Bay Area and an active environmental supporter, I am lending my voice to the opposition for the removal of the thousands of trees and non-native plants that grace our hillsides and canyons – trees that support wildlife and provide shelter and clean our air. The movement to remove non-native species is insanely short-sighted, proposing the clear-cutting forests, and laying down thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides can be described in one word – insane.

The Draft EIS is further compromised by tying in with Federal Disaster management funds to savage the environment and kill thousands of native birds and other animals that depend on the forests and habitats you propose destroying.

It matters not one whit that the trees you wish to destroy are non-native and weren't here 200 years ago – for that matter neither were we – so perhaps we should begin by the eradication of the burden placed on the environment by humans? How about bees? They are non-native – they were imported from Europe. The apple trees? Same thing. A narrow-minded approach such as this is not the answer. I truly hope that you can do better.

I am disgusted and appalled that this is even on the table – I have witnessed first-hand the destruction of habitat in many places throughout the Bay Area under the guise of “habitat restoration” and “habitat protection” and what is left behind is a clear-cut wasteland subject to erosion and further destruction by natural forces of nature, not to mention the loss of animal life and the subsequent degradation of quality of life for all who previously enjoyed groves and sheltered forest glens.

Cease and desist. For what you propose doing is nothing short of criminal!

Mel Bearn
Concerned Citizen
925.876.2269

From: [Sherry Keith](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comments on the EBH_EIS_FEMA-RIX Report
Date: Thursday, June 06, 2013 9:50:35 AM

Comments on FEMA's draft EIS for Fire Reduction in the East Bay Hills

I am writing with respect to the proposed FEMA Fire Protection Plan for the East Bay Hills which has only recently been made public. Along with many residents in the Berkeley Hills, we are deeply concerned about a potential fire, having lived through the fire storm in 1991. As a long time residents of the Berkeley hills, we support an environmentally sound approach to fire control. Having read the FEMA report with care, our analysis is that the **proposal lacks an essential re-forestation component of the areas where eucalypti, acacia and Monterrey pines are to be removed. Additionally, the proposed use of herbicide to inhibit re-growth of the "invasive" species of trees is highly controversial and should be revised for an approach without the use of toxins.** Substantial concern was voiced about this particular element of the plan at the May 18th meeting with good reason.

I am also concerned that the public has had very little time to review, discuss and respond to the proposal. Only two public hearings have been held to date both in May of 2013 with a deadline of June 17, 2013 for submitting letters to FEMA. For an environmental project of such large scope, there are multiple constituencies who need to both be consulted and enter into a open dialogue about this project. Among these are clearly residents, represented in part by the Claremont Canyon Conservancy which supports the project unequivocally. This constituency is understandably concerned about potential loss of property and life should another fire of the magnitude of the 1991 break out during the coming months. Their concerns merit immediate attention.

However, there are other residents such as ourselves who have reservations about certain aspects of the plan. These reservations also merit serious consideration. Because the public has had very little time to review, discuss and respond to the proposal it appears that the plan is being railroaded forward without due public discussion.

Additionally, other constituencies including recreational users of this area (hikers, bicyclists, and runners); local, regional and national organizations focused on protection of natural environments, endemic species and climate change need to be able to weigh in all elements of the FEMA proposal. We refer to organizations like The Five Creeks, Berkeley Pathfinders, the East Bay Bicycle Coalition, the Sierra Club (both local, regional and national chapters), Save the Bay, Kids for the Bay and others who are concerned and will be affected by altering the ecology of the East Bay hills.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, is the need for a project of this magnitude to include a long range re-visioning of the East Bay Hills ecology. This vision extends beyond a mere decade into the centuries to come. Such a vision and the FEMA plan should encompass a re-forestation plan for the East Bay hills. **One which will protect the multiple , and not necessarily conflicting interests of this region's constituents.** Hopefully, such a vision could lead to a concrete re-forestation plan that would be carbon negative, provide jobs for local residents as part of the re-forestation effort and become a local, state and national model for a sustainable, environmentally sound relationship between urban and natural landscapes.

Due to the eminent danger of fire in an especially hot, dry year in California it may well be necessary to proceed with some tree removal immediately. This, however, should not preclude a slower paced, more deliberate and democratic approach to a long range plan for these beautiful hills of the East Bay.

Respectfully,

Sherry Keith
2519 Hill Court
Berkeley, CA 94708
skeith@sfsu.edu
Sherry Keith

From: [Martha Jackson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Rethink the deforestation of the Berkeley Hills!
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 9:34:03 AM

Please do not let the proposed vegetation management project in the Berkeley/Oakland hills go forward. We do not want all those chemicals to be used, we do not want so many trees cut down! There must be a better plan that would not do so much environmental damage. Please revisit the project and consider other methods of vegetation management!!

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable!

We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees, as well as the impact on nature and people of the use of the proposed herbicides.

Martha Jackson

From: [Alan Kren](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on proposed hazardous fire risk reduction activities in the East Bay Hills
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 4:02:13 AM

I agree with the conclusions of the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on proposed hazardous fire risk reduction activities in the East Bay Hills.

I support removing targeted species (eucalyptus, Monterey pine, acacia, scotch broom, etc.) using the methods described in the draft EIS and treating stumps and sprouts with herbicides as described in the draft EIS.

Alan Kren
1642 Trestle Glen Road
Oakland Ca 94610
Alan@itsengineered.com

From: [Kathy Dittmer](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Proposed FEMA grant for Claremont Canyon area
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 7:18:18 PM

We have been living at 1001 Rispin Dr for over 40 years. We are very worried about the huge grove of Eucalyptus trees just across Claremont Ave....directly across from our house. We know the potential of Eucalyptus trees to ignite and explode in a firestorm and we have these dry windy conditions many times each year. We would like for this grove to be removed and also other Eucalyptus groves which threaten these homes in the hills, The Claremont Hotel, and UC Berkeley. Thank you from Kathy Dittmer (including 12 members of our family)

From: [Gretchen Hayes](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees to be cut in Oakland and Berkeley!
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 5:02:27 PM

I absolutely do NOT approve of FEMA's plan to cut about 85,000 trees in Oakland and Berkeley. The using Round Up to kill off any new growth is insane. First, we're inviting mud slides, and then we're going to pollute the ground. Give me a break. The public deserves better.

Gretchen Hayes
4360 Terrabella Way
Oakland, CA
94619

From: [Wendy Monroe](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please do not cut trees in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons!
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 4:19:01 PM

Hello,

I have learned of this plan to cut down thousands of trees in Strawberry and Claremont canyons in Berkeley and Oakland, also that Roundup will be applied to the stumps to prevent their regrowth. I have read that there is a probable link between exposure to Roundup and Parkinson's Disease. My Dad has contracted Parkinson's Disease, we believe it was probably caused by exposure to herbicide.

Please cancel this deforesting plan. I have lived in the East Bay all my life, love that area, and it breaks my heart that all those trees will be cut down, apparently for no legitimate reason.

Sincerely,

Wendy Monroe

From: [Craig ZB](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 2:45:49 PM

I fully support the East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project. I live across the street from Tilden Park and welcome any action which would reduce the danger of fire to my neighborhood, which this project certainly would do. I don't think the herbicide will be a danger to wildlife, as it will be applied directly to stumps.

Craig Z. Baum
1360 Summit Road
Berkeley 94708

From: SLAKEWINGS@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Update to my previous letter
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 2:42:04 PM

PLEASE SAVE OUR EAST BAY PARKS

PLEASE do not spend taxpayer FEMA money desperately needed elsewhere and not needed to prevent fire.

Killing hundreds of thousands of healthy, tall, mature, beautiful trees without most residents even knowing what is being planned, and with no way to vote is criminal. Losing these parks will be terrible for a population already dealing with poverty and pollution. Protect our local environment and all the wild animals who also will die if this plan based on greed is allowed to happen.

I truly believe that those asking for money from FEMA are primarily concerned with getting access to that money. The few moneyed people who chose to buy houses near the parks knew the risks, and it's unfair that they now want the parks destroyed. It's also not the responsibility of FEMA to help them more than people who actually need help. Besides, making more grasslands will increase fire risk, while the tall trees, including eucalyptus, help prevent fire by bringing inches of water from the fog each year.

To find out the actual facts and not deliberate misinformation, please see these websites:

<http://milliontrees.me/fire-the-cover-story/>

www.eastbaypesticidealert.org/wildfire.html

1. This FEMA project will cause MORE fires, not less. Fires typically begin in grasslands, which is where the 1991 firestorm started. This project will greatly increase non-native, highly flammable grasslands and non-native poison hemlock, thistles, broom, etc. in the East Bay hills, instead of beautiful trees. Entire sections of our parks will become dry, barren wastelands. And the planned "control burns" will pollute the air with smoke, as well as risk more fire and make the herbicides airborne.

2. After the trees are gone, the erosion and resulting landslides will be catastrophic. It is shameful to use desperately needed tax money for a project which is not needed and will result in ecological disaster. At that point, FEMA money really WILL be needed.

3. Re-planting is NOT part of the project.

4. Many native trees are extremely flammable, but eucalyptus are NOT a particular fire hazard, and have been demonstrated to help forests prevent and contain fires.

Eucalyptus were seen to actually stop the spread of fire to houses, creating windbreaks during the 1991 firestorm, while redwoods burned. (Of course when a fire is hot enough, everything burns, but the answer to that is clearly not to kill all the trees.) Eucalyptus and our other tall non-natives precipitate inches of water from the fog each year, moistening the earth, filling creeks and adding water to reservoirs, supporting green and fire resistant shrubs.

5. Sudden Oak Death is killing our native trees. Most are infected. We should be grateful for having our fire-resistant, disease-resistant, healthy, beautiful, exotic trees who are well-adapted to our semi-arid climate -- especially with climate changing and impending drought -- and treasure them instead of killing them. We have no idea how quickly and extensively our native trees will die. We may end up with only non-native forest, so we need more tree diversity, not less. Many of our best parks have almost all non-native trees (which most people don't realize.) What reasonable person would prefer dry, empty, barren grasslands with no shade or wildlife diversity?

6. Why would anyone kill hundreds of thousands of huge trees, some over a hundred years old, when we desperately need them for cleaner air and to prevent climate change? Those supporting this ill-planned project make no mention of the harm done to the environment from eliminating so many oxygen-producing trees. The killed trees chipped on site will add to air pollution as well as greatly increase fire risk. Significant amounts of sequestered CO₂ will be released, adding not only to global warming, but also to local climate changes: more wind, more dry air, less fog, more air pollution. Big trees are needed to store carbon. No other type of vegetation stores as much carbon as tall hardwood trees. Ongoing carbon sequestration capabilities will be reduced from what they are now, and will never recover.

7. This project is actually about greed and getting 7 million dollars from FEMA for Monsanto, UC, local cities, and EBRP -- money that is desperately needed elsewhere. There has been no significant fire in the East Bay since 1991. There is now better prevention and quicker response time (the main fire cause is arson or carelessness.) Nothing is needed to be done to make the hills safer, but this project WOULD greatly increase fire risk.

8. WHY is something that will affect the quality of life in our East Bay cities forever not being put to a vote, and is being snuck in with almost no one knowing about it? Most of the people affected have no idea they will be losing their beloved parks. The propaganda campaign of myths and half-truths does not lead to trust. Some of who are participating in promoting this destructive plan while spreading misinformation will likely be benefiting.

9. Where is the concern for the millions of native animals who will be killed, including some who are endangered?

Once the trees are destroyed, the already-burdened wildlife will die from hunger and loss of habitat. Others will be directly killed by the devastating bulldozing, chainsawing and poisoning. Without predators like raptors, rodents and other small animals will

over-populate.

Learn from our native animals which trees they prefer. Bay Nature magazine online has a beautiful photo of the Bald Eagles nesting in a eucalyptus at Lake Chabot -- that tree, like much of the parkland overlooking Lake Chabot will be killed. Our native raptors -- eagles, hawks, owls, etc. -- PREFER eucalyptus for nesting because they are the tallest trees and have an open canopy, which is good for spotting predators and for the largest birds to be able to safely fly in and out of. (A young Peregrine Falcon died recently because he landed badly when learning to fly.) The largest raptors ignore oaks, bays, etc., because the forest is too dense to safely fly in.

Hummingbirds rely on eucalyptus flower nectar. Monarch butterflies prefer eucalyptus to rest in in the millions during migration. The brilliant website Death of a Million Trees says that a survey of 173 ornithologists reported that 47% of birds eat from non-native plants

Eucalyptus are now an essential part of our eco-system, as are the beautiful Monterey pines, Monterey cypress, acacias, etc. The Monterey pine forests have far more bird diversity than native forest. Yet every pine is slated for killing. WHY? Yet another myth is that they have short life spans. They live up to 120 years, and every part of their life cycle nurtures our wildlife and plants. Raptors, woodpeckers, and other birds use the dead trees for their survival to hunt from or to store acorns. Insectivorous birds prey on small animals on the trunks. Many animals live on the nutritious pine nuts and those animals feed many native predators. The young pines grow up from the base of their dead mothers, keeping the hills green with new trees, completing the cycle. These trees need no thinning, pruning, cutting. Monterey pine also greatly enriches the soil, creating thick humus helping our native clay earth nurture oak, bay, etc. seedlings, as well as wildflowers, mushrooms, etc. MONTEREY PINES ARE AN NOW ESSENTIAL PART OF OUR HEALTHY FOREST/PARKS ECOSYSTEM.

10. When the Redwoods were cut down in the 1800's, the many species of plants growing under them were destroyed. Not all came back. The logging in Marin was done differently, so they have much more species diversity there. The East Bay has very little Woodwardia/Chain fern left (this classic Redwood companion has an almost identical relative, also a Woodwardia, who grows in Japan with their Japanese close Redwood relative, the Cryptomeria.) And we have none of the beautiful Clintonia and Scolipus lilies and other plants that use to live under the Redwoods.

If there is another massive logging with heavy machinery and then poison, we will lose even more native species.

11. The effects of a planned decade or more of highly toxic herbicide spraying is also being ignored. (Monsanto, DOW, etc. must be thrilled at this project.) How many cases of birth defects, cancer, neurological, auto-immune and other illnesses will result from the use of these poisons?

Most people living in the East Bay would object to the plan to continuously apply

herbicide to the stumps of the butchered trees for TEN years, if they knew the details.

Applying herbicides across the hills will result in incalculable deaths of native animals, including endangered species, as well as the toxic sediments ending up in our creeks, reservoirs, lakes, and bay. When the winds come, which will increase because the tree windbreaks will be gone, the dust full of herbicide will be windborne, damaging the health of everyone in the East Bay. Some of the poison will evaporate into the air, adding to our air pollution problem.

No herbicide or the other petrochemicals added to it is safe. Every banned pesticide was once declared safe from studies funded by the pesticide industry and which the FDA approved. The experts who once assured us that DDT, Dieldrin, Chlordane, etc. were safe are saying newer poisons are safe. But the cancer rate continues to rise, as do birth defects, neurological illness, and auto-immune illness, etc. all associated with herbicide use. Meanwhile, how many animals are dying? We've seen California Newts dying horrible deaths after crawling through roadside areas sprayed with "safe" herbicides.

Knowing how toxic chemicals work, we also can't believe that the herbicides will not make the poisoned plants more flammable.

We also believe this plan simply won't work, knowing the amazing regenerative capabilities of these magnificent trees. So the use of poison will be far more continuous than planned. Eucalyptus will take thousands of gallons to stop its attempts to stay alive and resprout. And what about the acacias? You cut one down, and dozens sprout along the ground, yards away from the original tree. They continue to try to live years after their mother tree was killed. (These are not realities that should frighten people, but be reassuring that if our native forests die, we will still have magnificent parks full of beautiful shade trees with all the native animals we love.)

12. Every part of this plan makes no environmental sense. Honeybees are dying, so we need our native bee populations more than ever, but the planned 24 inches of chipped mulch will prevent native bees from reaching the soil where they nest.

13. Again, people who live in the East Bay have not been given the opportunity to vote on even the short-term aspects of the project and will be subjected, against our wills, to years of constant noise from chainsaws, bulldozing, woodchipping, road closures, and the ugliness and heartache of seeing favorite parks left treeless, with poisoned stumps. (There are a few places where this travesty was done several years ago which are still ugly wastelands.)

14. How will this devastation actually be done and who will commit it? Those of us who have seen "maintenance" in the parks result in destruction of rare wildflowers on one of the few special little trails in the EBRP know the impact just one individual untrained individual can have. (He weed-wacked everything in sight and now we have to travel two counties away to see some of those flowers.) Endangered Clapper Rail

habitat was destroyed at Pt. Reyes in an effort to help the rails. Audubon basically destroyed the Burrowing Owl habitat at Cesar Chavez park in Berkeley. (The last two had "experts" advising.)

15. We ask, why the selective logging? Those few people who demand that the park trees be killed are wanting tax-payer FEMA money after they chose to buy houses near the very trees they now want dead. And they want to eliminate the rest of the East Bay residents from access to those beautiful trees that we support with our taxes. We suggest they trade houses and they live instead in the tree-denuded wasteland that is much of the East Bay urban area.

For those who want our parks and UC Berkeley lands clear-cut, we suggest they start with the multi-million dollar ornamental non-natives that are the majority trees at the UC Botanical Gardens and campus, the landscaping of businesses and federal, state, county, and city buildings, people's private gardens and yards – which, like the hills, would leave almost no vegetation since most of the green we see are from non-natives. (Hypocrite UC even has a book about their many exotic trees on campus.) Why the inconsistency – why are the non native plants in the cities being spared while the wild animals' homes and food will be destroyed?

At the East Bay Regional Park headquarters in the hills where the meeting with FEMA was held,, and where tree-killing is planned, there were many non-native ornamentals. Those Olive trees, Liquidamber, Arbutus Unedo, etc, aren't going to be eliminated, so why destroy the trees on trails that many of us know personally and love?

We ask every human who is against the beautiful exotic trees, what do you have in your own garden? If you don't want to be a hypocrite, first cut down your olives, roses, magnolias, wisteria, jasmine, apples, peaches, plums, etc. before you deprive wild animals of their homes and food. Most people don't even know which trees are native and which are not. But 99% of the plants in people's yards and gardens are not native.

Actually, there is a reason that the vast majority of city plantings are done with non-natives. They contribute variety and beauty, and they feed and house an incredible diversity of birds, butterflies, etc. (The only truly problematical invasive is Hedera Canariensis, which completely covers trees and kills them. It can be seen from Highway 13 in Oakland and in many other public places, where it has been growing for decades and can be seen completely covering redwoods. We have called those responsible for decades and have been told that they don't see it or don't have the time. That is another reason why it makes no sense to kill healthy trees, while letting healthy natives be killed by ivy.)

Of course we are not actually suggesting that people kill their non-native plants or cut down street trees and other landscaping, but we object to the double standard of where the wild animals are to be deprived of their homes and food while humans keep their non-native plants. Why should only the native animals suffer? No non-native human should be giving a death sentence to the native

animals who will die as a result of this planned environmental devastation.

There will be many persuasive arguments for committing this irreparable environmental devastation, but please don't believe them. We've seen terrible harm already done in the name of environmentalism in the Bay Area. A few hours of well-intentioned work can result in permanent ecological damage.

For those who insist on eliminating non-natives, we suggest we start with the humans, and then the introduced non-native animals who kill millions of native animals each year. And why not kill all the honeybees as well since they're from Europe?

The animals trees who will be killed by this plan, are not just "things" in humans' territory. They are living, feeling beings. And they give us so much. When people are often depressed from the dark and rain in winter, the gorgeous acacias bloom brilliant golden for two months. The broom with their yellow, exquisitely fragrant blossoms bloom for months during winter and spring.

Please learn who this project will actually benefit. Find out the details before it's too late.

Please know that if this "project" begins, it will be far more destructive than they have told anyone. Expect the worst.

Once our beautiful forests are gone, we will be left with bare, ugly hillsides with poisoned stumps, impending erosion and landslides, polluted waterways, the wildlife left homeless, with many animals dead, many native plants also destroyed, the topsoil ruined, and the beauty gone forever. Few urban areas have such amazing wilderness. What a tragedy to mindlessly destroy it. We should all be grateful for what we have here.

The FEMA money is desperately needed elsewhere. Please do not waste this money by making a few people rich at the expense of the people, animals, environment, beauty of our parks. Please don't create a new environmental disaster under the guise of preventing one.

Bev Von Dohre
Slakewings@aol.com

From: JSNav@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: re-sending re: tree removal
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 12:47:10 PM

Please excuse the re-sending of this letter, which I sent yesterday. I realized after sending it that I had included neither the date nor my address.

June 9, 2013

To whom it may concern:

I wish to express my deep concern regarding the proposed removal of trees, particularly in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons. In regard to fire hazard control, there are other effective means to employ that do not involve anything close to complete removal.

These two canyons contain viable, thriving biological communities which contribute to the environmental health of the Bay Area. While I am a strong proponent of native plants in our environment, we must face the fact that, in our urban environment, a vibrant plant community which has interfaced beautifully with its urban surroundings and nourished the human population should be destroyed so that a partially native community could develop. Given the fact that a tremendous infusion of toxics are planned as part of the removal, given the fact that the removal will displace numerous animal species necessary for the native plants to take hold and thrive, given the fact that--considering the volume of non-natives in the surrounding area--a host of non-natives will invade anyway, no matter what the hopes are, a utopian native community is a fantasy. Meanwhile, the urban environment will be without its current source of erosion control, animal habitat, oxygen production, recreation, beauty, and much more.

Please consider all this, and set aside the plans for the removal of trees in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons. Thank you for your stewardship of nature in the urban community.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Shaw Navarrete
3806 Enos Ave.
Oakland, CA 94619

From: [Sandra Klein](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Do not spend my taxpayer \$ funding toxins and clear-cutting in the Berkeley Hills
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 11:44:02 AM

I am against the current plan to clearcut and spray known toxins and contributors to Bee colony collapse on the Berkeley Hills. PLEASE do NOT fund this project or support it in any way. There are far better and less extreme options. And, by the way, US Berkeley should pay for their own upkeep!

Sandy Klein
4 Jenna Lane
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

From: [Remsen Belvedere](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comments on East Bay Hills Fire Reduction Plan
Date: Monday, June 10, 2013 11:17:21 AM

Dear FEMA

There is a very vocal minority trying to stifle public debate and full disclosure of the effects of the proposed clearcutting of eucalyptus and pine trees in the Oakland Hills. These people demonize anyone who questions their dogma that the trees are an imminent risk and attempt to suppress factual discussions of what really will happen if the 80,000 trees are cut under the proposed plan.

