

Additional Documents

April 25, 2023 NREC Meeting



NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA

1414 MISSION STREET, SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030

TEL: (626) 403-7240 • FAX: (626) 403-7241

WWW.SOUTHPASADENACA.GOV

REGULAR NREC MEETING

APRIL 25, 2023 7:00PM

PUBLIC COMMENTS

FROM: ANGELO GLADDING

AGENDA ITEM: ITEM 2: CONTINUED TREE HEARING: 1865 HANSCOM DRIVE

ATTACHMENT: LETTER TO COMMISSION WITH PHOTOS



April 24, 2023

Dear Commission,

Thank you for continuing to review this tree removal permit.

The applicant's tree site plans are in disagreement and appear to have numerous errors. They serve as a poor baseline to make realistic or reasonable decisions about "reforestation". Can you please ask the applicant to assemble a single, authoritative tree site plan? Since the path forward involves taking into consideration future structure(s), can you ask the applicant to roughly portray these as well?

Collecting photos of the discrepancies has been difficult as brush still exists overgrown and untouched despite code enforcement requests to clear a year ago. Considering this tree removal permit was initiated with code enforcement documents as evidence and safety as a primary motivation, I don't understand why the brush clearance hasn't been addressed already site-wide. It most certainly does not require tree removal. The bamboo-like shrubs will become a fire hazard when they dry out in a couple of months. Bone dry dead trees litter the property despite the Fire Chief asking for them to be removed last year. The fire hazard risk increases greatly with heavy machinery and work being done on the site which will likely commence as soon as the trees are removed.

The Live Coast Oak requested for removal is a native species and the code requires two 24" box *native* species replacements for each 10" of caliper. The oak is 91" and thus calls for twenty 24" box native species replacements. There are zero native species replacements in the applicant's replacement plan. Greywater irrigation does not compensate for native classification. Native species are about more than just water requirements.

The spirit of the tree code is to maintain our urban *canopy*. Wikipedia states "In forest ecology, canopy refers to the upper layer or habitat zone, formed by mature tree crowns and including other biological organisms (epiphytes, lianas, arboreal animals, etc.)."

10' fruit trees sounds like a nice retirement project but does not in any way constitute maintenance of our urban canopy or an adequate replacement for trees standing 50-70' tall. Many of the placements are butted up against existing oaks that are currently in equilibrium. Irrigating avocado trees placed beneath or too close to an oak's dripe line is a danger to the oaks themselves as they have vastly different water requirements.

Furthermore, the applicant could simply choose to remove the entire lot of trees after two years without any penalty or if he decides avocado farming is no longer interesting.

I recognize that the task of appealing this process has become draining to all parties involved. The community and neighbors are left simply wondering why the process continues to push forward without due consideration. Please ask better of the applicant and please appreciate the time I've personally taken to ensure that our community's urban forest is treated with the respect it deserves.

Here's a few comments from Alison Lancaster, the arborist that has offered to be an impartial community arborist. She contracts for neighboring cities and is well respected by her arborist peers as I have learned first-hand.

- **Drought readiness** - Avocado trees are not as drought friendly as the native tree and pines that are being removed. And they definitely won't be drought friendly if [the applicant] has any hopes of the trees being productive, because fruit production requires LOTS of water.
- **Loss of habitat** - Removing an oak which provides the most wildlife habitat of any tree in SoCal, as well as tall pines that serve as perches for birds of prey - to be replaced with short avocado trees that offer no wildlife benefit.
- **Erosion** - [The applicant's] claim that avocados have shallow roots and therefore mitigate erosion is unfounded. It's wrong for two reasons:
 1. Trees have roots wherever resources (water, gases, nutrients) are available. That's USUALLY in the upper layers of the soil, but can also be deeper. Avocado trees will not be any more likely to have shallow roots than any other species of tree, because rooting depth is dependent on soil type and resource availability - NOT on the species of tree.
 2. Effective erosion mitigation does not come from shallow root systems. In fact, shallow root systems on loose soil slopes would be undesirable as the trees would not be well-rooted and would be more likely to fall over as they grow bigger.
 - Effective erosion mitigation comes from planting a variety of plant types, including trees that have expansive (not shallow) woody root systems to hold soils together, as well as shrubs and ground covers that spread additional roots and also shield soil from rainfall to prevent washing away of soil in storm runoff.
 - If his plan is to simply plant a grove of avocados, he will be missing half of an effective erosion mitigation plan.

