

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 14th Floor, Albany, New York 12233-1010
P: (518) 402-8545 | F: (518) 402-8541
www.dec.ny.gov

STATE OF NEW YORK: DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

In the Matter of an Order for
the establishment of
Protective Zones to Prevent the Spread
of Oak Wilt disease pursuant to ECL
Sections 9-1303

ORDER

WHEREAS:

- Oak Wilt is a serious tree disease that was first detected in the Great Lakes Region of the United States in 1944. Since that time it has spread, killing thousands of oak trees each year. Oak Wilt is caused by a fungus, *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, which causes blockage of the water conducting vessels (xylem) of host trees slowing the movement of water within the tree whereby the leaves wilt and drop off. Infected red oak and European tree species typically die within a few weeks of infection and white oaks may take several years to die. The disease is spread through underground root systems and by beetles that colonize within infected trees. In addition, the spread of Oak Wilt disease is associated with the movement of firewood and other wood products. Thus, immediate action by the Department is necessary to eliminate this infestation and prevent the spread of this fungus to protect oak trees in the surrounding area and the entire state;
- In January 2016, the Department was notified by the Cornell Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic and New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets that samples from a symptomatic oak tree in Central Islip, NY had been submitted by a Tree Care company and tested positive for Oak Wilt by the Cornell Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic;
- In June, 2016 Department staff confirmed that Oak Wilt disease had infected oak trees in Central Islip, Suffolk County, New York;
- From June, 2016 – October 2016, Department staff sampled symptomatic



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

trees in the Central Islip Protective Zone, in the surrounding area, and on other properties as reported by public and private landowners;

- In November 2016, the Department was notified by the Cornell Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic that several samples from symptomatic oak trees had tested positive for Oak Wilt;
- In November 2016, Department staff confirmed that Oak Wilt disease had infected oak trees in a new infection center in the Town of Islip, and in the Towns of Southold, and Riverhead, Suffolk County, New York;
- The Environmental Conservation Law (ECL) Section 9-1303(5) empowers the Department to establish protective zones for the purpose of preventing the spread of forest tree diseases;
- ECL Section 9-1303(7) also authorizes the Department by order to prohibit the movement of materials which may be harboring forest tree diseases;
- Department forestry staff has consulted with Oak Wilt experts from the United States Forest Service and is developing a response and management plan, which will be discussed with the affected homeowners and community.
- Department staff has delineated the area infected with Oak Wilt disease as described on Schedule A and on the attached map, which shall be known hereinafter as the "Protective Zone"; and
- ECL Section 9-1303(7) provides that in establishing protective zones, the Department shall have the authority to enter onto private lands to make such modification in the composition of forest growth as it may deem necessary for the purpose of preventing the spread of forest tree diseases including spraying, cutting, destroying or otherwise treating trees or other vegetation located in the Protective Zone.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to ECL Section 9-1303 and based upon the above findings:

1. **I HEREBY FIND** that Oak Wilt disease has infected oak trees in the Towns of Islip, Southold, and Riverhead, Suffolk County, New York, and that, in order to protect the forests of New York State, the Department must take immediate action to manage this infestation and prevent its spread;

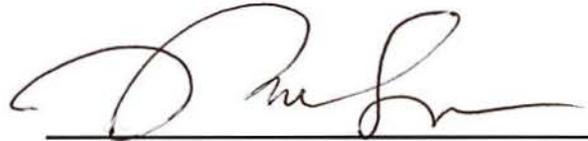
- 1A.** Oak nursery stock may be moved out of the Protective Zone under a limited permit providing that the shipping nursery is under a compliance agreement with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Plant Industry. This compliance agreement will require Oak Wilt surveys in nurseries and specify production practices to minimize the risk of spreading Oak Wilt through nursery stock movement. It will also require nursery growers handling regulated articles to compile, maintain and make available for inspection for a period of two years, records of inventory and sales of regulated articles on a form or forms prescribed by the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets.
- 1B.** Living or dead or any portion thereof and firewood (of any species) may be moved outside of the Protective Zone under a Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Lands and Forests limited permit, providing the materials are from sources apparently free of Oak Wilt disease; transportation of such materials shall only from August through March; materials shall be shipped with a copy of the permit and proper shipping documents.
2. **I HEREBY ORDER** Department staff to continue to develop and implement, with public involvement, a management plan including: (1) the removal of infected and potentially infected host trees, (2) proper disposal of infected material, and (3) any other action, as resources allow to prevent the spread of Oak Wilt disease.
3. **I FURTHER ORDER** Department staff to continue to take reasonable steps and exercise due diligence to notify, work cooperatively with and enter into agreements with affected landowners as appropriate to implement the Department's management plan;
4. **I FURTHER ORDER** that the infected area, as delineated on Schedule A and the attached maps of boundaries, is designated as the Protective Zone for the purposes of carrying out this order;
5. **I FURTHER ORDER** that, except as authorized by the Department in writing, no person shall move any living, dead, standing, cut or fallen oak trees or any

portion thereof, including branches, logs, stumps or roots, green oak lumber and firewood (of any species) outside of the Protective Zone unless it has been chipped to less than one (1) inch in two (2) dimensions;

6. **I FURTHER ORDER** that the Protective Zone established in this Emergency Order replaces the Protective Zone previously established in Central Islip;
7. **I FURTHER ORDER** that a copy of this order be immediately filed in the Offices of the Clerk of Suffolk County; and
8. **THIS ORDER SHALL BE EFFECTIVE** ten days from the filing thereof with such Office and shall remain effective until Oak Wilt disease has been declared eradicated from within the Protective Zone.