What I'd like to point out is that the eucalyptus and pine trees were in the hills long before the current housing stock was developed and people who bought houses in the hills have to accept the fact that they took on risk of fire when they decided to live among these trees.

The trees affect many more people than those who live in the Oakland/Berkeley Hills. Millions of people in the Bay Area depend on the trees in the Oakland Hills for the myriad ecological benefits they provide, from carbon reduction to erosion control to wildlife habitat.

It would be manifestly unfair to allow the few, privileged people who chose to build their mansions among the trees in the Oakland Hills to then deprive all of the residents of this area the benefits of the trees simply because the handful of homeowners have an irrational fear of the fire risk that they chose to live among.

It's difficult to quantify the benefits of the 80,000 trees that are targeted for destruction but I used this site to come up with an estimate:

<http://www.treebenefits.com/calculator/ReturnValues.cfm?climatezone=Inland%20Valleys>

I assumed an average size of 24 inch diameter for the 80,000 trees. In carbon alone, each of the trees reduces atmospheric carbon by approximately 500 lbs per year. Multiply this by 80,000 and you get roughly 41 million pounds of carbon per year that is eliminated by the trees that will be destroyed. An average car puts out 11,000 lbs of carbon per year, so going forward with the planned tree destruction would have the impact of putting almost 4,000 more cars on the road.

This doesn't even take into account the erosion control benefits, the air pollution mitigation benefits, etc.

Those who push for the destruction of the forests in the Oakland Hills insist that new trees will take their place. This might be true, but it will be 20 or more years before the new trees are mature enough to replace the benefits of the trees currently in the Hills. Wildlife will be long gone by then, the equivalent of 80,000 more cars will have furthered harmed the environment and it is very likely that any fire risk mitigation will be minimal.

Please don't let the vocal, paranoid minority destroy the

From: [Kim Cranney](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please approve EIS for Claremont Canyon
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 7:08:15 AM

To FEMA

Re: EIS for Claremont Canyon

I urge you to approve the EIS so that clearing of eucalyptus and other hazardous vegetation can begin promptly.

I have frequently hiked in Claremont Canyon and adjacent Strawberry Canyon ever since I moved to Berkeley 49 years ago. I have seen the effects of several fires in the Berkeley/Oakland Hills. From all I have read and observed personally, eucalyptus trees are especially hazardous with regard to spreading fire.

Please approve this EIS so that the urgent clearing work can be done.

Kimball J Cranney
2807 Regent St.
Berkeley California 94705

From: [Helene Whitson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Eucalyptus
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 2:27:28 AM

Dear Sirs/Ms.:

PLEASE remove those horrible, messy, non-native trees as soon as possible. They are certainly a fire danger, and the last thing we need is a repeat of 1991, Eucalyptus and Monterey pine are not native to the area. Eucalyptus debris, especially, is very slippery in addition to being a fire hazard. A number of years ago, I was in Marin County in a eucalyptus forested area and slipped on a pile of leaves on the ground. I had a bad sprain that took several months to heal. I haven't had the same problem with oak or bay-laurel.

I would like to see a return of our native oaks and redwoods. Removing the eucalyptus trees might also bring back some of the native flowers and grasses, and give our native wildlife the rich habitat they deserve. I've walked through some of the cleared UC property, and have been amazed at the variety and richness of the new undergrowth.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Helene Whitson

Helene Whitson
1824 Arch Street
Berkeley, California 94709
510-849-4689
hwhitson@choralarchive.org

From: [Joshua Halpern](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#); inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Please don't remove East Bay trees!
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 1:45:15 AM

To whom it may concern:

Please don't kill the East Bay trees. I love these trees from the core of our earth to the core of my heart. I've had hugely important moments of my life under these trees. Make-outs and break-ups and breakthroughs. Last year our neighborhood got to know a baby Great Horned Owl that was being raised right off the path in Claremont Canyon. So cute and powerful, and a great learning experience for everyone.

During my Plants and People class for my Integral Ecology degree, I spent great deals of time with some of our hundred year old grandparent Eucalyptuses, studying the ecology, and learning the personality of each old being, looking out over the bay from such a beautiful vantage point. There have been rope swings attached to these trees, great fun to swing on, and whenever there are major events that have to do with the sky, eclipses, meteor showers, fireworks, there are major gatherings under these groves to watch together.

Not only are these trees habitats for diversities of animals that have no other place to go, but the trees themselves are the oldest beings around us in the East Bay, and therefore have a great deal to teach us - about patience, and perseverance, and that steady climb towards the light.

Removing all these trees and spraying poison across the landscape will feel like a genocide to us. The uprising this month in Turkey arose from protests over the removal of one park. Us Berkeley residents, and especially our Oakland friends to the South, we take this kind of thing really really seriously. Do not underestimate our resolve, nor our love and commitment to these trees. Fire danger is a real and important consideration. But there are better ways than this deeply flawed plan.

These trees are sacred, they are enjoyed and adored by many many people every single day, dawn through dusk, and cutting them down would be a direct attack against the heart and health of our neighborhood and community for which we would never forgive you and against which we will never stop fighting.

May our voices and the trees be heard and respected, may a suitable and acceptable compromise be reached, and may peace and resilience prevail across our gorgeous shared East Bay ecosystems.

Thank you for your understanding and swift action to change this all towards justice, compassion, and healing.

Love,

The Claremont Canyon Trees
via Joshua Halpern
Integral Ecologist, Artist, Activist
outsidejosh.com

From: [Stephen Walrod](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Tree Removal in Claremont Canyon
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 10:43:55 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my opposition to the removal of the eucalyptus trees from Claremont Canyon. I oppose their removal because I do not wish to have Roundup herbicide put into the environment for 10 years and I do not want the habitat for current wildlife in the forest to be disturbed.

Sincerely,
Stephen Walrod

--

"What they undertook to do
They brought to pass;
All things hang like a drop of dew
Upon a blade of grass."

W. B. Yeats

From: [Lauren McIntosh](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: subscribe
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 10:04:01 PM

I would like to subscribe.

I do not want the trees removed from the hills. I do not believe they are any greater risk than any other tree. I think that the people who live in the fire prone areas (myself included as I live on Alvarado Road) should remove debris and be aware of high fire risk days. I do not believe that mans life trumps the lives of other living beings: trees, plants, animals, insects.

I do want Round Up or any other TOXIN sprayed on the roots and stumps of the trees for 10 years or any period of time... I believe this would be more harmful to more people in the long run.

From: [Ross Hutcheon](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Environmental Impact Study for the East Bay Hills
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 9:45:06 PM

I am supportive of the project

Bay Hills.

the East

<http://ccfirestorm.blogspot.com/2013/06/there-is-firestorm-building-in.html>

Ross Hutcheon
1365 Alvarado Road
Berkeley, CA 94705

From: [Martha Breed](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Tree cutting for wildfire reduction
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 8:57:33 PM

Sir and Madam:

I support the plan to cut the trees.

It makes good sense to manage the urban & suburban landscape.

Many of the non native Eucalyptus are crowding out native plants.

This plan for remediation is overdue and welcome now.

MH. Breed
Walnut Creek CA 94595

From: [Jerrie Reining](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: please please PLEASE CUT THOSE DAMN TREES DOWN IN BERKELEY
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 8:42:03 PM

Sent from my iPad

From: [Brent Eubanks](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: brent@lorax.org; [Dawn Home](#)
Subject: Public comment on San Francisco Bay Area tree removal plan
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 7:03:48 PM

Dear FEMA,

As residents of the San Francisco East Bay Area, we request that you fund the plan to remove non-native, flammable vegetation from the Oakland/Berkeley hills. This vegetation has proved time and time again to be a grave fire risk, endangering the lives of firefighters, residents and wildlife.

The East Bay Parks District plans for removing the eucalyptus and Monterey Bay pine trees and replacing them with native vegetation is both wise and overdue. While many Bay Area residents are strongly sentimental about the existing trees, these concerns are not well founded. The existing trees present a tremendous fire danger while providing little in the way of animal habitat or soil stabilization. A native chaparral ecology both presents less fire danger and better wildlife value – it is better for both people and the environment.

We trust that the application of herbicides will be done responsibly with all due concern for riparian and aquatic life, as well as sensitive human neighbors.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter,
Dawn Pillsbury and Brent Eubanks
Oakland, CA

Brent Eubanks, PE, LEED AP
Mechanical Engineer, Taylor Engineering, LLC
1080 Marina Village Parkway, Suite 501, Alameda CA 94501
(510) 473-1164 direct
(510) 749-9135 office, (510) 749-9136 fax

beubanks@taylor-engineering.com
www.taylor-engineering.com

From: [Jan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 5:25:47 PM

To whom it may concern,

Please do not go forward with the misguided plans to cut down thousands of trees in the Oakland-Berkeley hills and to use herbicides to keep them from growing back. This action is unwarranted and foolish and will ruin the landscape.

Thank you.

Jan Watson
248 Via El Dorado Ln
Martinez, CA 94553
925-370-6264

From: [Sally Nelson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Written Comment Re: Proposal for Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction, East Bay Hills, CA
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 5:19:56 PM

To: Officials of the Federal Emergency management Agency:

Thank you for holding the Public Meeting on May 18, 2013 about this important matter, and for welcoming our written comments.

While we are all concerned about the risk of fire in the East Bay Hills, many of us are very concerned about FEMA's Proposal for Fire Risk Reduction in this area. We are concerned about the proposed logging of 80,000 trees, the spreading of 24" of wood chips on many of the targeted 1,000 acres, and the ten years of twice-a-year application of highly toxic herbicides.

If the plan is implemented, the loss of tens of thousands of large trees would mean the loss of shade, which now inhibits the growth of inflammable grasses, hemlock (Conium), star thistle, Italian thistle, among others. Being close to the ground, these plants are more susceptible to ignition, and therefore a greater risk of fire. Massive tree removal would release huge amounts of sequestered CO₂, which would add to the greenhouse gases contributing to Climate Change. Removing so many trees would mean the loss of the fog drip which nourishes the plants and replenishes our water table. This would create further drought and desertification. Trees, shrubs, and roots hold the soil in place, and their removal would increase erosion and the risk of landslides. Silt would fill and alter the streams, affecting all life forms downstream.

If the plan is implemented, the impact on wildlife habitat would be horrendous. Gone would be the owls and hawks who keep in check the numbers of rodents. Gone would be the fox, deer, raccoon, and cougar. Gone within the soil would be the microbes and mycorrhizal fungi that nourish new plant life. Our streams would no longer sustain and nourish the animals who drink from them. No longer would the streams be safe for the children who play in them.

If the plan is implemented, covering the land with woodchips, whether two inches deep or twenty-four inches deep, would inhibit the nesting opportunities for many species of small mammals, reptiles, bees and other insects. The nation's bee population is already at risk. Woodchips are not adequate for the wildlife whose habitats have been disrupted. The woodchips and the sawdust created by such massive logging would generate more airborne particulate matter, and would inhibit the attempts of new plant forms to grow. Twenty-four inches of woodchips on the ground poses a substantial fire risk. If they ignite, the resulting fires are extremely difficult to extinguish.

The plan to apply 216,000 gallons of herbicide every year for ten years is extremely misguided. Garlon, a form of Triclopyr, is so toxic that it is not available for public use. An article in the *Journal of Pesticide Reform* (Winter 2000, Vol. 20, No. 4) states that Triclopyr is known to cause an increase in breast cancer, damages the kidneys, causes reproductive problems, and disrupts the growth and development of the nervous system and fetal brain development. Triclopyr is toxic to fish, inhibits the ability of frogs to avoid predators, and decreases the survival of birds' nestlings. Triclopyr is mobile in soil and has contaminated wells, streams, and rivers. Roundup

is already a known carcinogen. We, the people, and also speaking for the wildlife, we do not want our landscape and wild habitat poisoned.

There are alternative ways to reduce the risk of fire in the East Bay Hills. The \$5.9 million requested from FEMA by UCB, EBRPD, and Oakland could be redirected to methods that are more respectful of the area's entire ecology. Thinning dense groves and pruning shrubs require manual labor, labor that could be provided by the currently unemployed who are eager to work to feed their families. They could be paid by the funds not being used on bulldozers, chainsaws, and gallons of herbicides.

In the words of Aldo Leopold: "We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Please rework your Draft Environmental Impact Statement, knowing that we belong to the land, and it will care for us as we care for it.

Sincerely yours,
Sally Nelson
Berkeley, CA

From: [Alwyn L'hoir](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: east bay hills fire reduction projects.
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 4:05:25 PM

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MINDS? TAKING OUT TREES WHICH SEQUESTER CARBON AND PROVIDE OXYGEN AND REPLACING THE FOREST WITH TWO FEET OF WOOD CHIPS IS FIRE REDUCTION? AND THEN USING ROUNDUP TO PREVENT THE RETURN OF NATIVE VEGETATION? HAVE YOU BEEN BOUGHT AND SOLD BY MONSANTO? or are you on drugs?

There are more efficient ways to reduce the fire hazards, and they have been practiced by forestry for decades. This is not fire reduction, this is environmental devastation, and it must be stopped.

Alwyn L'hoir
www.blumoonperfume.com

From: gemma@mcn.org
To: [EBH-EIS-FFMA-R1X](#)
Subject: East Bay trees
Date: Tuesday, June 11, 2013 2:40:05 PM

Please do not clear cut the beautiful oak forest in the Oakland hills. These trees preserve the hillside from sliding, create oxygen in an urban area & provide much needed natural relief from the urban jungle.

Please is not a strong enough word when I ask that you refrain from using an glyphosates or neonicitinoids. These poisons are directly responsible for the dying of bees, butterflies & birds. Their toxic effects are long lasting & debilitating for all animal life.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2012/sep/18/bees-pesticides-neonicitinoids>

http://www.theecologist.org/blogs_and_comments/commentators/other_comments/686959/revealed_the_glyphosate_research_the_gm_soy_lobby_doesnt_want_you_to_read.html

<http://www.pan-uk.org/pestnews/Actives/glyphosa.htm>

Consider the need for a cleaner environment with the beauty of trees in your grand-children's lives.

Sincerely,
Gemma Barsby

From: [Ron Zucker](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Public comment on the proposal to cut down trees in the East Bay Area
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 10:42:46 PM

I am writing to express my opposition to most aspects of the proposal to cut down nonnative trees in the East Bay.

While I think it might be reasonable to get rid of the more flammable eucalyptus trees, I feel more extensive elimination of trees, including the Monterey pines, would be a mistake. The canopy that the trees provide would be largely gone, allowing in the short term for less reflection of sunlight and less natural consumption of carbon dioxide. In this way the project would contribute more to global warming.

The absence of the canopy would also keep fog from cooling and dampening the area, making it more dry and more of the fire hazard that the project is trying to obviate. The resulting wood chips that would prevail on the ground would create an additional fire hazard.

I am also very alarmed by the plan to spray the stumps with herbicide to prevent the trees from growing back. The use of such chemicals surely mostly benefits the manufacturers of the herbicide, but are in turn disastrous for the habitat and well-being of animals in the area as well as the environment, generally speaking. I am convinced there is a more careful way to prevent the trees (only eucalyptus, preferably) from growing back. Such a solution may be more time-consuming and expensive to implement, but surely it would be better in the long term and deserves full consideration to whatever extent trees will be cut.

I hope my comments will be carefully considered.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Zucker

From: [stuart.phillips](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: DON'T CUT DOWN ANY TREES in the Berkeley (East Bay) Hills!!
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 10:15:48 PM

Please don't cut down any trees in the Berkeley (East Bay) Hills. This cutting of eucalyptus, acacia & cypress will heat the soils more, dry them out & actually exacerbate fire danger, cause mudslides, flooding, overheating of area, overdrying of area, please stop this plan now, it is a waste of taxpayer money & will actually exacerbate fire problems, destroy wildlife habitat & decimate the area. thankyou
stuart.phillips, oakland, ca

From: [Shelagh Brodersen](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Support Draft EIS for the East Bay Hills
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 9:36:10 PM

Dear FEMA Region IX Administrators:

I support the East Bay Hills EIS and recommend the approval of the proposed projects and immediate release of grant funding so the projects can move forward. As an environmentalist and a resident in the Claremont Canyon Hills I had several major concerns: fire risk reduction and restoring native vegetation and habitat types – they are much more fire-resistant and have great environmental value. Whatever the plans were they must be cost-effective and provide for long-term maintenance. This plan provides for all of these concerns.

I live in Claremont Canyon and experienced the 1991 firestorm that devastated our East Bay Hills and witnessed first hand eucalyptus exploding and their embers being blown great distances, landing on structures that, in turn, ignited the structures and fueled the fire. The firestorm was a wake-up call to educate ourselves on fire-safety in our urban wildland interface. The biggest lesson learned is that by removing the invasive trees and plants the native flora – and fauna – do return.

Critical to my support of the Draft EIS was the comprehensive yearly follow-up and mitigation measures that allow the use of adaptive management techniques to ensure that conversion to native habitat goals are being met. Having participated throughout the years since the 91 Firestorm in volunteer work parties throughout the East Bay Hills I know from experience that once the invasive fire-prone trees are removed the native habitat returns quickly, but so do the invasive weeds. With regular maintenance volunteers can remove these invasive weeds; the task seems daunting at first, but after 3-4 years the maintenance is vastly reduced, and the new native habitat is thriving with the result being our beautiful native habitats – that are more fire safe and we can enjoy the Fall rather than Fear it.

While none of us wants to use herbicides there is no practical way to eliminate eucalyptus infestations without herbicides. The herbicide use is specific with appropriate environmental safe guards. I do recommend the removal of ALL eucalyptus rather than thinning as the best way of encouraging native habitat regeneration and less damaging to the environment, and much less costly. I fear EBRP district will incur huge maintenance costs in its less desirable thinning proposals.

The Draft EIS is very comprehensive and I support fully funding the proposed projects. This will allow the City of Oakland, East Bay Regional Park District and the University of California, Berkeley to continue their critical role in reducing the risk of a hazardous wildfire on our public lands while balancing environmental protection with long term, cost effective actions.

Shelagh Brodersen

Resident of Claremont Canyon
Volunteer Coordinator Garber Park Stewards
Garber Park, a City of Oakland Open Space Wildland Park in Claremont Canyon

Web: www.garberparkstewards.org

From: [Jim Churchill](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: YES on EBRPD fire risk reduction plan in the East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 9:32:40 PM

I am in favor of the removal of eucalyptus from the Berkeley and Oakland hills. They're extremely flammable trash plants that displace native flora and fauna and I believe it would be a great public service to remove them.

James R Churchill
805-646-4212

POB 426
Ojai, CA 93024 (though I live in Ojai I have family in the Berkeley Hills)

From: [greg case](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 9:31:53 PM

- [greg case](#)

To

- EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov _
-
- >The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

I strongly OBJECT to cutting trees in the East Bay hills. I live on Colton in Montclair, and I choose to live in this urban forest, regardless of fire danger. If the right conditions happen (a crown fire and high winds), a similar result will occur again, and the only way to actually do anything to prevent fire would be to denude the entire hills of trees, and I did not spend big bucks for my house to live in a de-forested area. I love trees and have several Monterey pines on my property. The two oaks I have are showing signs and straining against sudden oak death syndrome, so they most likely will not last very much longer. I also love Oakland, living here, and am delighted with the recent evolution of this town, but I will not live without trees. I'll say goodbye to Oakland, sell my expensive house, and buy 40 treed acres in the foothills with the proceeds.

Be light of spirit and strong of heart.



From: [Kathleen C. Gray](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Murder of Trees, Animals, Environment!
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 6:39:30 PM

I am writing to oppose one of the most horrendous proposals I have personally ever heard, the destruction of trees in

From: [Susan Kuchinskas](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Berkeley, Calif resident deeply concerned about use of herbicides
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 5:52:29 PM

Hi, there. I understand that the plan to reduce fire risk in the Oakland and Berkeley Hills includes the spreading of herbicides to prevent resprouting of trees. I understand the need to reduce fuel and support attempts to re-establish native vegetation -- but not by using chemicals that may cause cancer, poison a wide variety of vertebrates, invertebrates and insects, and poison Strawberry Creek. Please reconsider this part of the proposal.

Feel free to contact me to discuss my concerns.

Susan Kuchinskas
510- 644- 2612
[www. kuchinskas. com](http://www.kuchinskas.com)
[@susankuchinskas](#)
[www. facebook. com/SusanKuchinskas](http://www.facebook.com/SusanKuchinskas)

From: [Cheryl Matthews](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills Tree Cutting and Herbicide Application
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 3:58:13 PM

To Whom it may Concern:

I am a resident of the Oakland Hills, and have lived here for over 40 years. I moved here, and continue to live here, for the advantage of living in the beautiful forested hills. I am against FEMA funding to plan to remove over 80,000 trees in the hill areas. This tree removal would reduce my quality of life living here, and presents a threat to many wildlife species.

I am also against the use of herbicides in this area, as this contamination of the land and water threatens the health of those of us who live here, those who may be affected by the residual toxins, and threatens our wildlife, as well as pets.

Since living here, I was close to the 1991 fire. Although it was devastating, so are many other life experiences. I do not recall any other significant fires in this area since moving here in 1972. I am personally willing to risk the chance of another fire, rather than have the area devastated with tree removal and application of poisons.

As a taxpayer, I also object to the Federal Government spending 5.9 million dollars on this project. It is not only expensive, but comes with much opposition and sacrifice. I do not believe this is a wise use of taxpayer's dollars.

Please consider my comments before proceeding with this plan.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Cheryl Matthews
Oakland Hills Resident

From: agpflaumer@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Claremont and Strawberry Canyon Fire Abatement
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 3:53:30 PM

Dear FEMA,

I'm an very happy that you have - at last - recognized the need for making our community safer from the kind of disaster we witnessed in in the 1991 Berkeley/Oakland Hills fire by making FEMA funds available for eucalyptus removal.

I'm also grateful that the University of California and the Claremont Canyon Conservancy has participated in a thorough EIR on the project. The monumental work they have done already has resulted in a more beautiful, safe, and more ecologically natural environment.

Please add my name to those who heartily endorse the project and grant the necessary funding - quickly! - to complete this project in a timely manner. We've had a very dry year here and can't afford to wait any longer.