The applicant has apologized to public works for replacing quality with quantity yet as far as I can tell he hasn't even spoken to any of the neighbors he's impacting. What may appear to be kindness isn't. The applicant seems to be treating this as a game. He's made a mockery of the process thus far and he's had an ex South Pasadena senior city planner helping him from the beginning. There's simply no excuse for not knowing any better.

May the commission consider asking the applicant to include 36" box oaks and pines and 24" box miscellaneous native species from the city's approved list of native species. He'll have crew after crew building his dream home, it is not onerous to ask him to have landscapers install the trees alongside the irrigation necessary to keep them alive. 36" box trees are more likely to survive the intense conditions of their first two years on a hot hillside under active development.

The Live Coast Oak and Italian Stone Pine requested for removal are well-suited species for the site. I have no doubt the applicant can make room for a patch of dwarf avocado trees if

carefully planned. Sago Palms grow to a maximum of 10 feet and can take as long as 50 years to do so. They are not an approved native species either.

A final few matters of practicality: If planting replacements will interfere with construction is it possible for the commission to allow/require some replacement trees be installed after construction? If there are poor condition trees (dead/diseased/dying/hazardous) in the future development zone should they not be included in this removal/replacement plan? And lastly, can the commission comment on the trees of heaven that span every inch of the property?

Tree-of-heaven is especially successful at establishing around riparian areas, and changes streambed ecology by forming dense thickets that crowd out native plants, alter physical habitat, and produce chemicals that prevent other plants from establishing nearby. Tree-of heaven can also form extensive root systems that damage sewer systems and foundations. Established trees are incredibly difficult to eradicate because they can reproduce by sending out shoots, re-sprout from root fragments left in the soil, and female trees can produce up to 325,000 seeds in one year. Because tree-of-heaven is so efficient at re-sprouting, mechanical and manual removal is only effective against new, small trees, and usually must be repeated for a few seasons to be successful. The most effective strategy to remove established plants is with application of herbicide, and even this is not completely successful.

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Plants/Dont-Plant-Me/Tree-of-Heaven>

Thank you for your consideration,
Angelo Gladding
1856 Hanscom Dr

Imbus Property Tree Inventory

Project Name: Charles Imbus

Address: 1865 Hanscom Dr., South Pasadena

Date:

