



# Cooperative Oak Wilt Suppression

## Fungal Disease Threatens Oak Trees

Caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagaceurum*, oak wilt kills live oaks and red oaks by plugging up water conducting tissues.

Hundreds of thousands of oak trees have been killed in 73 Central and West Texas counties.

## TFS Response

- With funding from the U.S. Forest Service, Texas A&M Forest Service initiated a Cooperative Oak Wilt Suppression Project in Central Texas in 1988. The program continues to this day.
- Affected landowners are offered technical assistance and federal cost shares to treat expanding oak wilt centers in live oak motts and remove infected red oaks.
- TFS partnered with fellow organizations to develop and maintain a web page devoted to oak wilt management in Texas: [www.texasoakwilt.org](http://www.texasoakwilt.org).
- In an effort to increase the technical assistance available to landowners, TFS has joined with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service to train several hundred certified arborists, master naturalists and master gardeners as “oak wilt specialists.”
- TFS foresters have offered numerous oak wilt workshops and met on-site with countless landowners whose properties are affected by oak wilt.
- In collaboration with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, TFS has organized and sponsored two National Oak Wilt Symposiums to highlight oak wilt research and management options.

## Economic & Environmental Impact

- Since 1988, a total of **3.9 million feet of cost-shared trenches** have been installed to halt the spread of **2,772 oak wilt centers** in 42 counties in Central Texas.
- This is equivalent to a trench running from Houston to El Paso (**739 miles**).
- An estimated **1.6 million trees on 56,000 acres** have been saved over a five-year period from halting disease spread on **2,772 treated centers**.
- Benefit-to-cost ratios for the use of trenching to halt oak wilt spread have been conservatively estimated at an average **6:1**, ranging from **2:1** for rural, non-residential sites to **13:1** for suburban sites.
- The **\$20 million in federal, state and private funds** that have been invested in oak wilt management since 1988 has yielded at least **\$120 million in benefits**.
- Since its inception, the oak wilt website has grown in number of users and amount of content and has become the definitive resource for oak wilt information in Texas.
- More than 800 master gardeners and certified arborists have been trained as “oak wilt specialists” in Central Texas.