Sincerely,

Andrea Pflaumer
6 Summit Lane
Berkeley, CA 94708

From: Gary.Cox@kp.org
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Public Comments on the Draft EIS
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 3:09:57 PM

I live in the Montclair area of Oakland and I fully support the proposal to remove Eucalyptus and Monterey Pines in the East Bay.

Thank you for your consideration.

Gary Cox | Director CA Medicare Strategy & National Performance Analytics | t: 510-625-3359 m:415-271-1877 | Admin: Ghaliyah Roberts-Palmer 510-625-3396

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From: [Marty Brenneis](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: YES on EBRPD fire risk reduction plan in the East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 1:01:25 PM

When I was born my parents built a house in the Berkeley hills on the border of Tilden Park.

Over the past 55 years I have seen freezes and fires threaten our house.

We removed all of the eukies from the property and have allowed the native flora to retake the land.

I am in favor of the removal of the non-native trees which pose a major fire hazard in that area.

We may move back to that house sometime in the future and want to see it safe from non-native hazards.

They should also bring back the use of the goats to clear the brush. That was rather effective and low impact on the environment.

Marty Brenneis
415-485-4478

From: [Mary Ayers](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: tree
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 12:22:05 PM

Hooray!!!! Keep up the good work! Especially against this monster called, "Monsanto"! I don't live in the Bay area, but I'm on your side. If the "boys" can get away with destroying the natural beauty of the California landscape, created out of a desert from the myriad of ship's captains, trust me they will try.

Sincerely,
Mary Ayeres

From: [Lisa Brenneis](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Support EBRPD fire risk reduction plan in the East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 12:07:06 PM

My family 's home adjoins Tilden Regional Park - our home has been there for 60 years. We have seen fires and freezes, and have removed eucalyptus and monterey pine from our own property because of the known fire risk. Our property has recovered nicely with the oak-bay mixture that belongs there.

We strongly support this tree removal and habitat restoration project for the immediate safety and long-term environmental health of the East Bay Hills.

--

<Lisa Brenneis>
<805 558-7898 cel>
<lisabee@earthlink.net>
<Final Cut Pro for Macintosh: Visual Quickpro Guide>
<Final Cut Express for Macintosh: Visual Quickstart Guide>
<<http://http://www.peachpit.com/store/product.aspx?isbn=0321636813>>

"The difference between theory and real life is that in theory there is no difference between theory and real life, but in real life, there is a difference."

--Marshall Spight

From: [Ann Sullivan-Cross](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: tree removal
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 11:19:07 AM

I would like you to research the 91 fire, which reveals that the spreading fire was not due to non-native trees but rather radiant heat from burning houses.

Each time I read an article about this, the number of trees to be cut down rises starting with 22,000, then 54,000, then 85,000... this scares me. Once the cutting starts where will it stop? Plus, dousing the area with toxic pesticides sounds insane.

Please go back to the drawing board and figure out what's best for all concerned.

Thank you,
Ann

From: [Judy Scott](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Claremont Canyon Hazardous Eucalyptus Removal- STRONGLY SUPPORT
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 8:34:39 AM

I am a property owner adjacent to the Canyon. We experienced the wildfire of 1991. We are extremely concerned about the potential for a disastrous fire if the eucalyptus are not removed and native habitat restored.

A small group of non-expert fanatics are attempting to stop this excellent opportunity to remove a hazard. Their fanaticism puts everyone at risk including our treasured UC Berkeley.

Please APPROVE the proposed plan.

Judith M Scott PhD

From: [Steve Otlowski](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: RE: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project.
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 8:08:03 AM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-6.tiff](#)

RE: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project.

It seems to me that one could protect the designated urban areas with firebreaks rather than simply clearcutting the entire area and resorting to toxic herbicides.

Please reconsider the clear cutting proposal in this area.

Steve Otlowski -



Steven Otlowski - sotlowski@dioceseofcleveland.org

The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, 1007 Superior Ave E, Cleveland OH 44114-2582



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From: [la creates](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 10:00:57 AM

I'm writing to voice my objection to the FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland and EBRPD.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

The current Draft EIS will inflict enormous environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, destabilize steep slopes, and actually increase the risk of hazardous wildfires.

The EIS should support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen.

The foundations of the draft EIS have been challenged by a local well respected engineering company which regularly contracts with numerous public agencies and was initially hired to be a consultant on the tree-cutting project. They found that the EIS may potentially create a fire hazard situation of it's own because UC wants to spread chips of the cut trees up to two feet in depth, which is in itself a potential fire hazard, because of the chips themselves, and also that because UC has no plans for re-planting the area. So they would actually be creating a new fire hazard as all different types of vegetation may sprout up after the project is completed.

Finally, the fact that UC's 2020 Long Range Development Plan includes the possibility of building faculty housing and a campus retreat center at its Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve study area must be taken into account with respect to the drastic decision to clear cut vs. much less invasive and yet very effective methods of achieving the same result.

Please retract the draft EIS and support less drastic measures that would achieve the same result with much less damaging consequences.

Laura Anderson

Oakland, CA.
415.845.4386

From: [Michael Pinkerton](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Stop the deforestation and cutting of old trees on the Oakland/Berkeley Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 9:24:32 AM

To Whom It May Concern,

The Oakland/Berkeley Hills are full of tall, beautiful trees. It is these trees that make this area wonderful to visit. To cut down these trees in the name of “fire prevention” would be wrong. There are several issues that I will mention below, that I feel are problems with the plan. However, the greater issue is that it is simply not acceptable to cut down trees and dump pesticides in the forest to “help” people. Human beings are not helped by such actions. They decrease the worth of homes (which will no longer be near beautiful forest land), they decrease recreational and hiking opportunities, and all of those who drive through the area or live near the area suffer as a result.

Please get in touch with who you are as a human being on the earth, and move to put a stop to this incredibly damaging plan.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day

after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Yours truly,

Michael Pinkerton D.C.

432 Coronado Dr

Petaluma, CA 94954 (former Berkeley and Oakland resident)

From: [mt mab](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#); inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 9:07:45 AM

DEAR FEMA:

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because:

1. it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.
2. it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.
3. it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.
4. it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.
5. it does not address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

THANK YOU,

Martha Birch

From: [Katrina](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: [Lovbeam](#); [S S Prusso](#)
Subject: Strawberry and Claremont Canyons
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 8:49:34 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

I have just read of your plans to clear-cut thousands of trees in the Strawberry and Claremont Canyons in an effort to mitigate fire danger in the area. While I respect the concern to protect property and lives which I choose to believe is your underlying concern I also vehemently oppose the clear cutting and subsequent dousing of the landscape with herbicides.

I understand the desire to lessen the perceived fire danger of the trees and pose the question; without the trees won't the threat of fire increase with a more arid landscape vs one which holds moisture, maintains erosion and creates an environment which attracts fog? And is reducing the threat of fire worth the known harm of introducing hundreds and hundreds of gallons of herbicide which will work their way to water table and certainly into our waterways? The harm to the wildlife this habitat creates must also be taken into consideration.

We are a brilliant and creative species with hearts and minds beyond statistics and due diligence. There are ways to co-exist with the wild edges of our environment and we need to reach beyond dollars, beyond fear, beyond rote remedies, quick fixes. We can cultivate ways that support those edges in order that they also support us.

I hope that this decision to clear cut the canyons is taken into deep consideration and an alternative plan which works with and not against the natural landscape is implemented.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Katrina Davidson

From: [Rasjidah Franklin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: [Rasjidah Franklin](#); [Carole Swain](#)
Subject: Deforestation in Oakland Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 8:46:44 AM

This proposed project is unacceptable. We moved to the Oakland hills in order to live in a forest and enjoy the wildlife which lives in it. The deforestation project you propose will ruin the beauty of the area, destroy the environment which supports deer, owls, coyotes, foxes and numerous other species, will promote mud slides which will endanger my home and will poison our groundwater. Please stop your disastrous plan to rape our hills!

Dr. Rasjidah Franklin
6421 Heather Ridge Way
Oakland, Calif 94611

Sent from my iPad

From: [Jeff Cobb](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: please rework the FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 8:37:44 AM

Dear FEMA,

The current Draft EIS is unacceptable as it will inflict enormous environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, destabilize steep slopes, and actually increase the risk of hazardous wildfires.

FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen.

thank you for considering,
Jeff Cobb

From: [William Zappas](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: EIS
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 8:33:41 AM

To whomever it may concern,
I just read the executive summary of the proposed wildfire risk reduction project, and am greatly concerned. While it does seem like some of the environmental impacts have been considered, I found the use of herbicides in this project to be particularly problematic. The impact of this on surrounding human habitations and the local ecosystem are not worth the potential wildfire risk reduction. Furthermore, while Eucalyptus is an invasive species, it has also been growing in the area for quite a while, and the impact of it's eradication on local ecosystems should also be considered.

There are alternatives to leveling trees and shrubs and spreading herbicides which should be considered. Perhaps controlled burns could be used. Perhaps more funding to local firefighting. Creativity in dealing with this situation must be implemented before resorting to poison and destruction.

Please let me know when the next meeting on this project is, as I would like to attend.

Thanks,

--

Tucker Zappas

From: [Kitty Jones](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please - no clear-cutting or pesticides in Oak/Berk hills!!!!!!
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 6:37:35 AM

Dear FEMA,

Please, please, please, do not allow clear-cutting or pesticide usage in the Berkeley/Oakland hills! As a UC Berkeley student studying environmental science as well as someone who literally jogs through the hills *every day*- I ask you to please not destroy and poison this valuable and ecologically-diverse area.

The current Draft EIS is unacceptable as it will inflict enormous environmental damage, expose the public to thousands of gallons of toxic herbicide, destroy raptor habitats, destabilize steep slopes, and actually increase the risk of hazardous wildfires. I am especially concerned about the pesticides that will be used!

FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen.

**Thank you so much for your time and consideration!
Kyana Jones**

From: [Danielle Mead Skjelver](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Strawberry and Claremont Canyon
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 4:34:16 AM

To whom it may concern,

As one who lives in a place with few trees, I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed clearcutting project. I really can not imagine how this is justifiable.

Danielle

From: [Norma J.F. Harrison](#)
 To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX; inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org](mailto:EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX;inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org)
 Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 12:32:21 AM

the removal of close to 100,000 trees will expose us to massive amounts of herbicides

- destroy raptor habitat and the habitat of many other forest creatures
- release huge amounts of sequestered CO2
- destabilize steep hillsides
- waste almost \$6 million of taxpayers funds that could be used for real fire risk mitigation

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

2. If you know anyone who has not yet signed the HCN petition, ask them to do it. Please add the link to your Facebook page and please tweet this information!

<http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-the-deforestation-3>

3. Send a message to Barbara Boxer. You can copy/paste the sample below, but we recommend that you personalize it. Send it to Senator Boxer via:

<http://www.boxer.senate.gov/en/contact/policycomments.cfm>

Dear Senator Boxer, I am concerned that FEMA will approve the Environmental Impact Study that is now in the public comment stage. UC, the City of Oakland and East Bay Regional Parks District have requested grants of approximately \$7.5 million of taxpayer money to log the Berkeley/Oakland Hills extensively and poison the tree stumps with toxic herbicides. I believe the the Environmental Impact Study is seriously flawed, and is

neither adequate or accurate. The plan as it stands allows for a huge clear-cut of a vibrant ecosystem with tall, healthy non-native trees (eucalyptus that have been here for more than 100 years, Monterey pines and acacias).

These forests are home to raptors, endangered species and other animals, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for residents throughout the East Bay. The logging would severely change the ecosystem by removing critical raptor habitat. Without the hawks and owls, the rodents would overrun the hills becoming a huge nuisance and a possible public health risk. The EIS does not adequately look at alternatives to this damaging plan.

The current plan does nothing to decrease fire risk in the hills. It will, in fact, create more fire danger because the type of vegetation (oak-bay savannah or grassland with an occasional oak or chaparral brush) that may eventually replace the non-native trees is known to be more ignition-prone and will support more dangerous fires that produce flame lengths triple the length of flames in the present forests of tall, non-native trees. This is a bad plan. Thousands of residents in the East Bay are as outraged by it as I am. Please join me in opposing FEMA's acceptance of this project before it is too late. The public comment period will end on June 17th. Sincerely,
Thanks so much for your support of this important cause!

Norma J F Harrison
1312 Cornell
Berkeley, Ca. 94702
1-510-526-3968

4. Send a message to Barbara Lee. You can copy/paste the sample below, but we recommend that you personalize it. Send it to Representative Lee via:

<https://lee.house.gov/contact-me/email-me>

Dear Representative Lee,
I am concerned that FEMA will approve the Environmental Impact Study that is now in the public comment stage. UC, the City of Oakland and East Bay Regionall Parks District have requested grants of approximately \$7.5 million of taxpayer money to log the Berkeley/Oakland Hills extensively and poison the tree stumps with toxic herbicides. I believe the the Environmental Impact Study is seriously flawed, and is neither adequate or accurate. The plan as it stands allows for a huge clear-cut of a vibrant ecosystem with tall, healthy non-native trees (eucalyptus that have been here for more than 100 years, Monterey pines and acacias). These forests are home to raptors, endangered species and other animals, in addition to providing recreational opportunities for residents throughout the East Bay. The logging would severely change the ecosystem by removing critical raptor habitat. Without the hawks and owls, the rodents would overrun the hills becoming a huge nuisance and a possible public health risk. The EIS does not adequately look at alternatives to this damaging plan. The current plan does nothing to decrease fire risk in the hills. It will, in fact, create more fire danger because the type of vegetation (oak-bay savannah or grassland with an occasional oak or chaparral brush) that may eventually replace the non-native trees is known to be more ignition-prone and will support more dangerous fires that produce flame lengths triple the length of flames in the present forests of tall, non-native trees. This is a bad plan. Thousands of residents in the East Bay are as outraged by it as I am. Please join me in opposing FEMA's acceptance of this project before it is too late. The public comment period will end on June 17th.

Thanks so much for your support of this important cause!
Sincerely,

Norma J F Harrison
1312 Cornell
Berkeley, Ca. 94702
1-510-526-3968

5. Check out the HCN website @ <http://www.hillsconservationnetwork.org>

From: [R. Solomon](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 11:12:06 PM

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them.

The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis. Please do this thoroughly in order to have a comprehensive EIS.

Chihoko and Richard Solomon

From: [Anthony Poshepny](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Regarding the Berkeley hills protection
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 11:06:58 PM

Hello my name is Anthony. Please do not destroy the precious sanctuary of the Berkeley hills. The ecosystem is dependent upon the eucalyptus, acacia & pine trees- cutting down them then spraying herbicides, pesticides is not going to make the majority of people visiting this very special place any healthier or happier. There have been so many beautiful wild spaces on this earth that have been taken control of by humans & destroyed. Please for you, for me, for this earth including the soil, the varying bugs, varying animal species, please do not destroy this priceless living earth space for some hidden agenda. It is a lose lose situation.

From: debbie.notkin@gmail.com on behalf of [Debbie Notkin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and ERBPD vegetation management
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 10:02:46 PM

Dear people,

As a resident of Oakland who was living here during the 1991 fire, I am very aware of the fire danger present in the Oakland/Berkeley hills. However, I am also deeply distressed by the current vegetation management plan.

I believe that other, less expensive and more environmentally friendly options exist and have not been fully considered. Nothing should be done until we have an EIS which analyzes, rather than dismisses, potential alternatives.

I am very uncomfortable by the plan for widespread use of herbicide(s) without full examination of the costs and risks. The herbicide will, of course, not only kill the targeted eucalyptus trees (which I do not believe are appropriate for wholesale destruction) but also much of the native vegetation around and nearby. The EIS should be redone to consider all consequences of massive herbicide use.

On a related note, the EIS presumes that the fire model immediately following destruction of more than 100,000 trees would be a lasting model. However, weed, brush and tall grass would grow back almost immediately, and fire danger would increase. Any functional model would have to examine the fire danger one, two, ten, and twenty years after the tree destruction.

The air quality effects of this massive burning cannot be underestimated. Asthmatics will be at risk for weeks, if not months, and people like myself with normal lung capacity will probably feel negative effects. Finally, the release of carbon into the air will dramatically affect carbon PPM, and the loss of such a huge source of carbon sequestration is terrifying.

I beg you to reconsider this plan while there is still time.

--

Debbie Notkin
kith@spicejar.org

From: [meaveen.o'connor](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills clearcutting
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 8:30:31 PM

I strongly urge you not to sponsor the cutting of the trees in the East Bay hills of Oakland and Berkeley California. The herbicides that are scheduled to be used contain many chemicals that are very harmful to humans, animals, plants and our watershed. I live in Berkeley and care very much about keeping these tree covered areas as they are.

Sincerely,

Meave O'Connor

From: [John Hablinski](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 8:22:27 PM

"Brownie you're doing a heck of a job." Part II

Ladies & Gentlemen this is the stupidest thing I have ever heard. To prevent forest fire you want to cut down the forest push all the trees through a shredder and then cover the area you wish to protect with knee high in woodchips AKA kindling. Brilliant!

From: [Mike Vandeman](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction
Date: Wednesday, June 12, 2013 5:13:22 PM
Attachments: [mmwd spraying_pac sun 4-13.doc](#)
[mmwd spraying_pac sun 5-13 pt 2 final.doc](#)
[ATT00001.txt](#)

Here are comments to MMWD (which is engaged in a similar process), opposing the use of chemicals:

Date: Wed, 12 Jun 2013 21:04:00 +0000 (UTC)
From: abinik@comcast.net
Subject: my letters, as promised

Good luck w/ EBRP, Mike. Letters attached here.

I can't promise anything, but you might try to contact Doug Linney, a Board member at EBMUD. <http://www.ebmud.com/about/board-directors/director-doug-linney> He may not want to get personally involved w/ goings-on at a different agency ("collegiality", etc), but maybe he would have some leads for you on who best to contact at EBRP.

Alexander

Once again, an intrinsically-faulty process for a Marin civil grand jury investigation has led to a deeply-flawed recommendation: to spray large quantities of pesticides (particularly glyphosate) year-after-year on the lands we depend on for most of our drinking water (*Say it—don't spray it!*, April 12). The jurors' skewed secret "research" was mostly supplied by MMWD staff and its paid consultants; there was no opportunity for witness cross-examination, nor for information to be offered by independent, expert members of the public.

Glyphosate's biggest manufacturer (Monsanto) says it's safe, but the corporation said the same thing about DDT, which it manufactured for almost 30 years till *that* pesticide was finally banned, and it even told us its ultra-toxic Agent Orange defoliant was safe. But what's the *reality*? The latest scientific studies confirm the serious dangers to human health and the environment from extensive glyphosate use. One such brand-new scientific review found that glyphosate enhances the negative effects of other environmental toxicants on the body; the study concludes: "*Consequences...include gastrointestinal disorders, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, depression, autism, infertility, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.*" Other studies have reported that "*glyphosate is associated with an increased risk of non-Hodgkin Lymphoma, genetic damage, and endocrine disruption, as well as environmental damage including water contamination and harm to amphibians.*"

Other recent research shows that glyphosate harms soil in the entire region where it is utilized. Spraying it pollutes the air, the land and the water; recent government studies document "*the consistent occurrence of this chemical in streams, rain and air*" in regions where it has been sprayed. Its repetitive spraying has inadvertently already caused widespread mutations into resistant "superweeds", and there's significant likelihood that the same could happen with the broom plant--requiring larger amounts of spray each year in a futile attempt at ultimate control. In fact, by spraying glyphosate MMWD would be violating its own Precautionary Principle Policy (Board policy since 2007).

In a follow-up letter, I will explain the troubling possibility that exposure to even tiny amounts of glyphosate (and chemicals to be sprayed with it) can cause human "endocrine disruption", linked to breast and prostate cancer and other serious conditions. And I will detail prudent available alternatives that can create a "win/win/win" situation: i.e., *cost-effective* fire protection in our watershed without dangerous pesticide spraying.

Alexander Binik, DE-Toxics Institute, Fairfax

As I've previously written [Letters, May 24], after first mixing the glyphosate pesticide with a chemical "surfactant" to increase its toxic effectiveness, MMWD plans to spray the mixture over and over again--onto our Marin watershed, the source of most of our drinking water. Their proposed maximum *annual* glyphosate use amounts to 750 lbs, the equivalent of *thousands of gallons* of the 2.5% dilution in which the common glyphosate product Roundup is typically sold.

What about primary manufacturer Monsanto's claim that glyphosate is safe? The majority of research supposedly demonstrating that has been far from independent--done by the corporation itself or those with financial ties to it. MMWD's scientific consultant acknowledged that "the toxicity of glyphosate when used in conjunction with different surfactants remains largely unexplored" and claimed that "no information is available on AMPA [glyphosate's primary breakdown product]'s carcinogenicity, reproductive and developmental toxicity, neurotoxicity, immunotoxicity or endocrine disrupting ability"--hardly a ringing safety endorsement. Actually, independent scientific studies have shown that carcinogenic formaldehyde *is* a breakdown product of AMPA.

Other independent research has demonstrated that glyphosate (and its breakdown products) can persist in heavy clay soils (typical of our watershed) for *many* months after spraying. Any unexpected rain can wash them down (above ground and below) toward our drinking water supply. And plants--once killed by glyphosate--preserve its poison in their dead roots, stems and leaves, from which it can be reactivated as this plant matter decays. How can this enormous volume of hazardous dead broom stalks be safely disposed of, post-spraying? (For safety's sake, they shouldn't be composted or burned.)

There are also numerous risks of other unintended consequences: The research of an emeritus professor of plant pathology found that glyphosate kills a great many soil microbes--so the surviving ones create a highly unbalanced soil ecology, causing pathogens to thrive that affect both plants and animals; this can make it virtually impossible for native plants to thrive, even in the unlikely event that the repetitive spraying ultimately eliminates the broom--so, forget about increasing plant biodiversity! And ecologists have warned that glyphosate's acknowledged toxicity to amphibians can lead to a proliferation of the mosquito larvae they normally eat, inadvertently increasing our exposure to mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus.

Besides its other dangerous attributes, recent independent research indicates that glyphosate is also an "endocrine disruptor", likely an even stronger one in mixtures with surfactants. Public health scientists have become very alarmed about human exposure to "endocrine disruptor" chemicals, including many pesticides. Even *extremely-tiny* amounts of these substances can make people, particularly fetuses and young children, vulnerable to dangerous consequences--including eventually developing hormone-related cancers, diabetes, attention deficit disorders, problems, thyroid disorders, damaged reproductive function (including fertility), even obesity. And they're also dangerous to other animal life.

