

Santa Ana River Canyon Habitat Area

CITRUS ORCHARD REMOVAL & NATIVE HABITAT RESTORATION

WHAT

The operation of a 21-acre citrus orchard (located on Orange County Flood Control District property in Yorba Linda) is no longer viable due to trees infected by the disease Huanglongbing (HLB). HLB is carried and spread by a tiny insect called the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP). In the best interest of the public, the community and citrus trees across the region, citrus trees are being removed and steps are being taken to return the area to natural and native habitat.

WHY

In October and November 2024, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) confirmed the presence of HLB-infected trees in the orchard. These trees were treated and removed in accordance with CDFA protocols. A notice to hold commodities on site was issued for the orchard to prevent spreading the disease. The orchard is located within an established State quarantine zone for the presence of ACP and HLB.

WHERE



Fruit from infected trees is of no value because of poor size and quality. Once infected, a tree will eventually perish. There is no cure for the HLB disease.

Given the potential for future required treatments and removal of infected trees, and to prevent the spread of ACP and HLB in order to prevent potential impacts to residential and commercial citrus trees, continued operation of the orchard is no longer viable.

Natural and native habitat will be established within the area where trees are removed.

The existing habitat adjacent to the orchard currently supports the least Bell's vireo, a federal and state endangered bird species. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is actively encouraging a land-use change of the orchard to restore habitat suitable for the least Bell's vireo.

The site is within the Santa Ana River Canyon Habitat Area on Orange County Flood Control Property, located between Prado Dam and Weir Canyon Road.

WHEN

Removal of infected citrus trees: Mid-Dec 2024 to Early Jan 2025
Native habitat restoration: Late 2025 (tentative)

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