

Mr. Alessandro Amaglio
Ms. Mary Simms
Region IX
Federal Emergency Management Agency
1111 Broadway, Suite 1200
Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Mr. Amaglio and Ms. Simms:

As an elected public official I am concerned about the danger of wildland fire in our community. Specifically, the current drought conditions have heightened the potential fire hazard posed by the dense eucalyptus forest in Claremont Canyon.

I understand your agency is completing an Environmental Impact Statement in order to release funds to reduce this fire hazard. We write in support of funding to remove the eucalyptus and not simply thin them. The fire hazard posed by these trees is well documented. In Claremont Canyon complete removal of these dense tree clusters will enable native species of oak, bay and willow to regenerate themselves as they have where eucalyptus was cleared earlier on the south side of Claremont Avenue at Signpost 29. The contrast between this area and the untreated eucalyptus forest across the road is illuminating.

Simply thinning the trees will continue to block sun light, consume the limited amount of ground water and not enable the native, less flammable species to regenerate. Furthermore, thinning will enable the Diablo Winds to blow through the eucalyptus more readily, thus enhancing the fire danger and increase the threat to homes in Claremont Canyon and beyond. Thinning also obligates the property owners to years of additional maintenance expense.

Therefore, please approve the EIS as originally submitted, allowing each of the three landowners to move forward with the plan that suits them best. This will enable the University of California, the major landowner in Claremont Canyon, to substantially reduce the threat of wildland fire.

Sincerely,