My next letter will present viable alternatives to pesticide spraying.

There are a great many toxicity dangers from repetitively spraying large amounts of glyphosate and other chemicals in our local watershed [Letters, May 24 and June 13]. So, *what can be done instead that is safe, effective and affordable?* MMWD already paid its consulting firm over \$300,000 (financed by our water bills), to develop vegetative management strategies. That consultant actually proposed six different control alternatives, half of them *not* involving spraying pesticides. (Inexplicably, only two of these options appear in MMWD's draft plan—one of which requires megabuck expenditures, and the other requiring heavy spraying annually, *possibly for 20 years or longer.*)

About one of the other non-spraying options, the consultant's report stated "*This alternative would meet the goals and objectives related to fire hazard management. It would have the major advantage of preserving uninvaded habitat from weed expansion.*" It prescribes annual broom mowing, costing roughly the same as spraying glyphosate mixtures every year. Actually, in much of the acreage effectiveness could be further increased by adding other carefully-timed non-toxic approaches. For example, prescribed burns not only kill much of the broom immediately, but also dramatically speed up exhaustion of the huge seed bank. Selective hand-pulling, followed by propane torching, can also be very effective.

By contrast, prescribed burns *couldn't* be safely used once glyphosate has been sprayed because of the possible toxicity of the smoke that would drift into populated areas. Also, hand-pulling of broom plant seedlings--amidst dead larger plants and soil containing glyphosate or its breakdown products--could be hazardous.

MMWD's own Precautionary Principle policy for its decisions clearly states: "An obligation exists to examine a full range of alternatives and *select the alternative with the least potential impact on human health and the environment.*" Now is the time for water customers to demand that the MMWD Board honor *its own* safety policy.

This Board seems increasingly out-of-touch with its customers, instead pursuing questionable technological fixes—building a pricey desalination plant or unnecessarily spraying pesticides. For the sake of public health and of the environment itself, Marin residents need to speak up--to insist on a *sane* fire-prevention strategy rather than the reckless pesticide-spraying one that MMWD seems hell-bent on pursuing. Fire safety and health safety can--and should--go hand-in-hand.

--

I am working on creating wildlife habitat that is off-limits to humans ("pure habitat").

Want to help? (I spent the previous 8 years fighting auto dependence and road construction.)

Please don't put a cell phone next to any part of your body that you are fond of!

<http://mjvande.nfshost.com>

From: [Barbara Murfin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 7:53:33 PM

Please don't cut down all those trees and poison the earth with Round-up. This is outrageous!! My 13 year old granddaughter wrote to me about it. She is very upset that you are doing this. I am sure you could find a better way to protect against fire since they have been there for decades already. PLEASE DON'T CUT THE TREES DOWN.

**Barbara Murfin
Rio Vista**

From: [Bill Shepard](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Removal of Eucalyptus in East Bay Hills
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 5:46:45 PM

I am a butterfly watcher and Monarch counter, but I support the removal of Eucalyptus in the Claremont Canyon area in order to reduce fire threat.

From: [prucarter7](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Cut the Trees
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 5:30:39 PM

Cut them too much fire danger!

Sent from my Galaxy S®III

From: [Mary E. MACCREADY](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: EIS re trees in Berkeley & Oakland Hills
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 4:41:44 PM

Hello,

I am urging you to reject the proposal to cut down many trees and treat with herbicides in the Berkeley Oakland Hills. Cutting them down will make more of a fire hazard because of the removal of shade, and, resulting growth of ground cover, and herbicides will harm us all. This plan is deeply flawed. Clearing out more of the understory and leaving the tall trees to provide shade would work better.

Sincerely,

Mary Wright

From: [DFSCMiller](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comments on Draft EIS
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 4:25:21 PM
Attachments: [DFSC comment EB EIS.pdf](#)

Please accept the attached pdf with comments on the Draft EIS
Cheryl Miller

Cheryl Miller
Executive Coordinator
DFSCMiller@comcast.net
PO Box 18616
Oakland CA 94619
510.536.0143

Diablo Fire Safe Council
www.diablofiresafe.org

From: [vic kley](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: UCB clear cutting in Claremont Canyon and Surrounds
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 1:04:34 PM

FEMA,

As a Hillside homeowner I opposed the plan put forward by UC Berkeley for Claremont Canyon and it's surrounds. I support the plan put forward and proven history of the methods used by the East Bay Regional Park District and hope that this will be a model against which all such fire mitigation shall be measured.

Vic Kley
510 649 8401
1119 Park Hills Road
Berkeley, CA 94708

From: [Queen Fields](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Fire prevention strategies in CA
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 12:13:47 PM

There are many institutions that are considered to be pillars of great science and protectors of freedom. I am reading of your plan to retard fire in Berkeley, CA and I am quite disheartened by the waste and the catastrophic destruction of trees. Please find a way to attain the end that is necessary without destroying and putting in place chemical toxins. Thank you.

Queen E. Fields

From: [Valerie Creane](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: opposition to cutting of trees in the Berkeley and Oakland Hills
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 9:30:00 AM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to register my opposition to the vast cutting of trees in the Berkeley and Oakland Hills. I am appalled at the extent of destruction being proposed by this project and at the possibility that RoundUp might be used in a widescale way to prevent the return of natural growth. I am equally distressed at the lack of publicity surrounding this project and at the lack of sufficient time for the public to respond.

One of the tremendous and unique assets of the Bay Area is the undisturbed natural landscape that surrounds a major urban area. Nothing should be done to alter this landscape without widespread community discussion and approval.

Sincerely,

Dr. Valerie Creane

From: [Theresa Coyle](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Stop cutting trees
Date: Thursday, June 13, 2013 8:06:15 AM

Why not just remove some of the most combustible trees Thin the Forrest and leave the good trees to protect the atmosphere. We need those trees why don't u see that NO Chemical should ever be added

From: [Steve Gilmartin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Reject Fatally Flawed Fire Risk Reduction Plans
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 11:04:51 AM

FEMA:

I am writing as a longtime East Bay resident to express my strong opposition to the three grant applications currently under consideration by FEMA for hazardous fire risk reduction in the East Bay hills.

In essence, the stated goal of fire risk reduction under these plans is to be accomplished at the cost of incalculable harm to the ecology of the hills and its diverse wildlife, adverse health effects on surrounding human populations through long-term herbicide use, soil erosion and increased risk of landslides, extremely damaging releases of sequestered carbon dioxide contributing to climate change, and harm to the nests of already struggling honeybee populations through excessive mulching.

But beyond all these negative consequences, the supposedly compensatory benefit of fire mitigation itself is illusory. The proposals will actually increase the risk of fire: 1) by replacing non-native woodland with oak-bay woodland subject to currently uncontrollable Sudden Oak Death, thereby creating abundant and flammable dead wood fuels, exacerbated by the spreading of 2 feet-deep dead wood chip mulch; 2) by eliminating windbreak barriers to wind-driven fires; 3) by eliminating shade and fog moistening of the forest floor; and 4) by the likely resulting growth of dangerously ignitable chaparral. A scenario that envisions the "natural" replacement of non-native with native species is highly unlikely according to the environmental consultant URS; the reemergence of native plants will require labor-intensive, ongoing intervention in order to succeed. In the absence of such efforts, the species most likely to be hardy enough to thrive in a 2-foot ground layer of eucalyptus chips is in fact the non-native French broom, which according to the US Forest Service, "burns readily and carries fire to the tree canopy layer, increasing both the frequency and intensity of fires in invaded areas."

I believe the goal of fire mitigation can be attained much more efficiently, and far less destructively, through the species-neutral strategies advanced by the Hills Conservation Network. This approach would focus on eliminating ground fuels, removing small trees and understory that serve as fuel ladders, and appropriate thinning. Such maintenance would eliminate the primary danger posed by crown fires, would not introduce toxic herbicides into the environment, and would discourage the growth of highly flammable weedy grasses. The FEMA EIS has objected to this approach as being too expensive and as causing erosion. But soil disturbance will be extreme under the plans under review, with increased water runoff resulting from the elimination of the trees and repeated entries for the clearing of dead vegetation and reapplications of herbicide. As for cost, the expense of ten years of herbicide reapplications for a project the size of the EBRPD's is estimated to be in excess of \$3 million. The cost of the large-scale introduction of triclopyr into the environment and its associated health impacts on humans and animals is incalculable.

The goal of fire mitigation is important and achievable, but the applications by UCB, City of Oakland and the EBRPD—influenced by the native plant movement's erroneous assumption that native plants are less flammable than non-natives—are unnecessarily destructive on many levels and fatally flawed in their approach to reducing the risk of fire.

Sincerely,
Steve Gilmartin

From: [Thomas Ratcliff](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: In Favor: hazard tree fire protection plan
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 10:33:02 AM

I am in favor of fire reduction and elimination of the Euclyptus (and possibly the Monterey pines). There are too many good reasons to move on this.

I sincerely hope that the FEMA grant will address, and UC will embrace, the long term management obligations that will make this a successful transition to a more native environment. Without proper management, too many unintended results will rear their heads.

So, YES for robust and continuing management of these hills to foster habitat and lower fire danger.

---Tom Ratcliff

From: [Tiamat 3](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Death of Strawberry and Claremont Canyons
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 10:32:21 AM

Dear Sirs -

I have only just learned of this planned atrocity, and must protest in the strongest possible terms. Fire hazard is a poor reason to destroy this valuable resource. Find a way to manage hazards without destroying our countries beauty.

I am not a California voter, but FEMA is a federal agency. This is a nationwide disgrace, one that reflects very badly on the reputation of UC Berkeley.

Regards,
Shellay Maughan

From: [April Warstler](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Berkley trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 10:27:27 AM

This is a bad idea to destroy the trees and place chemicals on the land. This not only affects the area but the environment. We need to spend our tax payers money on other projects like education, housing and ways to save energy.

I do not wish to see this project go forward. The chemicals will absorb into the ground and air which are also health hazards and lead to long term illnesses such as birth defects and cancer.

Stop this insane idea now before it is to late.

Signed a concerned Californian.

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE Smartphone

From: [M Pike](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: I am in favor
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 9:32:41 AM

I urge FEMA to provide this funding. I am in favor of this proposal.

Morgan Pike
Oakland California

From: [Mary Richerson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 9:19:26 AM

Dear FEMA i am outraged regarding removal of close to 100,000 trees - when is the last time you walked your dog in our hills- just yesterday when i was walking a deer crossed our path - 10 feet in front of us...

and a week ago a fat and slow rattlesnake went across the path - not rattling all full.

i feel that your solution is lazy and unfounded and you are most likely getting the money from monsanto- well in my opinion you can just give it back...and leave us alone- go focus on those disaster rather than our hills- they are real current problems-

thoughtfully - mary e richerson

i am in full agreement with the below comments:

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment with the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Mary Richerson
www@rockandrain.com
5515 doyle street #5
emeryville ca, 94608

510.597.1873
510.882.8869 c

From: [Brian McCarthy](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comments
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 9:11:19 AM

I my opinion the alternatives do not adequately address the fire risk in these areas of the East Bay Hills.

Sincerely, Brian McCarthy

From: [barbara.j.nagle](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Stop the destruction of the trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 8:05:04 AM

This is a terrible mistake
cutting and clearing the trees of Berkeley and Oakland in CA.
is wrong and to add to the destructions adding herbicides to the soil is
a really bad idea for future generations.
poison in the earth is not the answer.

stop cutting down trees.

barbara nagle

From: [Rk Bose](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comment on East Bay Hills Draft EIS
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 8:00:37 AM

Dear FEMA,

This is to comment on the East Bay Hills EIS.

Please do not fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by: destroying the wind-break; converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground; reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a huge waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

The only rational alternative is the No Project alternative.

A LOSING PROPOSITION

This project will be a no-win proposition for everybody. Not only will it increase the fire hazard by substituting a drier and windier landscape with more-flammable plants, it will not produce the pristine native landscape that the sponsors seek.

The Native Plant enthusiasts who hope that Native Plants and trees will recolonize the treated areas will be disappointed. There's no plan to replant or to garden those areas; the only tools are a deep mulch of eucalyptus chips and non-selective pesticides. The most likely plant to move into such areas would be broom – which is non-native and considered invasive because it can actually deal with the kind of conditions that will result.

The environment will suffer from the loss of carbon storage and pollution control, not to mention the beauty of the trees. Actually, most of the residents of the Bay Area.

FEMA could use these funds for other projects that actually reduce, not increase, hazards.

The worst of it is that it is essentially irreversible. If the planners realize that most of what the opponents say is true, they cannot grow back trees that took decades to become what they are now. They cannot sequester the carbon they've released. They cannot cure the people whose health has been adversely affected by pesticides. All they can do is declare victory and move on.

Is there a potential win for anyone? Well, maybe the contractors and the pesticides suppliers.

And UC Berkeley, whose Long Range Development Plan calls for building 100,000 square feet of additional space in the hills, would undoubtedly find it convenient to have the tree removal funded by FEMA.

PROBLEMS WITH THE PROJECT AND THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

This plan will convert living trees full of moisture into fuel – dead wood and wood chips on the ground. These are much more flammable than any living tree. In fact, even one of the research papers the EIS quotes says as much: "Sites where the activity fuels piles had not been burned or where they had been masticated (mechanically chipped into small pieces and spread over the treatment area) were excluded from the study because research suggests these additional fuels increase fire severity." (Malcolm North and Matthew Hurteau, "High-severity wildfire effects on carbon stocks and emissions in fuels treated

and untreated forest,” Forest Ecology and Management 261 (2011))

The wood chips could take up to 20 years to decompose. According to the EIS, they have a “half-life” of 5 years, meaning that half of it will be gone in five years. A pile that’s 2 feet high would be 12 inches deep in 5 years, and 6 inches deep in 10 years – leaving a fire hazard there for decades. And there’s also the potential for subsurface smoldering fires that can burst out under the right conditions.

Wind speeds will rise since the wind breaks provided by the trees would be gone. Fires in the East Bay are wind-driven fires, and eucalyptus and other tall trees actually fight fire by breaking the wind-flow. Even the EPA recommended preserving large and tall trees in place (according to Appendix K2 of the EIS).

The replacement landscape will be more flammable. Removing trees will encourage grasses and shrubs, making for a more flammable landscape of faster-moving fires that can reach structures more quickly. The forest shade tends to inhibit the growth of these plants. The plans intend to encourage the growth of native plants – but doesn’t provide for planting or tending them. They assume that the existing seed banks and seeds from adjacent areas will grow there. Actually, it’s more likely that broom and other fast-growing non-native species will take over. When these dry out, they are much more flammable than the trees. In any case, the native chaparral is also very flammable.

The loss of shade and the moisture harvested from the fog will make for a drier, more fire-prone landscape. The EIS suggests that the harvested moisture is compensated by the trees using moisture from rain, so the net amount of water is the same. This is just silly: the fog comes in California’s dry season, and provides additional moisture at a time when the landscape is dry and thus lessens flammability. During the rains, the landscape is green and not flammable.

If some of this acreage does actually become oak-bay woodlands, as the land managers hope, there’s another problem: Sudden oak death, which is spreading through California and could provide dead trees as fuel. The EIS ignores this threat entirely.

The Draft EIS significantly understates the effect on carbon sequestration. The trees will no longer store carbon; instead, they will be releasing thousands of tons of it into the atmosphere. But the EIS ignores the carbon stored in the branches, leaves, and roots of the felled trees, and in the soil. They also miscalculate the amount of carbon that will be released in the EBRPD section of the plan. They may have ignored 80% of the actual carbon emissions caused by the project.

The EIS fails to consider the following: Thousands of gallons of toxic herbicides will be spread over the East Bay; Prescribed burns will further affect air quality, and could get away and cause wildfires and serious damage; Erosion and landslides could occur on steep slopes when the tree roots no longer stabilize the slopes; Increased wind speeds with the loss of wind-breaks will affect quality of life, and likely cause the wind-throw of non-targeted trees.

Altogether it is difficult to see how these projects could actually benefit any Bay Area resident.

Sincerely,

Rupa Bose,

63 Forest Knolls Drive, San Francisco CA 94131

From: [Tiamat 3](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Death of Strawberry and Claremont Canyons
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 10:32:21 AM

Dear Sirs -

I have only just learned of this planned atrocity, and must protest in the strongest possible terms. Fire hazard is a poor reason to destroy this valuable resource. Find a way to manage hazards without destroying our countries beauty.

I am not a California voter, but FEMA is a federal agency. This is a nationwide disgrace, one that reflects very badly on the reputation of UC Berkeley.

Regards,
Shellay Maughan

From: [Kristen Roche](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Save the UC Berkley Forest
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 7:25:16 AM

Please do not destroy any forests in the UC Berkley and Oakland area. These trees have not only been present for decades and are not "hazardous" but these forests are also home to an entire ecosystem. Destroying them and using harmful chemicals such as roundup will only bring LONGTERM harmful effects to this area. You are sneaky and it is sickening that you try and keep this a secret from the public. Your actions are poorly planned, destructive and wrong, and will affect the area for generations to come.

From: [Desiree Delogu](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 7:15:45 AM

The trees are sacred
Every tree provides clean air
Trees love you and me

Dont cut down our trees
The trees don't want any harm
Trees love you and me

Please our trees need us
The trees don't give any harm
Trees love you and me

Dont cut down the trees because you need paper. Double think it please, because those trees are home to many living creatures

From: [Traoré](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:41:01 AM

Hello,
I want to give my opinion on this subject. I disagree With the FEMA plan because I think these trees are here for a reason,it's not the hasard.These trees have a history like everyone else. Who want his story away? No one. Else, Deforestation causes global warming. And global warming Will destroye the Earth and his inhabitant. Now, ask yourself this following question: Would I want all of this? My answer is no but you?

Thank you,Holly

Ps: Sorry for my bad english! :(

Envoyé de mon iPod

From: [Britnee Ohman](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Concerned citizen
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:23:38 AM

To whom it may concern:

I do not believe that clearing out trees is the answer. While this may indeed, prevent fires, it may also have lasting consequences. We seemingly cut down trees without any regard to the fact that trees and other vegetation are our means of oxygen, of our breath, of our life. What we do to trees, is kind of like when you cut your hair. You keep cutting and while doing so you think there's still plenty and it'll always grow back and before you know it, you've cut too much. The big difference here is that trees can take decades to grown back to the height they are now. Now I must also point out that aside from taking our oxygen producers, you are also releasing unnatural chemicals and poisons into the environment with whatever method of clearing you choose. I think this is a very bad idea and as a citizen of the USA it is my duty to inform you that I do not support this program at all and I really do hope you will reconsider.

Thank you,

Britnee Ohman

From: [Носова Полина](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-R1X](#)
Subject: trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:14:32 AM

No cutting down trees!

From: [fsdc43](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Unnecessary destruction
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:11:46 AM

A post popped up on my Twitter feed today which lead me to a very disturbing story about how you plan to destroy thousands of acres of natural woodland on the false pretext of a "fire hazzard" and I find this truely worrying. While areas of your nation struggle to make ends meet and need government support - which they do not receive - you plan to spend thousands of dollars on mass destruction.

I live in England, our nation is screwed because of politicians who think only of themselves rather than working for tge greater good. Do not make the same mistake. Turn your attention and you financial resources to better projects and support the people who put you in power. It is your God given duty to do so, and if you do not then you are shaming yourself and your country.

I do not endorse this and neither should you

Yours
Angry British environmentalist

From: [Bethany Fitzsimon](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills hazardous fire risk reduction project solution.
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 3:42:17 AM

Dear Sir/Madam,

Why would you cut down all the trees? We need trees to live and the number of trees around the world is decreasing rapidly. I don't know about you but I think it would be rather hard to breathe without oxygen from said trees. Why don't you just do controlled back burning? That's what we do here in Australia. We burn out the trees close to houses or roads so that potential fires can't jump to the houses. Just remove 15 - 20 metres of trees around the potentially hazardous area and then the risk of fires decreases significantly.

I'm 15 years old and I have come up with a very logical solution to your problem. There shouldn't even be a choice to cut down the whole forest. Please consider this very carefully. The future of our world is in your hands. Make the right decision.

Thank you,
Bethany Fitzsimon

From: [Linda OBrien](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Misguided plan
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 9:29:34 PM

Dear FEMA,

I'm writing in reference to the FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills. This document is a totally misguided and deeply flawed attempt to deal with the very real danger of fire in the East Bay hills, and is unacceptable in its current form. I encourage you to retract and revise this plan to assure that our taxpayers' money is spent on effective, reasonable fire mitigation measures, and not ones that are destructive to the ecosystems they purport to protect.

In particular, the UC proposal to cut down nearly 60,000 non-native trees in the Strawberry/Claremont Canyon and ridge areas, with no provisions for replanting of native vegetation, and with repeated applications of toxic herbicides to prevent resprouting is completely unacceptable. Let me enumerate just a few of the reasons why this is a terrible idea.

Habitat: Great horned owls nest in these trees, as do other raptors, keeping rodent populations in check. Without the raptor, the rodent population could pose a serious health risk. These trees also hydrate the hills environments, creating shade and fog drip which moisten the forest floor, even during the dry season. The stands of tall trees create wind breaks, which are an essential part of *slowing* fire spread in a wind-driven fire. The trees anchor hillsides and the steep slopes of the canyons; without their canopy to diffuse the raindrops, every rainstorm will erode the shorn ground and add to the silting of the creeks. These trees' shading *prevents* the growth of the fire-prone, invasive non-native grasses and shrubs such as broom, thistle, blackberry and hemlock, which will quickly fill the bare, unshaded ground if the UC plan is implemented. Clear-cutting will increase the risk of fire because more flammable weeds and brush will take hold.

Air quality: With global warming accelerating, and carbon dioxide recently found to exceed 400 ppm in the atmosphere, how can cutting down over 80,000 trees be a good idea? These trees sequester greenhouse gases, they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, they transpire moisture back into the air, they shade and cool the earth. In addition, the current EIS allows for prescribed burns and a mammoth chipping operation, both of which would release enormous amounts of greenhouse gases into the environment. These chips, to be left on site, create a mulch layer which is itself a fire hazard.