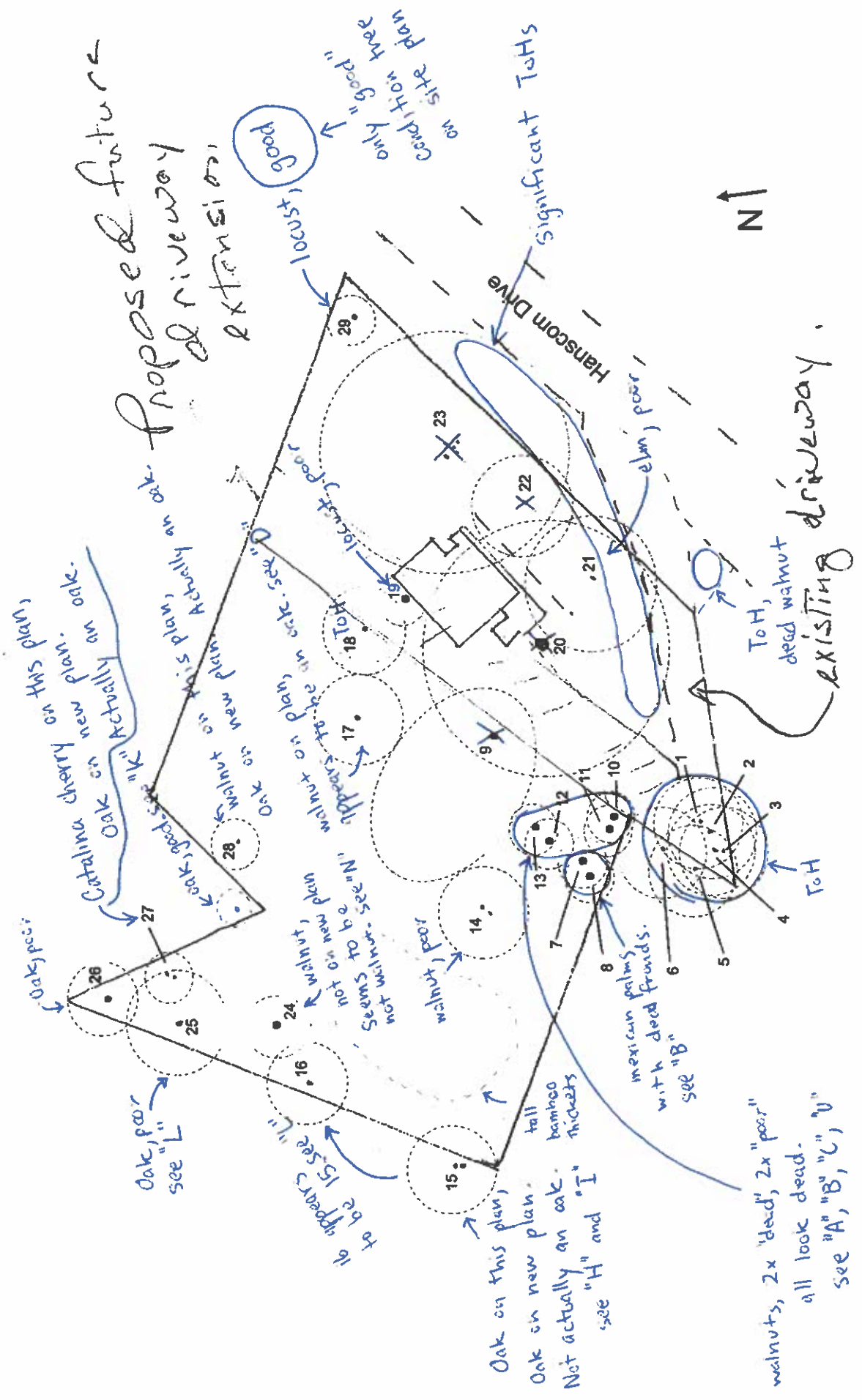
4/25/2022

Tree ID	Species	Common Name	DBH (inches)	Canopy radius (feet)	Height (feet)	# Trunks	Protected Tree Classification	Condition Rating	Disposition
1	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	6.5	10	30	1	Mature	Fair	Remove
2	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	6.5	6	35	1	Mature	Fair	Remove
3	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	8	8	35	1	Mature	Fair	Remove
4	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	6	12	25	1	Mature	Fair	Remove
5	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	7.5	12	30	1	Mature	Fair	Protect in place
6	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	6.5	8	30	1	Mature	Fair	Protect in place
7	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	Mex. Fan palm	13.7	3	45	1	Significant	Fair	Protect in place
8	<i>Washingtonia robusta</i>	Mex. Fan palm	12.3	3	40	1	Significant	Fair	Protect in place
9	<i>Pinus halepensis</i>	Aleppo pine	26.3	15	60	1	Significant	Poor	Remove
10	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	3.4, 2	6	15	2	Native, Mature	Poor	Protect in place
11	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	10.1	4	12	1	Native, Mature	Poor	Protect in place
12	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	5.3	4	12	1	Native, Mature	Dead	Remove
13	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	8.1	6	12	1	Native, Mature	Dead	Remove
14	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	6.4, 7.4	6	10	2	Native, Significant	Poor	Remove
15	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast live oak	22.9, 7.3	15	25	2	Native, Significant	Fair	Protect in place
16	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast live oak	5, 7.3	8	12	2	Native, Significant	Fair	Protect in place
17	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	10	8	20	1	Native, Mature	Fair	Remove
18	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Tree of Heaven	12.4	15	40	1	Significant	Fair	Remove
19	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black locust	5.5	6	30	1	Mature	Poor	Remove
20	<i>Pinus pinea</i>	Ital. Stone pine	33.2	30	60	1	Significant	Fair	Protect in place Remove
21	<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	Chinese Elm	11.5	20	25	1	Mature	Poor	Remove
22	<i>Ulmus parvifolia</i>	Chinese Elm	15.7	30	15	1	Significant	Very Poor	Remove
23	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast live oak	12.7, 20.3, 17, 17.2, 24.5	40	40	5	Native, Significant	Very Poor	Protect in place
24	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	8.1	15	5	1	Native, Mature	Very Poor	Protect in place
25	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast live oak	14.3	20	10	1	Native, Significant	Poor	Protect in place
26	<i>Quercus agrifolia</i>	Coast live oak	16	30	12	1	Native, Significant	Poor	Protect in place
27	<i>Prunus ilicifolia</i>	Catalina cherry	4	8	10	1	Native, Mature	Fair	Protect in place
28	<i>Juglans californica</i>	So. Cal. Walnut	6.3	4	12	1	Native, Mature	Poor	Protect in place
29	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Black locust	10	10	30	1	Mature	Good	Protect in place

Remove
C.S.

