

Good morning,

I am writing to express my concern over the massive tree die off that is underway in Lake County. The trees are dying faster than we can take them down, and the cost of falling them is significant. But the potential cost of not falling them is even higher, as that present a clear imminent danger to the health and safety of all Lake County residents and visitors.

I have two parcels, 32 acres on Cobb and 62 in Loch Lomond, and as a single 54 year old woman I have relied heavily on grants and my Prather cousins to drop the trees there. A few months ago we counted 52 dead Ponderosa on my Loch Lomond parcel--there are more now. Dropping a tree costs \$1-2k, so if there was no grant support I would be out \$100k. More than the worth of the parcel. This would be the same for other owners of rural lands. If nothing is done I fear a dead forest owned by absentee landlords who can't sell the blighted land because of the standing dead trees, and stop paying taxes, and just walk away.

This situation has exploded beyond the scope of what Lake County can handle with local resources, which allow you to escalate it and declare a disaster/emergency to access state and federal resources. Without help, we are going to have a forest composed solely of the Standing Dead. Thousands of acres of rusty red trees, a ticking time bomb for any nearby development and all public roadways. This is a climate disaster, a wildfire risk, a watershed nightmare, a wildlife disaster, flooding, mudslides, and economic impacts due to loss of tourism, and logging.

I strongly urge you to declare the emergency. We can pay the price now, or we can pay the higher price later.

Thank you for your attention,

Elisha Prather