Toxicity: Four different toxic herbicides are proposed for this project - Roundup, Stalker, Garlon 4 Ultra (from the Garlon 4 Ultra MSDS: "...highly toxic to aquatic organisms...; "Prevent from entering soil...waterways and/or groundwater"; "decomposition products can include...: hydrogen chloride, nitrogen oxide, phosgene." (All toxic)) and Garlon 3A - to be applied over a period of as long as ten years. The claim that none of these poisons will make their way down the watershed into the creeks, or that they will have no adverse effects on recreational users of the parks, or nearby residential communities, is pure wishful thinking. Even with all the mitigation precautions outlined in the Draft EIS, thousands of pounds of chemicals, applied by many users over many years – it takes only one unanticipated rainstorm or rogue windstorm to carry these outside the arbitrary boundaries that have been set.

FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 60,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen. I support targeted (not widespread) use of herbicides on the Koa leaves when they sprout, only applying it locally and after the rainy season so that it doesn't wash into the ground water. Round-up remains active on the above ground growth for 2 days but works to kill the underground root system for weeks.

Yes, we have a wildfire hazard in the hills. And, yes, if we cut down all the tall trees, they won't be there to burn. But we can achieve an equivalent mitigation outcome with much less drastic – and damaging – interventions.

The East Bay Regional Park District has found that selective thinning of non-native trees, combined with regular removal of understory fuels, is an effective fire mitigation strategy. When there are ground fuels in abundance, (this could include the 20+ inches of wood chips the UC plan would leave on the ground) they provide ready fodder for a fast moving fire. These ground fuels were a major source of the rapid spread of the 1991 fire in the hills. If these had been controlled, we would not have had the laddering effect that led to torching and crown fires.

What I am proposing is a series of amendments to the Draft EIS that incorporate these alternative solutions to fire mitigation. The current version is an invitation to habitat destruction and has the potential to *worsen* the fire danger by removing wind breaks and creating more ground fuel.

The choice is not between wildfire destroying our homes, or razed hills and herbicides in the hills. These are false extremes. The East Bay hills, with their stands of trees, rolling hills and beautiful watersheds, are a model to other urban areas, many of whom have lost their natural landscapes to development. We can reduce fire danger *and* maintain the best aspects of our green belt, with selective thinning and understory removal.

One of the least quantifiable aspects of this Draft EIS is what our woodland “management” will do to the recreational and aesthetic qualities of the tree-covered hills that hug our eastern borders. Walkers, hikers and joggers, school groups and families, dog owners and bird watchers all are regular users and appreciators of the East Bay hills. These tree-covered slopes are a treasure worth saving. When fewer urban kids have contact with trees and nature, we risk raising a generation of young adults who will not value the preservation of wildness and natural settings. And that would be a loss to us all.

Sincerely,
Linda O'Brien

From: [Patricia Everall](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Deforestation of East Bay Hills
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 9:11:31 PM

The current plan to remove eucalyptus from the East Bay Hills is a poorly considered one. The trees are well established, beautiful, provide habitat for wildlife, sequester carbon dioxide and moisture, and provide wind protection, among other beneficial qualities. That they present a fire hazard is, as Peter Scott of the Hills Conservation Network stated in the SF Chronicle 6-1-13, "greatly exaggerated". I have lived in San Francisco overlooking Glen Park Canyon where there is a similar dispute, since 1964. Fires in the canyon were a recurring annual summer problem for many, many years until serious attention was paid to managing the grass and brushy undergrowth that covers a large portion of the area. The eucalyptus never caught fire. Ditto for the Monterey pines.

At a time when funds are scarce for our state, national and local parks, spending money for deforestation and replacement rather than needed maintenance is foolish.

I hike regularly and have often hiked in the East Bay Hills over a period of thirty to forty years. It would be a terrible and ironic mistake to deforest this area (aided by herbicides, no less) in order to "protect the natural environment". Please leave these hills and the wildlife they shelter in peace.

Patricia Everall
San Francisco

From: sallyweare@hotmail.com on behalf of [sally weare](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: in Support of the East Bay Regional Park District Plan
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 9:03:34 PM

I couldn't agree more with this statement written by Maryly Snow. I couldn't have put it better, so I'll include it here:

We want and need fire hazard reduction in the East Bay Hills. The big question is what is the best way to accomplish this.

It seems clear to me that the nuanced and multifaceted approach of East Bay Regional Park District is vastly better and more appropriate than the UC plan.

The eucalyptus need to be thinned, not completely razed. They need to be delimbed to an appropriate height of 8-10'. Most importantly, their ground cover/understory, ground fuel needs to be removed on a regular maintenance schedule beginning ASAP.

The East Bay Hills provide habitat to a wide variety of flora and fauna, provide significant carbon sequestration, air filtering, and major green space. The UC proposal with its deep mulch layer is not a good fire reduction plan, especially since fires begin at ground level and move up toward the canopy of forests.

Unemployment is a problem that locally should be mitigated by hiring large crews to remove the eucalyptus bark and leaves.

UC wants to denude Strawberry Canyon, felling 80,000 trees, rendering the red tail hawks and barn owls homeless, along with deer, wild turkeys, bob cats, coyote, and hares, not to mention the skunks, raccoons, and opossums, animals that will be forced to seek refuge in residential neighborhoods. UC plan will befoul our water, air, and soil by using Monsanto's glyphosate in order to poison the tree stumps, along with caterpillars butterflies, worms, etc. Sixteen hundred and eighty-three gallons of Round Up will seep into our soil, air, and water for ten years just so UC can build faculty housing and a retreat center on the denuded land in 20 years. It could happen because money talks, because UC is accustomed to getting its way when it comes to real property, and because Senator Feinstein and husband Regent Richard Blum will make

sure that FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency, will give a large portion of the 5.9 billion dollars of our taxes for UC's property development.

My neighbors and I want a sustainable plan, not a brutal one, not one involving habitat destruction and use of toxic chemicals. We want our quality of life, including our air, soil, water, green space, and wildlife improved, not contaminated.

The Native Plant Society who wants all foreign plants removed should apply their own philosophy to themselves first, because WE are not native to these hills. The local chapter of the Audubon Society is represented by Norman La Force, a man with whom scores of local environmentalists, ecologists, athletic and recreational organizations have tangled because of his obstinancy and inability or refusal to compromise.

Watching the red tail hawks in the tree my neighbors and I call the "Mother Euc" is a joy that can a should continue. Eucs have gotten a very bad rap. Many people believe Eucs took the rap for the incompetency of the Oakland Fire Department in the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire. There is evidence of this in the Grand Jury examination into the causes of the fire. Today, Project Vesta in Australia researches the fire hazard and mitigation of Blue Gum Eucalyptus. I urge you to read their reports.

Please fund the project not for major deforestation but for ongoing ground fuel removal, and thinning and delimiting of selected trees.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
Maryly Snow

and also Sally Weare

sally@sallyweare.com

707 888-8076 cell

707 527-6002

510 595-0310

From: [Julian Horowitz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: clear-cutting east bay trees???
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 8:56:41 PM

Find an alternative way to deal with the problem-- NO CLEAR-CUTTING!!!

From: [Marie Pagliarini](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: DRAFT EIS
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 8:29:22 PM

I am absolutely opposed to FEMA's draft EIS plan to support clear cutting and putting toxic chemicals into the Bay Area environment.

RoundUp is proven to be toxic.

How DARE you support a plan that will inflict damage on our ecosystem and on the health and welfare of Bay Area citizens.

I oppose this project, and expect that FEMA will withdraw it's support to UCB's plan.

Marie Pagliarini

From: [Ann Myers](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: Removal of trees
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 7:17:35 PM

Dear Fma,

As a resident of Berkeley for more than 40 years, I am deeply concerned about the proposed removal of the trees in the hills.

The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, I ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Sincerely,

Ann Myers

From: [Mike Buckley](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: TREE REMOVAL IN OAKLAND/BERKELEY CA HILLS
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 7:13:37 PM

We have lived in Oakland's hills since 1974. We strongly SUPPORT the removal of Eucalyptus trees and Monterey pines growing the hills. The eucalyptus are positively dangerous. We were lucky and our house did not burn in the Oakland Hills Fire, I believe mostly because our neighborhood did not have many eucalyptus trees. Please continue the fire protection grants to local agencies to remove the eucalyptus, elderly Monterey pines and invasive non-native shrubs. Thank you.

Mike and Elizabeth Buckley
246 Pershing Dr.
OAKLAND, CA, 94611

From: [jack bowers](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 6:52:43 PM

dear FEMA:

I'm pleased to hear that you can help our community improve our nearby forest. For all my life, I've had to walk through groves of Australian eucalyptus as though they were our native forest. During the last Oakland Hills Fire, I rode my bike through falling cinders and saw the tallest flames erupting from the eucalyptus. But hose trees are too tough to be killed by fire. I'm glad that you can help Oakland and UC Berkeley restore our forest..

Jack Bowers

From: [Diane Aven](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Removal of non-native trees in Oakland & Berkeley, CA hills
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 6:39:18 PM

I fully support the removal of non-native trees in the Oakland and Berkeley, California hills (East Bay hills). I do a lot of hiking in the local and regional parks and find many areas have been taken-over by non-native trees, in particular, eucalyptus trees. Their fire danger is well-known. Our native trees (Oaks, Bay, Buckeye, Madrone, etc.) are beautiful and provide the correct and necessary habitat. Please bring them back.

Diane Aven
dianeaven@sbcglobal.net

From: [Ron Proctor](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: Barbara.Lee@mail.house.gov
Subject: SF East Bay FEMA projects should be rejected
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 5:23:03 PM

FEMA Representatives:

This proposal will decimate one the Bay Area's greatest treasures: healthy, pristine forests of the East Bay and I strongly disagree with the projects. The 3 applicants (University of California, Berkeley, City of Oakland, East Bay Regional Park District) are wrong to ask for FEMA money for the following reasons:

- 1) FEMA funds are for emergencies and this situation is not an emergency;
- 2) Tree clear cutting and use of herbicides is harmful to the pristine forests of the East Bay, and dangerous for humans and wildlife;
- 3) In view of climate change and increased CO2 levels, we need to retain all trees, not destroy them.

If the projects are allowed to go forward, the natural habitat for wildlife will become a toxic waste dump, poisoning and displacing animals. This is particularly disturbing in view of the fact that there are no plans for replacement plantings for trees or shrubs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,

Ron Proctor
Resident, San Francisco for 33 years

From: [Elaine McGee](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Support for the EIS for the East Bay Hills
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 4:57:51 PM

To FEMA:

I strongly support the wildfire hazard mitigation projects for the East Bay Hills. I lost my house in the 1991 Tunnel Fire, so I know, first hand, the special danger that stands of Eucalyptus and Monterey pine pose in these hills. Please approve the EIS as soon as possible.

Elaine McGee
1350 Grand View Drive
Berkeley, CA 94705

From: [Sandra Barlow](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Parks
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 4:25:21 PM

I strongly urge FEMA, UC Berkeley, the City of Oakland, the East Bay Regional Parks District to NOT log up to 100,000 trees from our parks and hills areas, but to reconsider other fire prevention plans THAT DO NOT DESTROY OUR ECOSYSTEMS.

It is not only losing our beloved trees, but this plan as it stands, will contribute to climate change, release huge quantities of carbon dioxide into our environment, apply toxic pesticides to tree stumps and vegetation and destroy habitat for raptors and many endangered species. Ironically the dry grasses that will take over can create more wild fires.

I know there are many alternatives that deal with the dangers of wild fires. But we have had no real opportunity to attend public meetings and hearings. It is shocking that such a huge public shift could go forth in the 21st century in such a back door manner.

Please consider the hue and cry of so many of our concerned citizens.

Thank you for your attention.

Sandra Barlow
Berkeley, CA
Sent from my iPad

From: [Riley Winograd](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: no on tree cutting plan
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 4:11:13 PM

This is so wrong. I cannot believe that people would want to clearcut all these wonderful trees because they are "non-native." all humans came from Africa which means we're non-native, but since we are humans we are somehow superior?

From: [Craig Fischer](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Do Not Cut Eucalyptus and Destroy Our Neighborhood
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 4:08:31 PM

I am a Oakland home owner and I highly oppose the cutting of Eucalyptus trees in the east bay area. These projects would permanently alter the Berkeley/Oakland hills ecosystem. UC and Oakland will clearcut tens of thousands of mature, healthy trees, some more than 100 feet tall and more than 100 years old. **To prevent trees from resprouting, the hills would be drenched with massive amounts (30,000 + gallons) of toxic pesticides. In addition, pesticides will be sprayed throughout the watershed to knock down the weeds, hemlock, poison oak, thistle and broom that will emerge with the loss of canopy. Toxic sediments will seep into our creeks.**

An enormous amount of habitat would be destroyed; the tall trees favored by raptors such as owls and hawks would be lost forever. Without raptors to keep them in check, the rodent population will undoubtedly increase.

Thank you,

Linda Birch

Oakland home owner

4427 Harbord Dr.

Oakland, CA

94618

From: [linda](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Proposed cutting and herbiciding of trees in East Bay
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 3:44:22 PM

I am sending this revised version of my original comment because I've learned that several e-mails I sent in the past few weeks were never received.

As a resident of Oakland since 1973, I oppose this project. It would have devastating long-lasting environmental and health consequences. It would likely increase the risk of fire: by removing the shade and fog drip of thousands of trees and thus increasing dry heat; by placing tons of dead wood onto bare ground; by leaving space for non-native grasses and brush to fill in and become a true fire hazard; by destroying wind breaks; and by doing prescribed burns that could easily get out of control. Most fires start in dry grass and brush, not under moist tree canopy where captured fog often drips down even in summer. Even the maligned eucalyptus trees have been documented as resisting raging brush fires.

The Oakland-Berkeley Mayors' Firestorm Task Force investigating the 1991 fire found that trees were not the primary problem, not even eucalyptus trees. Task Force member David Maloney more recently wrote, "The Task Force Report concluded that the spread of the fire was mostly due to the radiant heat generated by burning houses." "Because of our conclusions, new fire prevention codes relative to housing construction were promulgated..."—not codes relative to species of trees. Native trees are not inherently more fire resistant.

As if increased fire hazard is not bad enough, using herbicides would poison the woodlands and surrounding areas—earth, air, creeks and ultimately the Bay—damaging the health of exposed humans and animals for many years to come. It makes no sense to add more poisons to already polluted air, water and soil—poisons we end up carrying in our bodies, leading to chronic illness, disability and early death by cancer, COPD, etc. It should be unthinkable to expose babies and children to more and more toxic chemicals, as they are the most vulnerable.

Urban populations need safe and healthy places for rest and recreation in nature. Children, especially, need those places to be free from chemical poisoning. It's no good saying that application of poisons will be done carefully—they are still poisons. Even the so-called inert ingredients are sometimes found to be just as toxic or even more so.

Killing thousands of trees would destroy vast areas of animal habitat. It would also release the carbon sequestered in those trees into the atmosphere. Not to mention the destruction and pollution inflicted by the machinery used to kill the trees.

It makes no sense to create a guaranteed disaster to human health, wildlife, and quality of life on the pretext of preventing a fire disaster that might never happen. This proposed plan would not have prevented the 1991 firestorm. There are real firestorm-prevention measures available, like creating and enforcing better building codes, ensuring that our fire departments' needs are adequately met, and requiring safer landscape maintenance by hills' homeowners. Some of these measures have already been enacted.

We don't want to give more money to pesticide and logging companies. FEMA should ban all pesticides (including herbicides) from public lands, with no exemptions.

This project as presently drafted would be a shameful misappropriation of tax money, resulting in the opposite of its stated purpose and causing only enormous harm.

Linda Giannoni
Oakland, California 94602-3335

From: [Marilyn Robinson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Draft EIS
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 2:55:27 PM

I am an East Bay Claremont resident living in natural forestry. There is no substantial reason for requesting a FEMA Grant to cut down our trees stating that the trees are a fire hazard. There are alternative ways to trim the trees in this area to prevent fires. There will be more serious poisonous problems if the trees are cut and poison is released to kill rodents and tree roots. The mulch that is being discussed to cover the ground after the trees are cut is even more of a fire hazard...DON'T EVEN THINK THAT CUTTING DOWN OUR TREES IS AN ANSWER TO FIRE SAFETY!!!!

The statement saying we need trees cut down to prevent fires is FALSE. The TRUTH is there is a plan to use this cleared area for faculty housing..at the expense of FEMA money. This request is not for fire prevention.

FEMA PLEASE LOOK SERIOUSLY AT WHAT IS NEEDED IN THE EAST BAY FOR FIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY!!!!!!!!!!!! The answer is NOT giving money to cut down our beautiful trees and destroying our parks with toxic herbicides and pesticides and not to mention destroying the beauty of our area.

A Concerned East Bay Resident who will fight to save our trees!!!!

Marilyn Robinson
2951 Derby Street
Berkeley, CA 94705

From: [Mary Berg](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Deforestation
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 2:35:28 PM
Attachments: [proaudio.vcf](#)
Importance: High

I have read the EIS-in-progress, and I find it disturbing in the extreme.

Apparently (as I can hardly believe) you propose to annihilate over half a million living, life-giving trees - plus countless myriad creatures who live in their protection in a long-established ecosystem - thus creating a monstrous fire-hazardous wasteland devoid of any kind of life except toxics and herbicides, in order to conduct "Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction".

This is beyond madness, of the most toxic sort. It demands an immediate, thorough-going investigation of the three purported applicants - UC Berkeley, East Bay Regional Park District, and the City of Oakland- - and any other entities who are party to such an infamy.

A growing number of taxpayers - myself included - will be pursuing this investigation as we speak.

**Mary Berg
1427 Milvia St.
Berkeley, CA 94709**

**proaudio@proaudio1.com
kpfaberg@gmail.com**

510-484-7665

--

**Mary Berg Producer and host of "A Musical Offering" Sundays
5:00am - 9:00am KPFA 94.1 FM kpfaberg@gmail.com 1427 Milvia
St Berkeley CA 94709 510-484-7665**

From: [melissa_mandel](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Don't approve any of the East Bay hills toxic deforestation projects!
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 1:59:17 PM

Dear Reviewers:

Through my understanding of and education on native plants, and from my frequent visits to the parks named in this review, I completely oppose the plans and methods that would remove hundreds of thousands of fully grown trees and related plants in order to achieve the stated goal of reducing fire risk in the East Bay hills.

To be more specific, I submit these points:

* These projects are more likely to **increase the risk of wildfires** than to reduce that risk.

By distributing tons of dead wood onto bare ground

By eliminating shade and fog drip which moistens the forest floor, making ignition more likely

By destroying the windbreak that is a barrier to wind driven fires typical of wildfires in California

By expanding the oak-bay woodland being killed by Sudden Oak Death, thereby adding more dead wood

* These projects will **damage the environment** by releasing hundreds of thousands of tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere from the destroyed trees, thereby contributing to climate change.

* These projects will **endanger the public and all levels of resident animal life** by dousing our public lands with thousands of gallons of toxic herbicides.

* **Erosion** is likely on steep slopes when the trees are destroyed and their roots are killed with herbicides.

* **Non-native vegetation** such as broom, thistle, and hemlock are more likely occupants of the unshaded, bared ground than native vegetation which will not be planted by these projects because the non-natives that are the object of this project are adapted to crisis conditions. They germinate and grow much, much faster than the native plants. It is foolhardy to spend all this money and do all this damage to remove them when they are here to stay!

* **Prescribed burns** will pollute the air and contribute to the risk of wildfire, endangering lives and property.

* These projects are an **inappropriate use of the limited resources** of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Most of the proposed projects in the East Bay are miles away from any residences.

I urge the reviewers to look closely at the stated objective of these projects, fire risk reduction, and consider what parts, if any, are actually useful to that goal.

Respectfully,
Melissa Mandel
Permaculturist

From: [Lynn Murphy](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: be judicious, please
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 12:43:12 PM

Please do not give in to the scorched earth plans demanded by UC Berkeley in their part of the application for FEMA funds. Either do not fund their portion of the application or make them adopt the fire risk abatement practices of the East Bay Regional Parks District, which are actually designed to preserve the environment at the same time as reducing fire risk. The UC plans are an example of hubris, not of fire risk abatement. It is impossible to understand UC's motivation for proposing such a dangerous and stupid plan, let alone that public money would be handed to them for carrying it out.

Lynn Murphy
6816 Colton Blvd
Oakland CA 94611

From: [Janice Owen](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: proposed cutting of trees
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 12:14:52 PM

To Whom it Concerns--

PLEASE DO NOT CUT THOUSANDS OF TREES in the East Bay hills. Here's 6 reasons

why not:

--the noise --loss of habitat for many animals, including hawks and owls, which help keep down the rodent population --climate change demands that we NOT cut down massive numbers of trees; rather, we need to be planting them; we need the oxygen --likelihood of landslides without the tree roots to hold the soil in place --intended application of toxic herbicides, creating a health risk to all living beings --loss of nature's beauty, which we certainly need in our lives

Thank you.

Janice Owen

From: [elise](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: EIS for East Bay hills fire abatement plan
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 10:41:17 AM

I would like for this plan to be reconsidered to address these concerns:

- too many pesticides being used
- potential landslides in heavy rain
- thick mulch, which can be a fire hazard itself
- how will natives be encouraged? The CA Indians used fire management extensively, and as a result many natives have seeds and growing patterns that require fire or similar stress to be able to sprout. Obviously we have gotten ourselves in a situation where fire management has become dangerous, but whatever management we do will require making sure that natives rather than the invasive non-natives (scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry, etc.) will be growing back. Otherwise we're just back to cut and poison in 10 to 20 years.
- balance between reducing fire load and keeping carbon sequestered. I recognize that this is a hard one, but clear cutting probably is not the answer.
- a plan that will not become hopelessly bogged down in lawsuits and protests, so that the East Bay will actually become less of a fire hazard in a short amount of time.

Thank you for addressing the fire hazard in a balanced, wise way.

Sincerely,
C. Elise Brewin

--
Elise

Sent from your iFriend

"Ring the bells that still can ring
forget your perfect offering
there is a crack in everything
that's how the light gets in."
Leonard Cohen

Use this free program to make your computer more friendly to your health:
<http://www.stereopsis.com/flux/>

From: [Greg](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Oakland hills
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 10:27:47 AM

I live in the Oakland hills and I lived just a block away from the fire of 1991. I strongly support the fire prevention grants. We need to rid the hills of the dangerously fire prone eucalyptus trees.