ToH = Tree of Heaven
 X = Requested removal

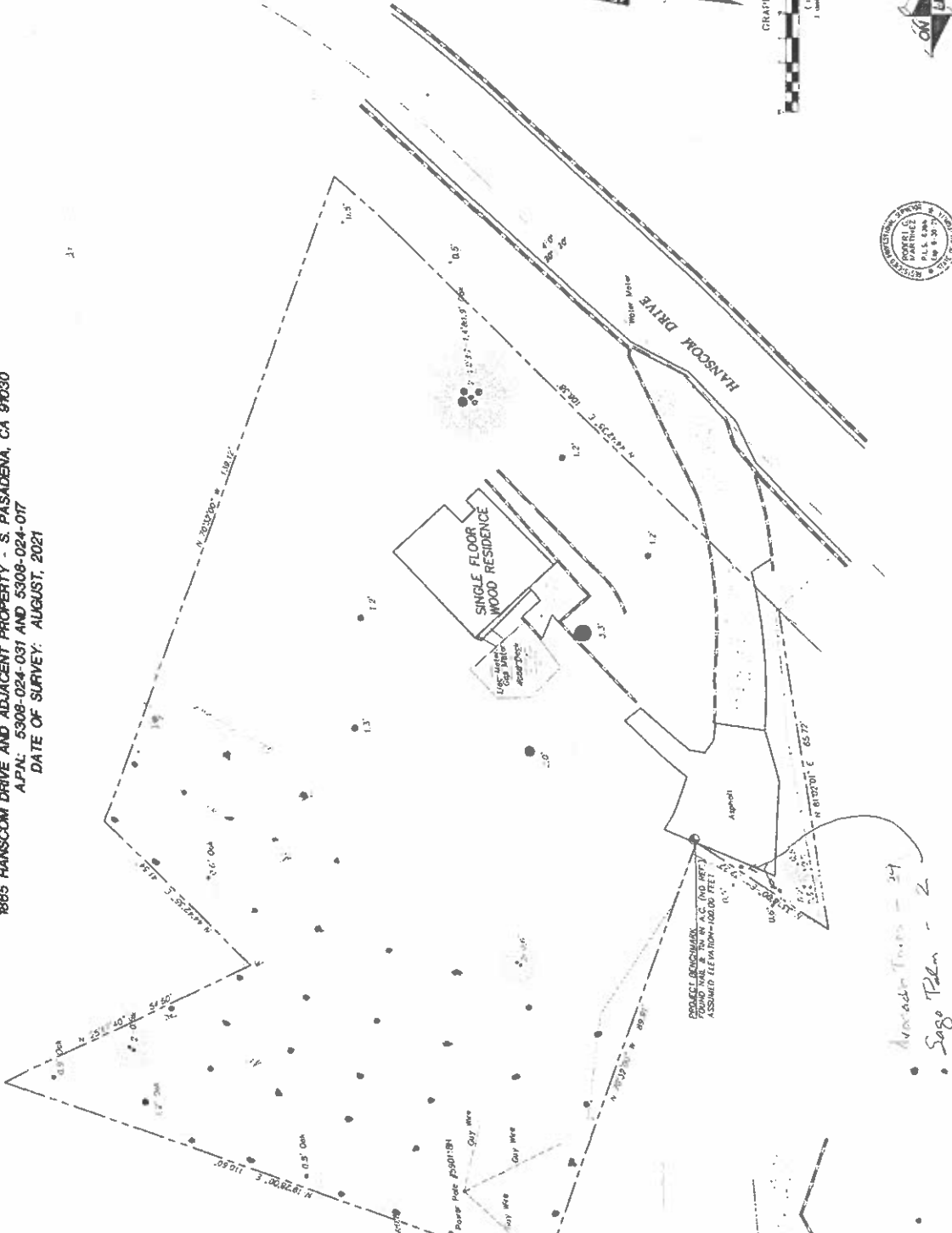
Imbus Property Protected Tree Locations



walnuts, 2x "dead", 2x "poor"
 all look dead.
 see "A", "B", "C", "U"

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1885 HANSCOM DRIVE AND ADJACENT PROPERTY - S. PASADENA, CA 91030
 APN: 5308-024-031 AND 5308-024-017
 DATE OF SURVEY: AUGUST, 2021



LEGEND

- FF --- FINISHED FLOOR
- FS --- FINISHED SURFACE
- AS --- ASPHALT SURFACE
- NS --- NATURAL SURFACE
- HC --- TOP OF CURB
- TC --- TOP OF CURB
- TD --- TOP OF DRIVEWAY
- TR --- TOP OF WALL
- CH --- CHARLEM/METAL FENCE
- HS --- HARDSCAPE SURFACE (CONCRETE, BRICK, TILE...)
- CS --- CONCRETE WALL
- NS --- NATURAL SURFACE (GRASS, PLANTS, GRAVEL, ETC...)
- SE --- SPOT ELEVATION
- TR --- TREE

