



Scenic Pacifica  
Incorporated Nov. 22, 1957

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## CITY OF PACIFICA

170 Santa Maria Avenue • Pacifica, California 94044-2506  
[www.cityofpacifica.org](http://www.cityofpacifica.org)

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To Whom it May Concern,

December 2, 2019

The hillsides of Pacifica were once grassland with patches of native brush. Over the last 60 years ornamental plantings of Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Monterey Cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*) have spread from the housing developments and propagated up the adjacent hillsides. These trees are native to California but are not native to the coast of San Mateo County.

The new forest now numbers hundreds of trees and the grass has been replaced with deep brush. Pitch canker, a disease caused by the fungus *Fusarium circinatum* was introduced to the Pacifica area approximately twenty years ago. Pine pitch canker affects numerous tree species however Monterey Pine is the most widely affected host. The fungus causes infections (lesions) that can encircle (or girdle) branches, exposed roots, and the main stems (trunks) of pine trees. The tips of girdled branches wilt as a result of obstructed water flow, causing needles to turn yellow and then brown. The fascicles (needle clusters) eventually fall off, leaving bare branch ends. Multiple branch infections can cause extensive dieback in the crown of the tree and may lead to tree mortality. This disease has had a devastating effect on the health of this species of tree and appears to have affected virtually all of the Monterey pine trees in this area of Pacifica to varying degrees.

Due to the mortality of these trees and the substantial fire threat they pose to the 583 adjacent homes, one elementary school and two apartment buildings, the City of Pacifica has listed the removal of the Sixty-five Monterey Pines and the thinning of underbrush as a high priority. This fuels management effort will benefit the community of Valley Mar by creating a defensible space zone between the new forest and the adjacent homes and other critical infrastructure. The remaining cypress and other native trees will benefit, and forest health and wildfire resiliency will be greatly increased. A healthier tree population also plays a role in increasing carbon sequestration.

The total area of the project is approximately 20 acres. The City of Pacifica is committed to matching up to \$25,000. in funds for the implementation if this grant is awarded.

Aren Clark  
City of Pacifica  
Public Works Superintendent  
Certified Arborist # WE4323AT