Santa Clarita Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan Oak Woodland Monitoring

SCV GSA Board Meeting
Item No. 3.2

March 20, 2024

Oak Woodland Monitoring Project

- In response to comments made on GSP, an Oak Woodland Monitoring Program was initiated in 2023
- Three locations were identified in the upper watershed meeting following conditions:
  - Mature Live Oak stands
  - Accessible property with land-owner approval
- Purpose of the monitoring was to collect data on oak tree health in the upper watershed over time
- Monitoring was conducted by a Registered Consulting Arborist (#769)

Oak Woodland Monitoring

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF COAST LIVE OAK TREES SURVEYED

Open Space Area	Number of Coast Live Oak Trees Observed
Quigley Canyon Open Space	28
Rivendale Park and Open Space	26
Wildwood Canyon Open Space	20
Total Trees	74

Oak Woodland Monitoring Locations

Physical Characteristics

- Diameter at standard height (DSH; 4.5 feet trunk height) – measured from the base of the tree using a forester's diameter-equivalent tape.
- Canopy spread – physically measured where access allows.
- Height – visually measured.
- Health and structural ratings were assigned on the criteria described below.

Oak Woodland Monitoring

Physical Condition

- Identification of damage caused by pathogens or insect pests, by natural causes such as lightning, or by human activity.
- Evaluation of vigor based on such parameters as amount of new growth, leaf color, abnormal bark, dead wood, evidence of wilt, excessive necrosis or leaf chlorosis, thinning of crown, etc.
- Assessment of the overall health of the tree based on the evaluation of vigor, presence of damage, and comparison to the typical archetype tree of the same species.
- Evaluation of vigor based on such parameters as amount of new growth, leaf color, abnormal bark, dead wood, evidence of wilt, excessive necrosis or leaf chlorosis, thinning of crown, etc.
- Notes about damage caused by pathogens or insect pests, by natural causes such as lightning, or by human activity. Assessment of the overall health of the tree based on the evaluation of vigor, presence of damage, and comparison to the typical archetype tree of the same species.

Oak Woodland Monitoring

Rating

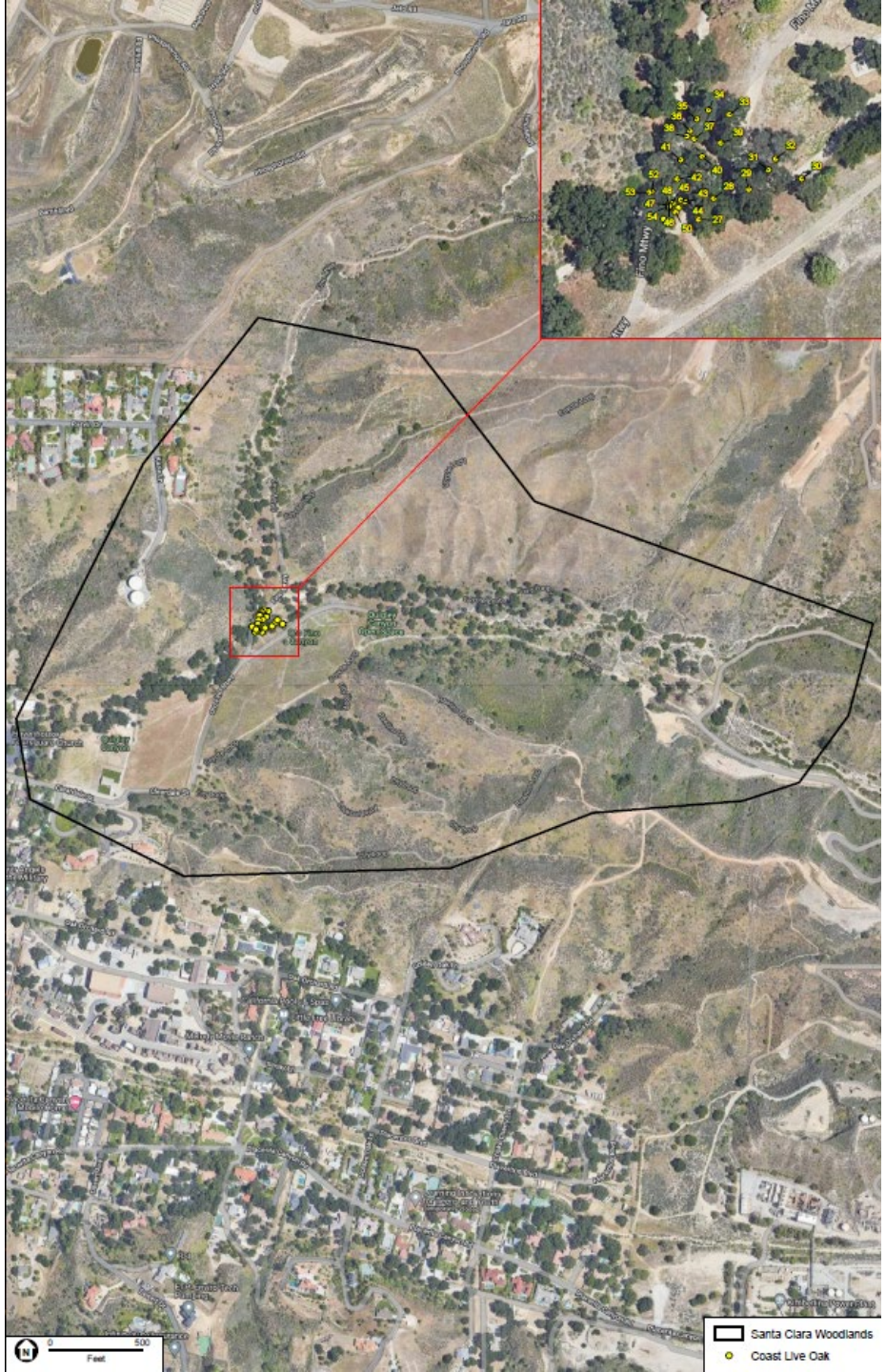
"A" through "F" was assigned for health, vigor, balance, and aesthetic.

Ranks were based on the criteria described below:

- "A" = Very Healthy/Excellent
- "B" = Healthy/Good
- "C" = Average Health/Fair
- "D" = Dying/Poor
- "F" = Dead/Very Poor

Rivendale Park and Open Space

Quigly Canyon Open Space



Wildwood Canyon Open Space

Oak Woodland Monitoring

TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF OAK WOODLAND AVERAGE RATINGS

Open Space Area	Health	Structure	Average
Quigley Canyon Open Space	Fair to Poor	Fair to Poor	Fair to Poor
Rivendale Park and Open Space	Fair to Poor	Fair to Poor	Fair to Poor
Wildwood Canyon Open Space	Poor	Poor	Poor

Oak Woodland Monitoring Conclusion

Overall, the surveyed oak trees exhibited health and structural characteristics consistent with trees that have experienced long periods of acute drought and wildfire damage. However, the oak trees were generally observed to be in a state of recovery due the abatement of drought conditions.

Questions