

The fight continues to save our historic 100 year old Eucalyptus Forest, planted by EW Scripps in 1909.

The Fire Department is still driven by fear of any perceived form of fire liability and armed with federal grant money to spend by 2010. Parks and Recreation has a completely separate agenda of removing all non-native plants and trees which includes eucalyptus. There are pressures from some of the more radical environmental organizations to remove non-native trees and federal directives to protect native plants – all aimed at our Forest!.

Serious scientific work on the issue has been done - in Australia - and it indicates that our Fire Department's claim that the trees are accomplices to the rapid spread of wild fire is seemingly without much scientific foundation. According to scientists down under, the eucalyptus may actually reduce the risk - both by killing the highly flammable brush underneath them and by forming windbreaks as well as *Fire Breaks* which knock down burning brush embers airborne in 50 mile per hour winds!

The science of Fire-storms is complex business and the Save Our Scripps Ranch Trees (SOSrt) organization is enlisting international experts in Computational Fluid Dynamics and Combustion Engineering of Fire Storms to debate the pros and cons of clear cutting mature Eucalyptus. The fear is that the Fire Department, while trying to eliminate as many eucalyptuses as they can to reduce fire danger, will, in fact, increase the real danger to the community and simultaneously destroy its character...

The Mayor's office is preparing to offer us a "pilot program" where the City would have arborists tag any trees to be cut, and give a new SR Community Oversight Committee a 5-7 day chance to review and consider any "appeals" to take back to City for re-look. While this sounds like a concession, it really would provide little more than some minor reduction in cutting of mature trees and perhaps a chance to go watch as they cut them down.

The final issue is one of finances and there is real risk that if the City resumes its current plan of cutting tens of thousands of mature trees in Scripps, it will run out of funds with the job only partly complete. Remember, there are 117 sites planned for the same fate as "Ground Zero" on Scripps Ranch Blvd. They would basically destroy some large part of the Forest and leave the rest untouched – the worst of all worlds.

The bottom line: SRCA, the SR Planning Group, SRMAD and SOSrt are actively working to get the City to do what the community is demanding – reduce the brush, cut the dead trees, trim at risk trees and remove the dead wood on the ground.

In short, a logical fire prevention plan devoid of political motivation.

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