Thank you,
Greg Cover
6175 Skyline Bl
Oakland Ca

From: [Katie Rose](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: "Fire risk reduction" OPPOSITION!!!
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 9:12:55 AM

Hello,

I'm an East Bay resident and an avid hiker and birder. While I agree that cutting down some Eucalyptus would definitely decrease fire risk overall, I think cutting all of those trees at once is a horrible idea on many levels. Raptors nest in those trees (some of which are protected or endangered). The trees also provide oxygen and shade for us and other animals. There is no proof mulching the trees and covering the ground in 2 feet of mulch is going to either reduce fire risk OR prevent nonnative species from growing. In addition, mulch with a high oil content (i.e. Eucalyptus mulch) has the potential not only to create more fire risk, but to burn at a much higher temperature, hence REDUCING safety for neighboring houses and forest. Furthermore, the use of RoundUp herbicide on the hills is harmful not only to humans, but to butterflies and bees, of which we truly can't afford to lose any more.

Like I said, I think it would be great to restore the hills to all natives, but I think the plan you've drafted is haphazard and not based in science or reason, which leads me to believe UC also has ulterior motives. This could be done effectively, over time, and not be such an eyesore or an environmental catastrophe. I hope your final decision is based not only on true science, but on the desire of the people in this area. We use these parks, and I think we should have some say in what happens to our lovely hills.

Thanks,
Katie Rose
Oakland

From: [Rachel Hall](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Clear cutting the East Bay park trees
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 8:49:10 AM

Is a huge mistake. Please. There are other ways to approach fire prevention. You are destroying an eco-system. I've been hiking in the hills for 30+ years and as a tax-payer I am appalled that my money is being used to fund such misguided projects.

There's no going back. Don't do it!

Rachel Hall
Berkeley, CA

From: [Sandy Zimmerman](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction Project
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 7:38:49 AM

Dear Sir or Madam,

I write to oppose the proposed East Bay Hills Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction Project.

The plan to chop down invasive species trees and spray the tree stumps with chemicals appears to do nothing to reduce fire risk, as the same wood that catches fire in its current live (tree) form would remain in the form of a two-foot high pile of wood chips. If anything, the wood would be more incendiary, as it would be dead and dry. The chemicals not only would also potentially increase fire risk, but would cause toxic pollution by saturating the surrounding ground and ultimately other areas via water run-off.

In short, the plan is ridiculous and appalling. It makes FEMA's handling of Hurricane Katrina look good by comparison.

The proposed East Bay Hills Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction Project should not be approved.

Respectfully,

Sandra L. Zimmerman
Pittsburgh, PA

From: [Susan Danis](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: REGARDING FEMA PLAN FOR THE BERKELEY/OAKLAND HILLS
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 2:19:23 AM

I don't think any trees should be cut. To protect the hills from fire, lots of redwoods should be planted to increase moisture. Teams of goats should be used to eat unwanted brambles & plant debris. No trees cut, no herbicide, no erosion, no ill effects to raptors or any other creatures.

From: susandanisartist@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: REGARDING THE FEMA PLAN TO PREVENT FIRE IN THE BERKELEY/OAKLAND HILLS
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 1:57:42 AM

I don't think any trees should be cut. To protect the hills from fire, lots of redwoods should be planted to increase moisture. Teams of goats should be used to eat unwanted brambles & plant debris. No trees cut, no herbicide, no erosion, no ill effects to raptors or any other creatures.

From: [Spitzer, John](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Eucalyptus comment
Date: Saturday, June 15, 2013 12:20:12 AM

Dear FEMA,

Seeing as how there's a lot of complaining these days about cutting down eucalyptus trees, I want to reassure you that there a lot of citizens in Berkeley and Oakland - particularly those of us who grew up in the area and who lived through the fire of 1991 - who support your efforts to manage the fire danger in the hills. Trees are a resource and an amenity, even eucalyptus trees, but like any resource they need to be managed.

I hope government agencies, the University of California, and the public will have the political will to manage the hills so that people can continue to live here for another 150 years.

John Spitzer

--

John Spitzer
San Francisco Conservatory of Music

email 1: spitzer@peabody.jhu.edu
email 2: john.spitzer@notes.sfcm.edu

From: [Mardi Mertens](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Berkeley Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:52:35 PM

I am a resident of Berkeley, California. I oppose the use of FEMA funds to cut trees in the Berkeley and Oakland Hills.

I am an environmental science teacher at Berkeley High School.

We know that these trees provide important habitat for many kinds of wildlife, and cutting them down will not prevent fires.

Clear-cutting in the Berkeley and Oakland Hills is a very bad idea.

It may cause mud slides, destroy the landscape, harm wildlife, destroy hikers' aesthetic enjoyment of our wildlands;

the planned use of pesticides is unconscionable.

Please do not fund any of this clear-cutting. It is a waste of money, will not prevent fires, and will cause harm.

Mardi Sicular-Mertens
990 Overlook Road
Berkeley, Ca 94708
510-849-1142

From: [Steve Salmon](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Tree Removal in East Bay Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 10:34:48 PM

I wish to put on record my support of the non-native tree removal grants being applied for by the City of Berkeley, Oakland and the University of California. I am a home owner in the Oakland Hills and have lived in the area most of my life. Over the years I have witnessed first hand changes to the native forest lands. First through the harvesting of Redwoods, then the introduction of eucalyptus trees. The eucalyptus trees, in particular, have become an ecological and safety problem that needs to be addressed. These trees are fast growing, take over acreage by becoming groves and the debris fields they create at their bases prevent almost any type of plant, except eucalyptus, to grow. The groves eventually combine to become a uniform forest of eucalyptus. The eucalyptus tree is highly flammable. In the 1991 Oakland Hills fire the eucalyptus was one of the main fuel sources that created a fire storm. In the aftermath of the fire it is the eucalyptus groves that have come back and have dominated the reforestation. We will never be able to eradicate this species from this ecosystem at this point. The best we can do is to control it with programs such as this. I would ask that if FEMA does not issue grants to all parties that it will increase grants to those parties that have been awarded monies to address this serious problem.

Sincerely,

Steve Salmon
2800 Kitchener Court
Oakland, CA 94602

scsalmon@comcast.net

From: [Eric Black](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: OPPOSITION to clear-cutting in Strawberry and Claremont Canyons!
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 9:50:14 PM

I am highly dismayed to hear of FEMA's plan to clear the historic and beautiful trees of Strawberry Canyon and Claremont Canyon in Berkeley and in the Oakland Hills, in the name of fire protection. I am appalled by this short-sited attempt, which involves the death of 85,000 trees and up to 14,000 gallons of toxic herbicides. This type of blatant environmental degradation is no less than disgusting and criminal. Our natural forests and grasslands must be protected at all costs. Natural hazards such as wildfire will always exist, but there are other ways to protect sensitive neighborhoods.

As if losing so many trees and the natural habitat they provide to local wildlife, not to mention their benefit to humans, were not enough, the planned use of herbicides that have been proven dangerous, such as Round-Up, should be absolutely banned. What will it take for our government to begin taking this poisoning of our environment seriously and start protecting it? Are you out of your minds?

Sincerely,
Eric Black
(925) 285-0153

From: [Andrea Sutherland](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Support eucalyptus tree removal
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 9:45:24 PM

Dear FEMA,
My home is near the many regional parks in the hills of Oakland.

The eucalyptus trees are a fire risks to the many homes. There are so reasons they should be reserved.
Take them out, please.

Thank you

Andrea Sutherland
2800 Kitchener Court
Oakland, CA. 94602
650 400 2389

iPhone

From: jessiethefeminist@gmail.com on behalf of [Jessie Raeder](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: I oppose the plant to cut down 85,000 trees
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 9:28:54 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

I am horrified to learn not only that there are plans to cut down 85,000 trees in the Strawberry and Claremont Canyon areas of Berkeley and Oakland, but that there are plans to spray herbicides including Roundup on the land to keep non-native vegetation from returning. I am in favor of native vegetation, but this is not the answer. I respectfully insist that you re-consider. Roundup is poison that is known to cause damages to humans as well as plants. We do not want to live in a world governed by Monsanto, which brings destruction and death to so many, and negatively affects the health of us all. We the public rely upon unknown but principled individuals in positions like yours, dear person who is reading this email, to protect the common good. Please take public outcry seriously. Please put the health of the people and the planet over corporate interests, which have become sociopathic of late. Good people must stand up to stop these things. If you are reading this, I imagine you have at least some power to say no, to dig deeper, to look closer, to regulate on behalf of the population. Godspeed. The health and lives of many people are in your hands. We implore you to do what you can, and to imagine that what you can do is more than you think.

Best regards,
Jessie Raeder
584 Alvarado Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
jessieraeder@gmail.com
323-823-5377

From: [Jeannie Achuff, ND](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Strawberry and Claremont Canyon
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 9:08:25 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of the East Bay and as a doctor I wholeheartedly encourage you to prevent the removal of trees and the application of RoundUp to Strawberry and Claremont Canyon. There are so many other ways of preventing wildfires; this approach is purely destructive on so many levels. Please seek out alternative ways to manage fire risk in the East Bay and do not allow such a crude version of "land management" to ruin our beautiful and unique landscape as well as pollute our groundwater.

In faith you will do the right thing,
Dr. Jeannie Achuff, ND
OriginsofHealthNaturalMedicine.com
Bay Area, California

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From: [Ed Gerber](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Oakland Grant
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 8:54:02 PM

Please approve the grant to Oakland for fire safety improvements in the Oakland hills. As a resident of the hills and a frequent hiker i am very aware of the incredible fire hazard that faces us. The proposed project will substantially improve for fire safety. As a former forest fire suppression crew member I am very aware of the danger that faces us.The 1991 fire proves this risk.

Thank you approving the grant.

Ed Gerber
6948 Ridgewood Dr., Oakland, Ca. 94611
H-510-339-3601
C-530-966-4026

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY-VOLUNTEER

From: [Sarah Kurtz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 8:12:52 PM

Dear FEMA,

I am a resident of the Oakland hills where a program to remove close to 100,000 trees in the name of fire safety is being proposed. I am very much not in favor of this. My house is 1000 feet away from where the 1991 Oakland hills fire was stopped. I am very familiar with the terrain and walk in the nearby parks Sibley and Huckleberry most days. I have seen the areas where this clear cutting has already happened and they are defiantly more land slide prone and windy. My experience of the Oakland hills fire was that the wind drove it more than anything and the houses fed it more than the trees.

The trees if anything slow down the fire because of the wind break they provide. I understand the issues with Eucalyptus trees and it would be nice if it were a Redwood forest but the Eucalyptus trees are here and they do provide more than being a weed tree. If you walk through them you will notice that it is much damper and moist under them from the condensed fog dripping down, this has to be better fire wise than dry grass on wind swept hills. Which is what I see in the areas already cut. They also provide habitat for many birds. I believe that FEMA should not be paying for this, the money would be wasted on this project. There are multiple reasons that cutting down close to 100000 trees is a bad Idea. What about the effect of loss of carbon sequestration? It would also use huge amounts of toxic chemicals in the form of herbicides that will expose all of us in the area. I choose not to use these chemicals and this is taking my ability to choose not to be exposed to them away. Please do not go forward with funding this.

Thank you for your consideration
Sarah Kurtz

Sarah Kurtz
5809 Florence Ter.
Oakland, Ca 94611
H: 510-652-0129
Cell: 510-326-6950
sarahck@comcast.net

From: [Eileen Karpfinger](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Oakland/Berkeley Hills Tree Clearing Opposer.
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 7:53:28 PM

In Response to the FEMA plan to cut and spray hundreds of acres of Oakland and Berkeley Hills to reduce Fire Fuel.

I own a house and 1/2 acre of land in the Oakland hills. I do not support the use of chemicals to reduce brush and fire fuel in the hills. The chemicals will wash down hill and to our creeks, rivers, lakes and finally our fine Bay. In addition, the chemicals are a threat to my and my family's health. The spraying of herbicides such as Roundup is onot necessary or welcome.

Keep the chemicals out of the plan. Cut non-native trees to reduce fuel, clear brush too. Do NOT use herbicides in the plan.

Thank you,
Dr. Eileen Karpfinger
6453 Heather Ridge Way
Oakland, CA
94611

Sent from my iPhone

From: Zimny,Chris@CALFIRE
To: Hall,Dennis@CALFIRE; Sampson,Richard@CALFIRE; Henly,Russ@CALFIRE
Cc: Snyder,Bill@CALFIRE; Shintaku,Duane@CALFIRE; Cunningham,Shane@CALFIRE; EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 4:32:33 PM

Rich --We would appreciate if you/the Unit could prepare and submit this letter with Dennis's edits and postmark by June 17th. Email EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov

Thanks--cz

Christopher Zimny
Staff Chief
Environmental and Cultural Resources Protection
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
1416 9th Street
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Desk (916) 653-9418
Cell (916) 712-7329
chris.zimny@fire.ca.gov

From: Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2013 2:40 PM
To: Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE; Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE; Henly, Russ@CALFIRE
Cc: Snyder, Bill@CALFIRE; Shintaku, Duane@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills

All:

This at least reinforces in writing that CAL FIRE permits may be necessary in order to implement parts of the project covered under the EIS. I have concerns that we were not properly noticed through a notice of preparation and therefore have not fully engaged in the process – but maybe the fact that this is an EIS rather than an EIR changes our role.

I think the letter can go out. I made a couple very minor changes.

Dennis O. Hall

Dennis O. Hall, RPF #2597
Staff Chief, Forest Practice

CAL FIRE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
1416 9th Street
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Phone (916) 653-9422
Fax (916) 653-8957
Dennis.Hall@fire.ca.gov

From: Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 4:53 PM
To: Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE; Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE; Henly, Russ@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE
Cc: Snyder, Bill@CALFIRE
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills

Here is draft where I shamelessly stole from Shane's email. It's my normal Environmental Coordinator comment template.

Rich Sampson
Division Chief - Forester II
Resource Management - Fire Prevention LE

CAL FIRE

San Mateo - Santa Cruz Unit
6059 Highway 9
Felton, CA 95018
(831) 335-6742

From: Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 4:51 PM
To: Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE; Henly, Russ@CALFIRE; Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE
Cc: Snyder, Bill@CALFIRE
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills

I think Rich Sampson has provided comments in the past on similar projects. He could start the letter and we could provide comments from the HQ perspective. If they are using this EIR to address environmental issues for a suite of potential permits such as conversion permits, THPs or VMP projects, we should evaluate the content to make sure they adequately cover our needs so we don't put them into some double jeopardy situation where we need additional CEQA analysis.

I see the comment period closes June 17th?? Did we get a Notice of Preparation and provide comments on that??

Dennis O. Hall

Dennis O. Hall, RPF #2597
Staff Chief, Forest Practice

CAL FIRE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
1416 9th Street
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Phone (916) 653-9422
Fax (916) 653-8957
Dennis.Hall@fire.ca.gov

From: Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE

Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 3:01 PM

To: Henly, Russ@CALFIRE; Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE; Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE

Subject: Re: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills

Hi all --- I think Shane's last paragraph sums most of our comments: commercial harvesting may occur and they should contact the Unit(Rich Sampson covering SCU) for info on appropriate harvest doc needs.

If Rich has more please send.

Who is drafting letter (Tony is gone)? Dennis, any help you can provide on letter? Thanks

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE DROID

"Henly, Russ@CALFIRE" <Russ.Henly@fire.ca.gov> wrote:

Here are Shane's comments on the FEMA EIS. You should have received these previously.

Russ

Russ Henly
Assistant Deputy Director
Resource Protection and Improvement
CAL FIRE
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
916-653-9447 Office
916-214-4868 Cell

From: [the_allie_kat](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please do not let UC Berkeley destroy our trees
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 5:45:47 PM

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to urge you to refuse funding to the UC Berkeley, City of Oakland, ERBPD's plan to level local woodlands. Not only are these areas home to endangered and at risk plants and animals, they are essential to protecting our environment.

Thank you very much,
R. Alison Thompson-Ray
Oakland, CA

From: [Ellie Waxman](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland and EBRPD
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 5:33:47 PM

June 14, 2013

Dear FEMA,

I'm writing in reference to the FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills. This document is a totally misguided and deeply flawed attempt to deal with the very real danger of fire in the East Bay hills, and is unacceptable in its current form. I encourage you to retract and revise this plan to assure that our taxpayers' money is spent on effective, reasonable fire mitigation measures, and not ones that are destructive to the ecosystems they purport to protect.

In particular, the UC proposal to cut down nearly 60,000 non-native trees in the Strawberry/Claremont Canyon and ridge areas, with no provisions for replanting of native vegetation, and with repeated applications of toxic herbicides to prevent resprouting is completely unacceptable. Let me enumerate just a few of the reasons why this is a terrible idea.

Habitat: Great horned owls nest in these trees, as do other raptors, keeping rodent populations in check. Without the raptor, the rodent population could pose a serious health risk. These trees also hydrate the hills environments, creating shade and fog drip which moisten the forest floor, even during the dry season. The stands of tall trees create wind breaks, which are an essential part of *slowing* fire spread in a wind-driven fire. The trees anchor hillsides and the steep slopes of the canyons; without their canopy to diffuse the raindrops, every rainstorm will erode the shorn ground and add to the silting of the creeks. These trees' shading *prevents* the growth of the fire-prone, invasive non-native grasses and shrubs such as broom, thistle, blackberry and hemlock, which will quickly fill the bare, unshaded ground if the UC plan is implemented. Clear-cutting will increase the risk of fire because more flammable weeds and brush will take hold.

Air quality: With global warming accelerating, and carbon dioxide recently found to exceed 400 ppm in the atmosphere, how can cutting down over 80,000 trees be a good idea? These trees sequester greenhouse gases, they remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, they transpire moisture back into the air, they shade and cool the earth. In addition, the current EIS allows for prescribed burns and a mammoth chipping operation, both of which would release enormous amounts of greenhouse gases into the environment. These chips, to be left on site, create a mulch layer which is itself a fire hazard.

Toxicity: Four different toxic herbicides are proposed for this project - Roundup, Stalker, Garlon 4 Ultra (from the Garlon 4 Ultra MSDS: "...highly toxic to aquatic organisms...; "Prevent from entering soil...waterways and/or groundwater"; "decomposition products can include...: hydrogen chloride, nitrogen oxide, phosgene." (All toxic)) and Garlon 3A - to be applied over a period of as long as ten years. The claim that none of these poisons will make their way down the watershed into the creeks, or that they will have no adverse effects on recreational users of the parks, or nearby residential communities, is pure wishful thinking. Even with all the mitigation precautions outlined in the Draft EIS, thousands of pounds of chemicals, applied by many users over many years – it takes only one unanticipated rainstorm

or rogue windstorm to carry these outside the arbitrary boundaries we imagine we have set.

FEMA should retract this EIS and remove those portions of the EIS that call for clear-cutting tall trees. The EIS should instead support a far less destructive methodology that would focus on a "species-neutral" approach, focusing on eliminating ground fuels and the fire ladder, thinning where appropriate, and limbing up as needed to ensure minimal risk of crown fires. Killing more than 50,000 trees and poisoning them for up to 10 years will have disastrous effects on this beautiful and healthy ecosystem, and cannot be allowed to happen. I support targeted (not widespread) use of herbicides on the Koa leaves when they sprout, only applying it locally and after the rainy season so that it doesn't wash into the ground water. Round-up remains active on the above ground growth for 2 days but works to kill the underground root system for weeks.

Yes, we have a wildfire hazard in the hills. And, yes, if we cut down all the tall trees, they won't be there to burn. ("We must kill the patient to save the patient.") But we can achieve an equivalent mitigation outcome with much less drastic – and damaging – interventions.

The East Bay Regional Park District has found that selective thinning of non-native trees, combined with regular removal of understory fuels, is an effective fire mitigation strategy. When there are ground fuels in abundance, (this could include the 20+ inches of wood chips the UC plan would leave on the ground) they provide ready fodder for a fast moving fire. These ground fuels were a major source of the rapid spread of the 1991 fire in the hills. If these had been controlled, we would not have had the laddering effect that led to torching and crown fires.

What I am proposing is a series of amendments to the Draft EIS that incorporate these alternative solutions to fire mitigation. The current version is an invitation to habitat destruction and has the potential to *worsen* the fire danger by removing wind breaks and creating more ground fuel.

The choice is not between wildfire destroying our homes, or razed hills and herbicides in the hills. These are false extremes. The East Bay hills, with their stands of trees, rolling hills and beautiful watersheds, are a model to other urban areas, many of whom have lost their natural landscapes to development. We can reduce fire danger *and* maintain the best aspects of our green belt, with selective thinning and understory removal.

One of the least quantifiable aspects of this Draft EIS is what our woodland "management" will do to the recreational and aesthetic qualities of the tree-covered hills that hug our eastern borders. Walkers, hikers and joggers, school groups and families, dog owners and bird watchers all are regular users and appreciators of the East Bay hills. These tree-covered slopes are a treasure worth saving. When fewer urban kids have contact with trees and nature, we risk raising a generation of young adults who will not value the preservation of wildness and natural settings. And that would be a loss to us all.

Sincerely,
Elinor Waxman

From: [Rick Rickard](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: [Allyson Rickard](#)
Subject: In Support of East Bay Tree Removal
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 4:51:27 PM

Folks,

As long-time Oakland hills residents who were here during the firestorm, we want very much to weigh in with our support of the plan to remove eucalyptus and other fire-prone invasives. As others have pointed out, there is substantial evidence that the long-term result of such a removal project is a renaissance of native plants that are more drought- and fire-resistant. We disagree with those who seem to have a knee-jerk reaction against removal of any plant and who don't seem to understand the extreme fire hazard presented by the eucalyptus.

Please count us in favor of going forward with the planned removal effort.