DATED:

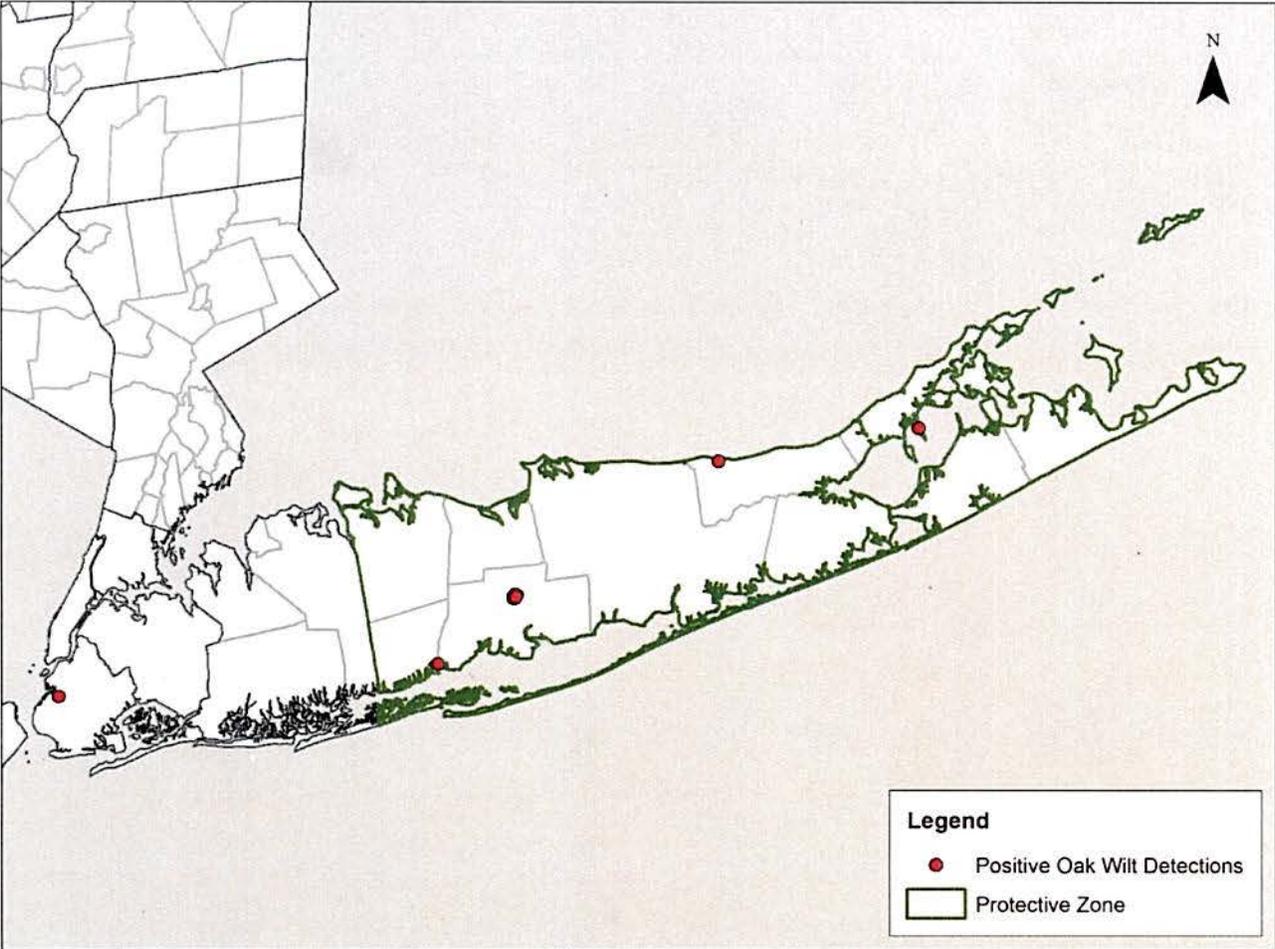
March 23, 2017



Basil Seggos
Commissioner
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

c: Commissioner Ball
Christopher Logue
Robert Davies

Schedule A



Including all Towns in Suffolk County including those parts of the Towns of Babylon, Huntington, Smithtown, Islip, Brookhaven, Riverhead, Southampton, Southold, East Hampton, and Shelter Island.