

UCSD creates strategy to preserve Eucalyptus groves

March 8, 1990

Contact: Pam Jenkinson, (619) 534-7303 or Dolores Davies, (619) 534-3120

UCSD HAS STRATEGY TO PRESERVE EUCALYPTUS GROVES

In the 1989 Revised Long Range Development Plan (LRDP) recently approved by the Regents, UCSD has reaffirmed its commitment to preserving Eucalyptus trees by designating a significant portion of the groves and other natural features of the campus, as part of the UCSD "Park." In addition to the grove, the Park includes hillsides, canyons and bluffs, which are designated as ecological reserve or preserve lands.

Through the Park, UCSD will preserve the campus's unique natural features, including native vegetation, for educational purposes and for the enjoyment of future generations.

Although the pressures of UCSD growth will cause some new campus facilities to displace a number of existing trees, it is anticipated that this loss will be offset by numerous new trees to be planted on campus. While the majority of existing trees will be preserved in this Park system, some, unfortunately may die, not from new buildings, but from poor health and insect infestation.

"The trees are not in the best of health," said Ernie Chew, a horticulturist retained by UCSD to evaluate the condition of the trees. "They are suffering from overcrowding, inadequate irrigation and fertilization, as well as from borer beetles, which have been attacking Eucalyptus trees throughout the state. The groves are really more fragile than most of us would think -- they need more care and attention than they've been given."

According to Chew, the poor health of the trees is also being caused by people who are inadvertently damaging or mistreating the trees by bumping them with campus vehicles or nailing notices on the trees.

"There are a number of things that UCSD can do from a non-technical perspective to nurse the trees back to health," said Chew. "People should stay on designated trails when walking through the groves and refrain from nailing or posting signs and flyers on the trees, as this wounds them and opens them up to infection. Also, contractors and service vehicle drivers should be required to stay on asphalt paths when driving adjacent to the groves."

As a result of the horticulturist's recommendations, the campus's Department of Facilities Design and Construction is currently developing specific policies to eliminate future encroachment of construction activities into the groves. Additionally, a Park Committee has been established to direct the development of a management and maintenance program to preserve and enhance the park resources.

(March 8, 1990)