

GYPSY MOTH State orders voluntary quarantine in Felton area

4-5-85
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FELTON — A voluntary quarantine over 175 acres "infested" by the gypsy moth will officially go into effect Tuesday — a quarantine some have already called a "harassment tactic."

The California Department of Food and Agriculture got final approval for the quarantine this morning. The quarantine is voluntary and will not include road blocks or stopping of vehicles.

It will, however, make it illegal to take gypsy moth-host materials out of the area without getting them inspected first. Host materials include firewood, building materials, plants and stored recreational vehicles.

Persons moving such materials out of the 175-acre zone are asked to call 425-2885 for an agricultural inspection first. Those caught "willfully violating" the quarantine will be subject to fines of not more than \$75.

The state maintains the quarantine is needed to prevent the spread of the gypsy moth "infestation" out of Felton. Fifth (San Lorenzo-Scotts Valley) District Supervisor Joe Cucchiara and some Felton residents feel the state is only reacting to the county's legal victories rather than enforcing a necessary gypsy moth eradication measure.

California Department of Food and Agriculture Information Officer Gera Curry said the quarantine is not aimed at visitors passing through Felton or those residents who frequently use their recreational vehicles, trailers and boats. Gypsy moth-host materials that have sat idle outdoors within the zone for long

periods of time are prime targets for gypsy moths to lay their eggs.

Cucchiara claimed the quarantine is a "harassment tactic" and a "reactionary measure" by the state. He said the quarantine "further reduces the credibility and image of the state" in Felton residents' minds.

Larry McNeill, owner of White Raven Bookstore and a member of People for a Safe Felton, called the quarantine "a sour-grapes reaction" by the state. Fellow member Don Haslam of People's Natural Food Store called it "totally unnecessary."

Curry defended the quarantine, saying it is necessary since the use of the insecticide carbaryl was prohibited by the local Superior Court, and the non-chemical bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* ordered used. B.t. will be aerially sprayed Saturday morning for the third time.

"A quarantine is standard procedure whenever we're not 100 percent confident in the material we're using," she said. "It's been done in San Diego and Santa Barbara when we had a less-than-effective eradication tool."

Curry expressed confidence residents will comply with the voluntary quarantine, saying, "It's to their advantage that we keep the moths from spreading."