



Black Oak Magic...

Have you noticed The Black Oak Magic? Here and there where everything is a blackened ruin and all the other trees burned, there is the bright spring green of a grove of Black Oaks putting out new leaves and doing well. The Black Oaks survive because of work that their relatively large leaves do putting moisture into the air. This is different than most trees in our area which make it through the hot dry summers by having small resinous leaves that conserve as much water as possible.

The Black Oak is a generous tree.

It has a deep and extensive root system pulling water out of the soil, up the trunk and out the leaves at a great rate. This is called evapotranspiration. Like respiration...you can think of it as the way trees breathe. So the Black Oaks are breathing water vapor into the air.

But it's not the moisture that stops the fire. It's the way the water vapor cools the air around the trees creating a micro-climate downdraft. Warm air rises. Cool air goes down. Something we saw during the fire...the way the wind blows is where the fire goes.

The mighty Black Oaks are creating their own small wind, pushing the fire down. Only a grove of Black Oaks are able to do this. Scattered trees here and there can't do it on their own. Only when they work together in a community are they able to survive the fire.

Like us and our wonderful community of Concow. Like us the Black Oak is hard to transplant. It loves its native ground. So only rarely do you find them in nurseries, even native plant nurseries.

Concow needs more Black Oak Groves. This fall, when you see their acorns lying on the ground, take some home and cover them with a little soil. Then you will have Black Oak Magic for yourself.

Distributed via email from Ms. Mandy Lyle



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August 2009
Begin Community Needs Assessment
Strawbale build 2010
Planning/Fundraising

July 2008
Concow Phoenix Formed

August 2008
Formed partnership with INOCF and raised funds through the Annie B's Fund Drive

September 2008
Created website, blog and email contact list for fire survivors

October 2008
First training grant distribution
Created community tool bank

November 2008
Halloween Fundraiser

December 2008
Ben & Jerry's fundraiser
Created & distributed post-fire restoration calendar

January 2009
Adopt-A-Shed Collaborative Building Project

February 2009
Title 25 working group advisory
Collaborative restoration grant application

March 2009
Info for national newsletter
Research and collaboration on Cal EMA & FEMA disaster recognition & resources

April 2009
Collaboration on CSUC funding for strawbale land utility

May 2009
Yard sale of donated books

June 2009
Wild Mountain Fair Fundraiser

July 2009
Press contact for Annie's army of fire media coverage
Annie's army Ho do letter home

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~ a Year In Review ~



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