Sincerely,

Rick & Allyson Rickard
3241 Crane Way
Oakland, CA 94602

From: [Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE](mailto:Zimny_Chris@CALFIRE)
To: [Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE](mailto:Hall_Dennis@CALFIRE); [Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE](mailto:Sampson_Richard@CALFIRE); [Henly, Russ@CALFIRE](mailto:Henly_Russ@CALFIRE)
Cc: [Snyder, Bill@CALFIRE](mailto:Snyder_Bill@CALFIRE); [Shintaku, Duane@CALFIRE](mailto:Shintaku_Duane@CALFIRE); [Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE](mailto:Cunningham_Shane@CALFIRE); EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 4:32:33 PM

Rich --We would appreciate if you/the Unit could prepare and submit this letter with Dennis's edits and postmark by June 17th. Email EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov

Thanks--cz

Christopher Zimny
Staff Chief
Environmental and Cultural Resources Protection
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
1416 9th Street
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Desk (916) 653-9418
Cell (916) 712-7329
chris.zimny@fire.ca.gov

From: Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE
Sent: Friday, June 14, 2013 2:40 PM
To: Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE; Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE; Henly, Russ@CALFIRE
Cc: Snyder, Bill@CALFIRE; Shintaku, Duane@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills

All:

This at least reinforces in writing that CAL FIRE permits may be necessary in order to implement parts of the project covered under the EIS. I have concerns that we were not properly noticed through a notice of preparation and therefore have not fully engaged in the process – but maybe the fact that this is an EIS rather than an EIR changes our role.

I think the letter can go out. I made a couple very minor changes.

Dennis O. Hall

Dennis O. Hall, RPF #2597
Staff Chief, Forest Practice

CAL FIRE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
1416 9th Street
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
Phone (916) 653-9422
Fax (916) 653-8957
Dennis.Hall@fire.ca.gov

From: Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 4:53 PM
To: Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE; Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE; Henly, Russ@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE
Cc: Snyder, Bill@CALFIRE
Subject: RE: FEMA EIS for hazardous Fuels Reduction in East Bay Hills

Here is draft where I shamelessly stole from Shane's email. It's my normal Environmental Coordinator comment template.

Rich Sampson
Division Chief - Forester II
Resource Management - Fire Prevention LE

CAL FIRE

San Mateo - Santa Cruz Unit
6059 Highway 9
Felton, CA 95018
(831) 335-6742

From: Hall, Dennis@CALFIRE
Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 4:51 PM
To: Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE; Henly, Russ@CALFIRE; Sampson, Richard@CALFIRE; Cunningham, Shane@CALFIRE
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From: Zimny, Chris@CALFIRE

Sent: Monday, June 10, 2013 3:01 PM

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Russ Henly
Assistant Deputy Director
Resource Protection and Improvement
CAL FIRE
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460
916-653-9447 Office
916-214-4868 Cell

From: [Suzanne Rogalin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comments on EIS
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 4:11:16 PM

I wish to send the comments by Antonio Rossmann as my comments on the Draft EIS. He is absolutely correct in saying that the Draft EIS is inadequate. His suggestion for a "third way" is sensible and should have been included as an alternative to the bizarre plan to practically clear cut the Berkeley Hills.

Suzanne Rogalin
1955 Napa Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94707

[Comment on Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Berkeley/Oakland Hills](#)

*By Antonio Rossmann
Friday June 14, 2013 - 02:21:00 PM*

From: [conor](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: tree chopping
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 4:08:10 PM

PLease do not chop down all those trees
Conor

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

From: [Charles Noyes](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: re: Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction EIS for East Bay Hills
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 3:50:44 PM
Attachments: [12 June 2013 Myths about the EIS - Jon Kaufman.doc](#)

To whom it may concern,

I wanted to comment on the recently-completed EIS for the East Bay Hills for hazardous fire risk reduction. I strongly urge you to adopt the "proposed and connected actions" alternative, and to provide federal financial assistance to implement the hazardous fire risk reduction projects in the East Bay Hills of Alameda and Contra Costa counties.

I have reviewed the executive summary of the EIS carefully and find the analysis and conclusions to be well-considered, comprehensive, and very compelling. As a hydrogeologist with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and as a Berkeley home owner in the area that would be directly impacted by a catastrophic wildfire (we live at on Panoramic Way, between the Claremont Canyon PDM and the Strawberry Canyon PDM), I believe that the safest way to protect the lives and property of those in the neighborhood is to proceed as expeditiously as possible with implementation of the plan.

I believe that the suggested protection for surface water during pesticide applications is entirely reasonable. I concur with the analysis submitted by Jon Kaufman, stewardship chair of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy regarding the "myths about the EIS" (attached). I also concur with the findings of UC Berkeley's campus environmental manager Tom Klatt recently submitted to the Berkeleyside new site <http://www.berkeleyside.com/2013/06/11/uc-berkeley-expert-talks-about-hillside-tree-removal-plan/>.

I do not agree with the findings published by the Express from a consultant from URS Corporation <http://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/is-uc-berkeleys-plan-to-cut-down-54000-trees-necessary/Content?oid=3577198>. The approach recommended therein relies on selective thinning of trees and regular clearing of the understory. In an age of shrinking budgets, and with the very strong likelihood of increasing droughts and temperatures brought on by climate change, such an approach represents a dangerous, uncertain half-measure that in all likelihood would provide little protection from catastrophic wildfire.

My wife and I hike the fire trails in the Strawberry Canyon PDM at least once a week, often more frequently. Although we love the scenic beauty provided by the eucalyptus and Monterey pine trees in this area, we are acutely aware of the danger they would pose during a wildfire.

We lived through the 1991 firestorm, narrowly avoided being caught in the fire ourselves, and had many friends who lost their homes to that fire. Please help our community avoid a repeat of this tragedy by adopting the "proposed and connected actions" and by funding these critical hazardous fire risk reduction projects as quickly as possible.

I would be glad to provide additional input if need be, and can be reached by phone at 925-422-8820.

Sincerely,
Charles Noyes

From: adddarb@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Berkeley Hills Tree Removal
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 3:31:40 PM

I live on Grizzly Peak Blvd -- the interface where much of the tree-cutting activity might happen.

My sincere concern is this:

What was growing here in the very beginning? It wasn't Eucalyptus, I believe the hills were covered with Redwoods. The redwoods were cut to build Oakland, CA.

Redwoods are actually fire-reducing in nature. There is a home in our neighbor which burned to the ground, and the grove of redwoods surrounding it kept the house fire from spreading to other homes on the block.

The areas in these hills which have had Euc's removed already, look barren, and have lots of chips and logs lying around---. That is not the way the hills should be left.

Barbara Addicott
1400 Grizzly Peak Blvd.
Berkeley, CA 94708

510-848-1109

From: [snow](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: No to EIS for East Bay Hills Tree Removal Plan
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 3:31:15 PM

Dear FEMA Representative,

While I think the U. C. Berkeley/EBRPD plan to reduce fire danger in the East Bay Hills admirable, the plan is extremely short sighted and presents greater and long term risk to the residents of the east bay. Their plan is to clear cut and spray possible causing cancer chemicals across a very large area. The clear cutting will devastate wild life habitat, increase the chances for landslides, and allow for more run off to enter into human communities. This run off will be filled with chemicals that are thought to cause or contribute to cancer. We don't need that. The landslides will endanger homes and safe roads, too

Basically, their plan will cause more and far reaching damage then a possible fire would. Their plan is short sighted and costly and should not be funded with tax payer money or anyones for that matter.

There are better solutions then to using chemicals to poison wild life habitat that is widely used by the residents of the east bay.

Thank you,
Snow Laura Levy

From: [Tamia Marg Anderson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: support for the East Bay Hills EIS
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 2:37:05 PM

Dear FEMA,

My husband and I own and manage a 14+ acre parcel with two homes close to the ridge of the east bay hills in Claremont Canyon. Our immediate neighbors are EBRPD, UCB open space, EBMUD, and Pacifica Foundation. My parents bought this land in 1953 and I grew up here, returning later in life to build a home and live here as well. I have witnessed two wildfires which narrowly missed our houses here and know the potential for unmanaged eucs to burn ferociously. I have also seen several euc-removal projects by our neighbors, in particular UC. After their clear-cutting of eucs, what was previously the understory became a new forest of formerly suppressed native vegetation. The plan for the removal of these eucs, followed by herbicide, is the right move towards a long-overdue cleanup of these abandoned agricultural plantations gone bad that pose a threat to our hills community.

Sincerely,
Tamia Marg

From: [Sara Sunstein](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Draft EIS for vegetation management projects, Oakland hills, CA
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 1:32:32 PM

The Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable.

1. Clear cutting is never acceptable. It leads to erosion, massive carbon emissions, ends carbon sequestration, destroys habitat for wildland critters, including raptors that keep down the rat and mice populations.
2. Massive herbicides are not acceptable, especially on hillsides where they enter the water shed and poison everything.
3. The Draft EIS does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. Moreover, the project itself poses massive fire dangers.

Please, do not approve the Draft EIS. Send them all back to the drawing board. Tell UC to manage its wildlands better. They have departments of Natural Resources with intelligent people. Fire reduction needs can be met differently and in a way that supports life on the planet, rather than destroying it.

Sincerely,
Sara Sunstein
P O Box 6164, Albany, 94706
UCB, class of 1973

From: [Antonio Rossmann](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: info@claremontcanyon.org; [HCN](#); [Dan Grasseti](#); [Kathy Burns](#); [Becky O'Malley](#)
Subject: Comment on Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction DEIS
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 12:50:29 PM

I am submitting this comment as a frequent user of the Claremont Canyon and Strawberry Canyon trails and resident at 6442 Hillegass Avenue, Oakland; and apparently a mildly dissenting member of the Claremont Canyon Conservancy. While my professional practice over 40 years has concentrated on preparation of or response to comprehensive comments on environmental documents, this comment will not focus on linear detail but attempt summarily to reach the heart of the matter.

The EIS posits a choice between only two alternatives: do nothing, or remove all the eucalyptus and Monterey pine. And so the community appears to have divided: those advocating wholesale acceptance of the FEMA proposed project, and those advocating no action. This circumstance, which flows from legal error so gross as to invite FEMA to withdraw the DEIS and proceed properly lest one of the interested advocates prosecute a worthy legal challenge, represents a regrettable disservice to the community. As I frequently advise my clients and my students, in the face of extremes your challenge is to find the third way. FEMA must develop and implement the third way of selective tree removal.

This writer accepts the reality that eucalyptus and other exotics pose a fire threat in the Claremont and Strawberry Canyon areas. This hazard must be moderated to the greatest degree balanced with other considerations. At the same time, this writer believes that stands of eucalyptus and Monterey pines within the two canyons form an important element of the historic and evolving landscape. One need only consult paintings from the California plein air school to comprehend that these trees have for a century formed a recognizable part of our region's environment and ecology. Just as the law recognizes that few absolutely natural watercourses remain in the state, such that we treat the changed water resource as "natural" for regulatory purposes, so should these trees be understood as earning recognition as part of the landscape that we view and in which we recreate.

Totalitarian elimination of this heritage landscape should be no more pursued than would we pursue elimination of other exotics, for example the striped bass from the Delta, or the post-McClaren vegetation in Golden Gate Park. And yet, action must be taken to improve both the fire security and visual access in these two canyons. Not all environmental conflicts lend themselves to beneficial resolution of competing values, but this one does. On rewrite the authors of the EIS will have the opportunity to honor the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Isaiah Berlin, that all values are relative.

A thinning of the exotics to preserve the most prominent trees, while removing concentrations that pose environmental risk and actually detract from the views of both hikers and observers, should be developed as a third alternative. For example, the prominent row of Monterey pines atop the north ridge of Claremont Canyon provide a visual landmark to users of the canyon and to those from afar; these should be maintained. Similarly, the landmark eucalyptus inside the elbow of the second switchback on the Claremont Canyon trail -- that is, the switchback that overlooks the Golden Bear soccer field -- would be unthinkable to destroy. Selective

thinning will leave these untouched, while promoting the health of the remaining forest and improving visual access from points along the trails. Shade and habitat will be preserved. This worthy example is the one followed by UC Berkeley a few years ago in Strawberry Canyon, and which now forms the preferred method of fuel reduction within the Tahoe National Forest.

The EIS is fatally flawed by deliberately avoiding the development of this alternative, instead including a partial clearance as a variant and part of the proposed project. This fallacy enables the decision-makers to avoid independent consideration of a partial-clearance alternative on its own, and more regrettably, from conducting the legally-required comparison of that alternative to both project and no action. The present EIS enables the decision-maker to avoid the legal necessity of identifying the alternative, other than no action, that is environmentally favorable; that strikes at the heart of NEPA.

Finally, the EIS fails to stand as a joint EIS/EIR, and thus cannot serve the state-law actors (UC Berkeley and EBRPD) whose approvals to carry out the project also require environmental documentation. This error is also more than academic, in that not only must those local agencies make use of an EIR, but they must formulate and adopt enforceable mitigation measures more potent than those required by NEPA; and prior to that, consider alternatives that are capable of attaining most, if not all, of the project objectives, which a thoughtfully-designed thinning project can accomplish.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Rossmann

Antonio Rossmann
Rossmann and Moore, LLP

Lecturer in Land Use and Water Resources Law
University of California, Berkeley, School of Law (Boalt Hall)

After 1 July 2013:
2014 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94704
T 510.548.1401
F 510.548.1402
BART: Berkeley Downtown

Until 1 July 2013:
380 Hayes Street
San Francisco 94102
Tel 415.861.1401
Fax 415.861.1822
BART Civic Center

MUNI Van Ness Metro and 21 Bus

<http://www.landwater.com/>

Rossmann and Moore is Green.

From: [Cory Wright](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills Tree Removal
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:34:37 AM

Dear FEMA Review Committee:

I am writing to express my disapproval of the UC, Oakland and EBRPD Fire Risk Reduction project being considered for FEMA funding. I have been an Oakland and Berkeley resident for the past 7 years and walking, hiking, biking and running in the Oakland and Berkeley hills has been one of the major highlights of the quality of life here. I was alarmed to discover that a plan to clear cut approximately 100,000 trees in these hills was under consideration and as a result I have made efforts to inform myself of the specifics of the FEMA Draft Environmental Impact Statement as well as the studies and opinions of experts opposed to the EIS.

First, it appears that 'converting' this fuel mass in the form of trees to a wood-chip layer 2 or more feet deep does not remove the fire risk. This quantity of wood chips can if ignited create flame lengths of 14-69 feet, far in excess of the 2 foot flames that would be the goal of this undertaking. Also of great concern is the use of tremendous quantities of herbicide that would be used. The short and long term implications of these toxins are not properly addressed in the EIS. Additionally, the EIS does not properly address the impact of cutting down 100,000 trees with regards to loss of carbon sequestration in those trees. The effect of these projects on the Greenhouse Gas situation as well as the local air quality need to be considered much more completely. Of particular concern is how this EIS does not take into consideration the long term scenarios of regrowth and how the vegetation that will come up in the future will impact the fire safety situation. Other, less environmentally (and less costly) alternatives the address fire reduction exist, but are not adequately discussed in the EIS.

For all of the above reasons I strongly urge that FEMA retract the EIS and have it reworked to address its many shortcomings.

Sincerely,

Cory Wright
Oakland, CA

From: [Janet Lenihan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:31:50 AM

I live adjacent to the proposed EIS Draft area in the Redwood Garden Senior Residence, 2951 Derby St., Berkeley, and I care very much about fire hazards.

The proposed draft EIS plan will create a WORSE FIRE HAZARD for this area and is very worrisome and frightening to me for the following reasons:

1. As a result of the disappearance of 80,000 trees there will be massive mud slides
2. The whole water system , leading to the San Francisco Bay, will be drenched with poison from dispersal of insecticides, (garlon and Roundup), for the next ten years.
3. Wildlife will completely disappear and will be left to rodents. This is ecologically very bad news.
4. Esthetically the vast area will be bare and ugly.
5. Because of the herbicides the parks and trails will be humanly inaccessible.
6. We understand that the actual fire hazards will increase.

I have heard residents who actually lost their homes in the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire are very alarmed by the fact that this plan does not solve the fire hazard, and will INCREASE the fire hazard, who are working hard to bring sane, alternative plans in place. These alternative plans are being worked on which make scientific, ecological sense.

We beg you to turn this draft plan down, and thus allow alternative plans which will actually solve the fire hazard problem.

Respectfully,

Janet S. Lenihan
2951 Derby St., #206
Berkeley, CA 94705

From: [Christopher Adams](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comments on Hazardous Fire Risk Reductions EB Hills Draft EIS
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:31:17 AM
Attachments: [Haz Fire Risk Reduction.docx](#)

I am attaching an 8 page Word document as comments on the DEIS. I will also send a paper copy by US Mail. Christopher Adams

From: [Christie McCarthy](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: EB Regional Park eucalyptus removal: YES
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:30:03 AM

We strongly support the proposed removal of eucalyptus trees. These trees are fire hazards, and given our experience in the Hills Fire, we would be very naive to NOT take advantage of this opportunity to replace eucalyptus and Monterey pines with alternative native flora.

Best,

Christie & David McCarthy
6000 Ocean View Drive
Oakland CA 94618

From: [Brad Johnson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: strawberry canyon and claremont canyon
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:12:54 AM

Please reconsider your plan to use Round-Up in Berkeley's Strawberry Canyon and Oakland's Claremont Canyon. That toxic chemical is not needed in our community. The Monsanto company that produces it is a reckless and unethical manufacturer of poisonous substances and unsafe GMO's. They do not deserve our tax dollars. Also, please do not cut down 85,000 trees. While fire prevention is important, and restoring native trees where invasive species have taken over is a noble goal, clear-cutting a beautiful park and spewing poison over the land is not the way to go about it. Selective thinning, pruning, and planting would be a much more responsible course.

I thank you for taking the time to read my comment, and also for your service to our country.

Bradley Johnson
Taxpayer and Registered Voter

From: [Connie Field](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Against the deforestation of the Oakland-Berkeley hill area
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 11:07:36 AM

As a resident of the Oakland-Berkeley hill area, I am thoroughly familiar with the hills and want to express my unmitigated opposition to the FEMA's deforestation plan. That plan has been drawn up without any consideration of its short-, medium-, and long-term environmental and social consequences.

I strongly urge you to reconsider your plan and draw up a sensible alternative in collaboration with environmental, civil, and social agencies.

Connie Field
Clarity Films
Saul Zaentz Media Center
2600 10th St. Suite 412
Berkeley, CA 94710
Tele: 510-841-3469
Cell: 510-289-5025
connie@clarityfilms.org
[@ClarityDocs](#)

www.clarityfilms.org

From: [Administrator](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: fema draft eis
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 10:52:19 AM

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

From: [Connie Sobczak](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: PLEASE DO NOT FUND THE DEFORESTATION OF EAST BAY HILLS
Date: Friday, June 14, 2013 10:16:45 AM

To whom it may concern:

I implore you NOT to provide funding for the deforestation of the East Bay Hills. My personal request is followed by the scientific reasons to abort this plan. I have been hiking in the East Bay hills most of my life. I was here during the fire of 1991 and had to evacuate my home. I am still adamantly opposed to the plan to remove all of the eucalyptus, acacia, and Monterey pines, followed by the spraying of pesticides to stop them from coming back. I thought we had become a more enlightened country when it comes to the environment. Both people and wildlife thrive because of the trees that populate the hills. As a hiker I NEED the trees for shade as well as enjoyment. As I get older, the shade has become more important. There are many people whose only form of exercise is hiking in the hills, me included. You will be taking away a critical part of my life and contributing to my ill-health in many ways if you give money to cut down the trees. Walking uphill keeps me in excellent physical health. I release my stress by breathing in the beauty of the trees and sitting to rest in the shade provided by the beautiful trees. I know I am breathing clean air, not pesticides, when I get out into nature. This will all be taken away from me and I'll be left angry and grieving if this plan goes through. I will have to leave my home because I don't think I can stand knowing that the hills are being destroyed by deforestation and pesticides. You may think I'm just another crazy tree-loving individual to be discounted, but I'm not. I'm a solid, thoughtful, respectful citizen who works hard and happens to prefer getting exercise and releasing stress in nature than in a gym. This plan will destroy people's lives as well as trees and animals.

PLEASE do not allow the East Bay Hills to be destroyed. I'm sure many people have provided you with the information below, but please read it again as you also take into account the emotional, personal reasons for not cutting down all of the trees in my home.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately address the effects of these projects on Greenhouse Gas emissions and the ongoing reduction in carbon sequestration capacity. The analysis not only uses an inappropriate baseline, but also fails to adequately consider the loss of ongoing carbon sequestration that will result from these projects. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the Greenhouse Gas implications of cutting down 100,000 tall trees.

>The FEMA draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD projects is unacceptable as currently written in that it does not adequately address the cost or the risks associated with the herbicide use that is being proposed. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the expected herbicide use not only to kill eucalyptus trees, but also the hemlock, broom, thistle, and poison oak that will emerge as a result of the loss of shade canopy.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately analyze reasonable

alternatives proposed for fire risk mitigation. Far less costly, far less environmentally damaging, and far more effective methods have been proposed, but the EIS fails to consider them. The EIS needs to be retracted and reworked to analyze reasonable alternatives rather than simply dismissing them without any serious analysis.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it does not adequately the effects on air quality resulting from the proposed plan. We ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to fully consider all the implications of the proposed projects on air quality.

>The FEMA Draft EIS for UC, Oakland, and EBRPD vegetation management projects in the hills is unacceptable because it relies on a fire model that is fundamentally flawed in that it compares the risk of the current environment iwth the environment that would exist the day after 100k+ trees are cut. This is a meaningless comparison as the EIS does not specify any means by which the project proponents will maintain the environment in this state. Because of this, shortly after the projects are completed, the fire danger will increase as more flammable weed/brush and tall grass vegetation takes hold. Because of this, we ask that you retract the EIS and rework it to modify the fire modeling to compare the current state to the expected new equilibrium state, not a completely meaningless state.

Sincerely,

Connie Sobczak

--

Connie Sobczak
Co-Founder/Executive Director
The Body Positive
connie@thebodypositive.org
www.thebodypositive.org
510.528.0101

From: [Benjamin Carpenter](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:27:52 PM

I understand the need to selectively cut for fire safety, but the use of herbicides on that land is unforgivable.

Please use your good senses and do not poison the land that we all live in.

Benjamin Carpenter,
Oakland, Ca.

From: [Carolyn Tipton](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Deforestation and Poisoning
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:06:33 PM

Dear FEMA,

Please reject the radical plans to clear-cut and poison in the East Bay Hills. Please consider the plan of the Hills Conservation Network, which is a far less radical, more sensible plan.

Thank you,
Dr. Carolyn L. Tipton

From: [celeste mclean](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: The Hills
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:34:33 PM

Please do not support the use of toxic herbicides on the Berkeley and Oakland Hills. There is a "cut & tarp (biodegradable) " method that is more effective and non-toxic to the environment and the community in regard to reducing the trees for fire hazards. Many best wishes.
celeste mclean-reid

From: [Charles Belbin](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please no Native Plant restoration funding
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:10:10 PM

Dear FEMA,

Please not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project in the East Bay Hills and the SF Sutro Forest that will only increase the fire hazard by:

- Destroying the wind-break;
- Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
- Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and
- Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use **thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides** where they can get into the watershed. It will **release carbon emissions on a huge scale**. This project is not only **environmentally destructive**, it is a huge **waste of funds** that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Children play in the Sutro and people walk there. It is a beautiful place. If the logic of returning the flora to native conditions were extended to the fauna that would include the removal of a good many of us San Franciscans! That's obviously absurd and so is the dubious reasoning of the return to native plants only folks. It is the nature of Nature to adjust to conditions--the Sutro Forest has survived and thrives. Let's let it live. There's nothing 'native' about pesticides!

Charles Belbin, San Francisco

Please approve the No Project alternative.

From: [Christopher Johnson](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Statement of Support for the Work Proposed in the FEMA EIS
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:31:31 PM

Dear FEMA,

We all are aware of the great debate raging on in the East Bay community about whether removing eucalyptus and monterey pine trees helps reduce the spreadability of fires. Some people - notably folks from the Hills Conservation Network - claim that eradicating eucalyptus and monterey pine trees is an unnecessary step - that by thinning and better managing of understory vegetation, we can better control fire risks. Others - including people from the Claremont Canyon Conservancy - claim removing these trees entirely, as proposed in the FEMA EIS, would vastly reduce the risk of spreading wildfires. After reading research articles by qualified experts, visiting the eucalyptus removal test site on Claremont Avenue, and watching a compelling video on the devastating 2011 wildfire in Australia, I have reached the conclusion that the work plan proposed in the draft EIS is not only necessary, it's imperative.

Certainly nobody likes the thought of removing tens of thousands of eucs and monterey pines, or the barren hillsides such work will create. But taking a long-term view of vegetation management, removing these trees would allow other species to take root and flourish, including coast live oaks, bay trees and redwood trees, all of which are native to the area and much less flammable than eucs and monterey pines.

I am satisfied that objective research demonstrates conclusively that (a) eucalyptus trees, when they catch on fire, propagate burning bark strips thousands of feet ahead of the main fire front; (b) eucalyptus trees and monterey pine trees have higher concentrations of flammable oils, compared to other trees, making them potentially much more dangerous; and (c) these species tend to smother other trees and shrubs that may be trying to grow beneath their canopies.

I urge FEMA to ignore the naysayers from HCN. I recognize they are passionate in their beliefs, however in this instance, the overwhelming evidence suggests eucs and monterey pines are dangerous, pose an unacceptable hazard to the area, and must be removed for the long-term safety of the community.

Christopher Johnson
Chair, North Hills Community Association

From: [Deborah Cowan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: "Native Plant" restoration project
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:37:12 PM

Fema! this is a careless, insufficiently thought-out plan--you can accomplish what you want by much better means, (including the economics). Please hold off until further discussion of sensible alternatives!!

Thanks,

Deborah Cowan
Berkeley resident and native

From: [Denise D Anne](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: TREES ARE LIKE TOTEMS
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:44:55 PM

Please, please do not destroy trees. To some they are sacred but to other they afford our breathing and absorption against global warming. Where do people get the insane idea to destroy these precious living thing.

Denise D'Anne
351 Guerrero St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-431-4172

From: [Diana](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: A murder of trees.
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:19:05 PM

Berkeley and Oakland need all the trees they have. By clear cutting the trees it will bring other, even worse problems. I'm infuriated that they were able to keep this so quiet. I live in the Bay Area and it took someone in Seattle to make me aware of this tragedy. We must not let this occur.

From: [Ellen Holmes](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:44:42 PM

The East Bay Hills projects that threaten nearly 500,000 trees - about 77,000 in Berkeley and the Oakland Hills, another 409,000 in the East Bay Regional Parks District.

PLEASE approve the "No Project" alternative for all the reasons already stated by those who have THOROUGHLY STUDIED IN-DEPTH the situation and who have no agenda except what is truly best for the environment!

Reasons Summarized:

To destroy all these trees for a Native Plant restoration project will only increase the fire hazard by:

1. Destroying the wind-break;
2. Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
3. Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and will encourage the growth of more-flammable plants.
4. It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Thank you,

Ellen Holmes
3053 Fillmore St.
San Francisco, Ca 94123

From: [Greg Schwartz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please do not not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will increase the fire hazards
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:33:29 PM

Please do not not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will increase the fire hazards.

Destroying a valuable wind-break, and turning living trees into dead fuel, will not help.

I know it's meant well, but please, please, don't do it.

Thank you.

From: [Jacqueline Proctor](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please approve the no project alternative
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 11:18:22 AM

Please do not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

- Destroying the wind-break;
- Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
- Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and
- Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a huge waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Please approve the No Project alternative.

Jacqueline Proctor

From: [Julia Brown](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Native Plant Restoration Project in Oakland/East Bay hills
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:35:47 PM

Dear FEMA-

Please do not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;

Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;

Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and

Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Instead please approve the No Project alternative.

Thank you,

Julia Brown
San Leandro, CA

Sent from my iPad

From: [Kathleen M Trieschmann](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Environmental murder
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 11:31:03 AM

Please reconsider the very destructive choice you are making to remove the trees and then use Round up to prevent regrowth. Nothing good will come of that action. Thank you, Kathleen M. Trieschmann

From: [Kent Mastores](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comment on EIR - Nuke the Eucs!
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:58:29 PM

Please, please get rid of these horrible eucalyptus trees.

In 1970, when I first lived in the E. Bay--in Berkeley right across the street from Tilden Park--I loved the two large eucalyptus trees in our back yard, just as I remembered fondly the stately, old eucalyptus trees lining a lane near the old horse barn down on the Stanford campus.

But over the years I have come to hate the species, for all the obvious, oft-cited reasons.

One further reason not often mentioned is that when they get to the end of their lives at around 100 years they are huge in both length and diameter and, with their relatively shallow root system in the type of soil we have around here, tend to come crashing down with potentially disastrous results. I came close to being killed when one fell across our street a couple of years ago. (And that's not the only one that has fallen on this street recently.)

NUKE THE EUCS, please!

Kent N. Mastores, survivor of the 1970 and 1991 fires
7050 Balsam Way
(the end of a dead-end street across from the Sibley Triangle)
Oakland, CA 94611
510.652.1986

P.S. I am joined in these sentiments by my spouse, Constance Rowell Mastores, a Berkeley and Oakland resident since her birth in 1938 and a survivor of those same fires. BTW, both her mother, b. 1907, and her father, b. 1909, remembered the 1923 conflagration as they were living in SF and in the Berkeley hills, respectively, then.

From: [Kent Mastores](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Subscribe
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:40:46 PM

Please put me on your mailing list.

Nuke the eucs!

From: [M. Donovan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Reject Oakland's application
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:43:46 PM

Oakland, California residents do not want our trees destroyed and the land sprayed with toxic herbicides.

Please reject the UCB,EBRPD and Oakland CA application for \$5.9 million.

This is an ill-thought out plan for the area and the wrong approach. Thank you.

MK Donovan
Oakland CA

From: [Misty Jones](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Cutting trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 11:27:17 AM

I think that cutting down all those trees because of fire hazards is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard! We live with earthquakes, tornados, tsunamis, hurricanes and wildfires but yet cutting down trees and spraying it down with roundup is dangerous and something we can prevent. Roundup carries glyphosate in it which causes harm to humans. Roundup can cause these problems Parkinson's, infertility and cancers. Why would you want to release that upon us. As if we don't have enough problems with our earth. Trees release oxygen for us to breathe. I just don't get people like you who want to destroy something so beautiful as in what you want to tear down. I think you all need to do more research on what you are willing to release in to our atmosphere and the illnesses that can occur from what you want to use. For starters read these articles

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/04/25/roundup-health-study-idUSL2N0DC22F20130425>

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/homesteading-and-livestock/roundup-weed-killer-toxicity.aspx?PagelD=2#ArticleContent>

Sincerely,
Misty Jones

From: [Molly J](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:42:14 PM

To whom this may concern,

I'm writing to ask you to approve the No Project alternative.

The Native Plant restoration project will increase the fire hazard destroying the wind-break, converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground, reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer, and encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

I'm also very concerned that this project will use **thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides** where they can get into the watershed. It will **release carbon emissions on a huge scale**. I'm very worried that this project is environmentally destructive.

Thank you for your time,

Molly Joplin

From: [Rebekah Moan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:27:16 PM

Hi there,

I'm writing to ask EMA not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;

Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;

Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and

Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

I ask that you approve the No Project alternative. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Rebekah J. Moan

--

[Another world is not only possible, it's probable.](#)

From: [Richard Schwartz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: <no subject>
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:29:26 PM

AS an ex-forest fire fighter for the USFS, I think your plan very poorly thought out and SHOULD NOT BE DONE. AS I saw many times, smoldering fires (like in the chips) erupt long after and make me think you might be creating a new firestorm rather than stopping one. What about all the wildlife you would kill. THIS IS A VERY DESTRUCTIVE, ILLCONCEIVED, AND POISONOUS PLAN. DO NOT GO FORWARD WITH THIS PLAN.

Richard Schwartz, former forest fire fighter with the USFS

From: [Richard Schwartz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Strawberry canyon
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:25:47 PM

These plans for Strawberry Canyon in Berkeley are the most outrageous I have ever seen. Not only is the poisoning of an area right above an intensely populated on (and the runoff to the bay) like a 1950 nightmare, but the destruction of a habitat and the inevitable soil run-off a horror thought out my mad men. DO NOT DO THIS.
Richard Schwartz

--

Richard Schwartz
<http://www.RichardSchwartz.info>

Subscribe to my events email list,
<http://eepurl.com/o4ltf>

From: [Rony Rolnizky](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Public Comment on Draft EIS (FEMA Tree Destruction)
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:04:11 PM

EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX@fema.dhs.gov

Dear FEMA: This proposal is both ridiculous and dangerous. My feeling is that this is a cult, out to destroy plants and trees they don't care for. All the science is squarely on the side of nurturing trees, not killing them, and they have their ears shut.

Destroying forests and large stands of trees is the opposite of what we need to do, in this time of climate change. For the public good, please deny this project.

~Firstly, it endangers the water with the plan to use severely toxic herbicides.

~Secondly, it does not reduce fire hazard - drying and heating the area and increasing wind through tree loss will *increase* fire potential. The brush and weeds that spring up after such tree removal are much more flammable!

~Thirdly, I strongly object to use of tax dollars for such an unnecessary project. There are people and places that deserve FEMA funds, and this is not a situation even remotely close to deserving.

Please look at this article about air pollution in China being linked to deforestation. It is obvious that our air in the Bay Area is worse and worse. Please don't contribute to worsening our air! Trees are like lungs of the world - if we continue to cut them out, we

will not be able to breathe. We need *more* trees and forests, don't be duped into funding this awful project.

<http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/1204076/deforestation-blame-beijings-pollution>

Thank you,
Lulu Carpenter

From: [Samantha Weaver](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Please please please don't take away our trees!!
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:16:16 PM

I grew up in the Bay Area, and my whole family lives there. Trees were the place I lost myself and played as a child. They are so important to the community. They give children and families and people of all ages solace and sanctity.

Please, do not take these trees out!

My whole family is crushed at such a thought. It pains the community to imagine them gone.

Samantha Weaver

From: [Sasha Oaks](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:34:10 PM

Please don't fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;
Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and
Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.
It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Please approve the No Project alternative.

Sasha Oaks
ReverendOaks@gmail.com
707-774-1368

From: [Scott Rubel](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Approve the No Project alternative
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:58:47 PM

FEMA, do not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;
Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and
Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.
It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Approve the No Project alternative.

From: [Sev Ulitsky](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:31:05 PM

To whom it may concert:

Please do not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;
Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and
Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Please do not approve the No Project alternative!

Sincerely,

Vsevolod Ulitsky - Oakland.

From: [Susan](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comment om draft environmental impact statement
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:28:54 PM

FEMA,

I am writing to you regarding the draft environmental impact statement for the native plant restoration project in the SF Bay Area's East Bay hills project.

I ask you to not fund the project for several reasons. Among them are: cutting down standing trees would destroy the current wind break, it would encourage the growth of more flammable plants, it would reduce landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer months, now living trees would be converted into dead fuel on the ground increasing damage in case of fire. In addition I am very concerned about the project's use of thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides. such chemicals would get into the watershed. Carbon emissions would be increased on an unnecessary and unacceptable scale.

I see the project as a waste of funds and as noted above would be environmentally harmful.

Any funds can and should be used to reduce rather than increase hazards in the area. As someone who has utilized the East Bay Regional Parks for many years for hiking and other recreation I mourn the prospect of a vast number of park trees being cut down. the parks have been a major source of pleasure for myself and my family.

Please do not fund the prospective native plants restoration project.

Thank you,
Susan Lieber
471 Cavour Street.
Oakland, Ca 94618

From: [Susanna Schmitz](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills petition
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:43:00 PM

Re: East Bay Hill Projects

Dear sir or madam:

Please do not to fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;

Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;

Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and

Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Please approve the No Project alternative.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,
Susanna Raeven

From: [Valerie Geier](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Comment Letter-East Bay Hills EIS for Hazardous Fire Risk Reduction
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 2:39:16 PM
Attachments: [Comment Letter-FEMA Tree Removal -Geier.pdf](#)

From: [Victor Sella](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Don't fund the east bay hills tree removal project!!!
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 12:31:39 PM

From: [Wendy Beck](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Approve No Project Alternative
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:02:08 PM

I'm writing to ask that you approve the "No Project" alternative. We do not need the native plant purists to eliminate wind breaks, etc.

Our area has a habit of breeding purists who do not see any other point of view. I do believe the no project option is the way to go after much research. I hope you consider this when you make the decision.

Thanks,
W.S. Beck

From: [2](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: PLS NO
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 1:24:41 PM

God created trees not to be broken down by men but to help men in their time of need!

It says in the Quran too that trees are used by humans for shades among other awesome things.

Tis a natural thing that Should Not be destroyed by MAN.

From: [Barbara Irving](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: To do this is a disgrace our country is supposed to be broke and yet you have money to destroy
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:41:39 PM

From: [James Koss](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Trees, let them be
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:33:34 PM

All this is true.
What are your salient points?

Destroying the wind-break;
Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;
Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and
Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.
It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed.
It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale.
Not only environmentally destructive, this is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

From: [Robert Clear or Barbara Judd](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Cc: inquiries@hillsconservationnetwork.org
Subject: FEMA EIS for tree removal in Berkeley/Oakland hills
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:31:42 PM

FEMA tree clearing proposal

The fire hazard problem in the Berkeley Hills is a maintenance issue, not an emergency issue. FEMA's proposal to clear-cut a portion of the Berkeley and Oakland hills simply replaces one maintenance issue with another one, while creating a host of other problems. FEMA proposes to use Roundup to control brush growth after clear-cutting, despite the fact that Roundup is poisonous to amphibians. Removal of the trees will devastate the local ecology, and is likely to create a slide hazard that will have to be managed. The money that FEMA spends on clear-cutting will simply create an on-going budget issue for weed and bush control, at a time when sequestration of funds is severely impacting other budgets. This is an inappropriate use of FEMA funds, that may even increase the fire hazard. The fire hazard can be controlled with far less invasive procedures than what is being proposed.

FEMA will receive other comments like the above, so I wish to add one more. The FEMA draft is unacceptable because it is a sub-optimization that ignores the social costs. The removal of a few trees near the Memorial stadium above the campus sparked a protest that required a large police presence over many weeks. Clear cutting a much larger area may create a much larger and more sustained protest, with its associated dollar costs, and risk of personal injury or even death. In addition to the short-term costs and risks during the actual work, there are long term-costs. A person would have to be blind not to have noticed the increasing distrust of government power, especially when it is exercised in such a blunt and polarizing fashion. There are other methods for dealing with the fire risk which do not create such an extreme risk of social unrest.

Robert Clear
3134 California
Berkeley, California

From: [Ginger Chouinard](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Poor Choice!
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:22:19 PM

Keep the TREES! They are natural and serve an important environmental purpose. Pesticides only do harm to the workers, the environment, and all creatures who come into contact with it. Pesticides are unnatural! Bad choice!!

-G Chouinard

From: Muteboss@aol.com
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Re: Clear cutting in Oakland and Berkeley
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:16:02 PM

Dear Project Directors,

I have read so many things over so many weeks, regarding the proposal to clear cut, pour thousands of gallons of toxic herbicides over an extended period of time, and an elaborately over written but completely unconvincing FEMA EIS, that I cannot believe FEMA will go ahead with this project.

The agency must know that their EIS is a far cry from the most productive and helpful plan that could be come up with; that UC Berkeley is attempting to make the federal government responsible for their own bills (which means we taxpayers will pick up the tab for something we don't even approve of), and that FEMA has far more urgent matters to attend to.

This isn't even a wise plan: everybody who knows anything about land management knows that clear cutting and the application of toxic chemicals for an extended period of time is a very bad idea.

FEMA shouldn't have to be reminded that these woodlands will become even *more* flammable if the current tree cover is removed, which provides moisture to the undergrowth, and the roots of the trees prevent erosion, which also leaves highly flammable material in its wake.

Two feet of wood chips saturated with a flammable chemical is less dangerous than a woodland? I don't think so.

This is a very bad idea, and it will certainly destroy the habitat of hundreds of native species, in case anybody cares about that.

FEMA has much better things to do with its time and money.

Please go do them.

Sincerely,

Kate O'Connell
2321 Grant Street
Berkeley, CA 94703
Muteboss@AOL.com
(510) 540-7427

From: [Jamey Frank](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East Bay Hills EIR
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:14:34 PM

Please do not fund a futile Native Plant restoration project that will only increase the fire hazard by:

Destroying the wind-break;

Converting living trees into dead fuel on the ground;

Reducing landscape moisture from fog drip during the summer; and

Encouraging the growth of more-flammable plants.

It will also use thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides on steep hillsides where they can get into the watershed. It will release carbon emissions on a huge scale. This project is not only environmentally destructive, it is a waste of funds that should be used to actually reduce hazards, not increase them.

Approve the No Project alternative.

Sincerely,

--Jamey Frank, San Francisco

From: [m_o](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: comment on EIS - please stop this program!
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 5:14:07 PM

Hello,

My name is Maxim Orgiyan, I am a resident and a homeowner in Berkeley.

I strongly oppose the proposed fire prevention plan to cut down thousands of eucalyptus and pine trees.

Having forrests and parks with rich vegetation one of the main appeals of Berkeley and Oakland, and we should be at the very least maintaining it, and not destroying trees that have been here for many years and that take many years to grow simply because we label them "nonnative".

The public has not been widely informed about this plan - I personally found out about it by accident, and not many people are aware of it. There are no public notices posted in the affected area.

Please let me know how I can continue to participate to make sure that this plan doesn't become reality.

Thank you,
Max.

From: [Nikki Deese](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Save the forest
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:58:51 PM

Save the trees don't cut them down we need them to provide cleaner air the animals need them as well to build their homes and for food so save the trees

From: [Haven Jumanji](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: East bay hills tree project
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:55:02 PM

FEMA,

**Do NOT fund the Native
Plant Restoration Project!**

It has many negative side effects that will
damage our eco system.

As someone that lives here I am begging
you to not continue with the project.

Please save the trees.

-Doug

From: [Kristina McNaught](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Stop Cutting the Trees
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:53:34 PM

As a concerned Berkeley resident and frequent user of the East Bay Hills Fire Trails for recreation, I strongly oppose the removal of any more TREES! Removing trees removes habitat for important species of insects, plants, birds and other animals. There will be less shade on our wonderful trails, making them less user-friendly. The loss of species may permanently affect the environment of the Hills.

Please stop or at least strictly minimize the removal of trees.

Thank you,

Kristina McNaught
3019 Fulton Street
Berkeley, CA 94705
510-548-5705

From: sharon.maldonado
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: EEMA Draft EIS, Berkeley hills
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:48:43 PM

To whom it may concern,

I ask that FEMA revise its Draft Environmental Impact Statement regarding reducing the risk of fire in the East Bay Hills. The draft EIS as it now stands poses too many risks to our watershed, to wildlife habitat, to the carbon sequestration of trees, and to the ecosystem itself. Also, it is detrimental to community character, to the aesthetic look and overall feel of the human community. The draft EIS especially in the UC Berkeley area would increase the risk of fire instead of reducing it.

FEMA must revise its Draft EIS to use alternative methods to reduce the risk of fire. The use of herbicides should be forbidden, especially the planned semi-annual applications. Thinning dense groves, and clearing the debris from the understory would be far more effective. Funding this more moderate method is far preferable to funding applications of toxic herbicides. I understand that the Park Service has a preferable plan. We need to see land as a community to which we belong, not as a commodity to exploit.

Regards,
Sharon Maldonado
Retired teacher and 44 year resident of Berkley, CA

From: [Gail Camhi](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Native Plant Restoration Project
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:29:51 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

i strongly urge you not to fund the above project, which will only serve to destroy the wind-break, convert live trees to dead fuel on the ground, encourage growth of more-flammable vegetation and involve distribution of thousands of gallons of toxic pesticides which will wind up in the watershed from the steep hills.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gail Camhi
4 Fallen Leaf Way
Novato, CA 94949
415-884-2875

From: [Lisamrie](#)
To: [EBH-EIS-FEMA-RIX](#)
Subject: Draft EIS
Date: Sunday, June 16, 2013 4:29:22 PM

I have read over this whole plan and am appalled.

Destroying thousands of healthy trees on the basis of "there might be a fire" is ludicrous. If we were to go with that theory, I guess ALL trees should be cut down because "there could be a fire*".

On top of that, this is a gross waste of tax payer dollars and I'm sure most taxpayers are unaware of this ridiculous plan.

Herbicides? Round up? So you cut down trees that would enhance the environment and help keep the air clean, and then use poisons to make sure nothing can ever grow there again? Really??

Do you people even understand the impact on the environment?

You need to replace the uninformed people who came up with this plan with those that are informed so that an alternate, NON destructive plan can be formulated.

The current plan is reckless, destructive, wasteful, and incredibly absurd.

I couldn't even believe what I was reading. Use your smarts and stop ADDING to the environmental problems.

Disgusted.

Lisa Williams
Augusta, Ga