Acacia Trees - 34
Sage Palm - 2

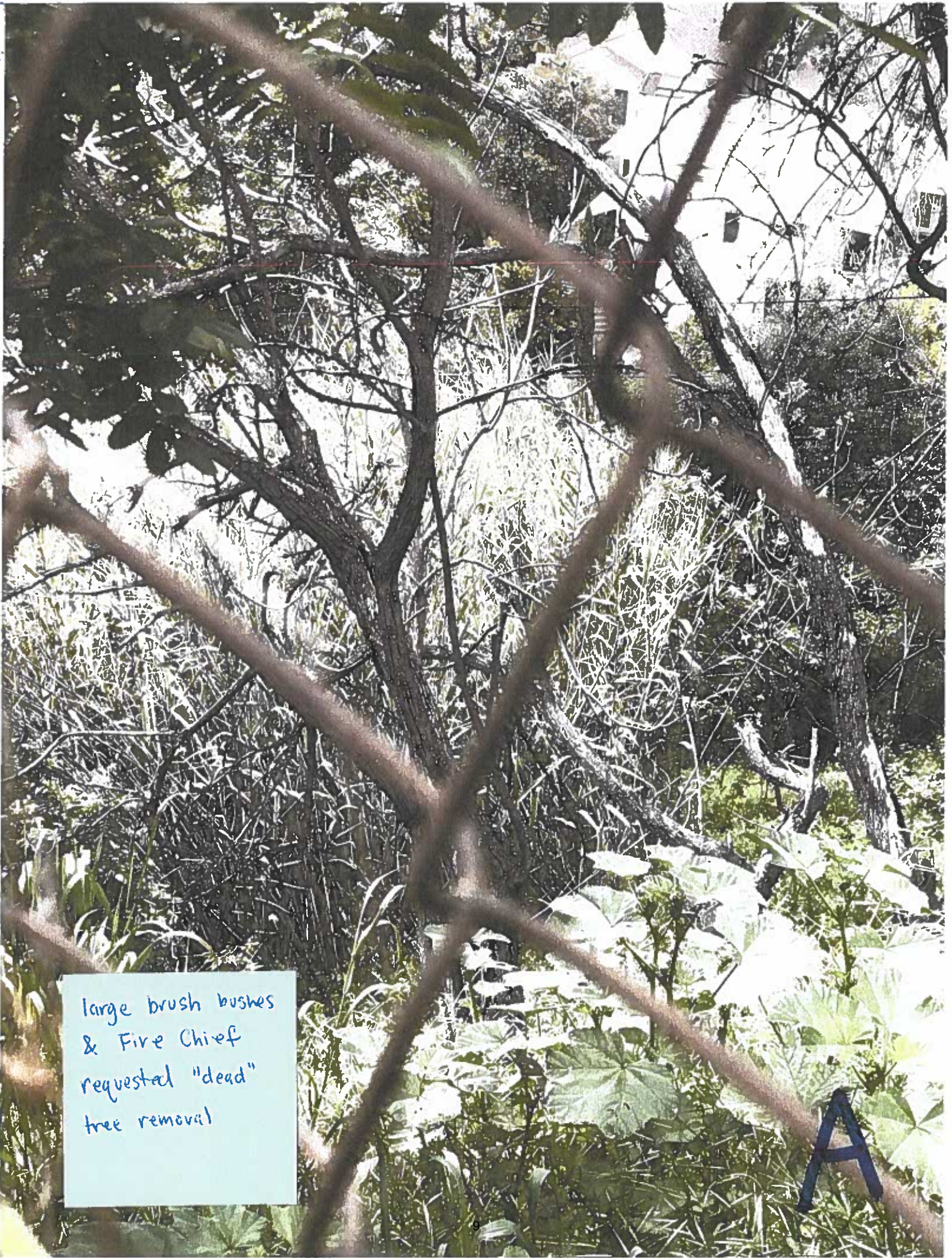
GRAPHIC SCALE
 1 inch = 40 ft.



THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE BELOW-SIGNED LICENSED LAND SURVEYOR:
 ROBERT G. MARTINEZ, L.S. 53087
 DATE _____

ON SITE ENGINEERING
 PROFESSIONAL CIVIL ENGINEERING & LAND SURVEYING
 908 WATERSLEY PLACE
 SUITE 200
 PASADENA, CA 91106
 (626) 791-3960
 EMAIL: obeng@on-site-hub.net

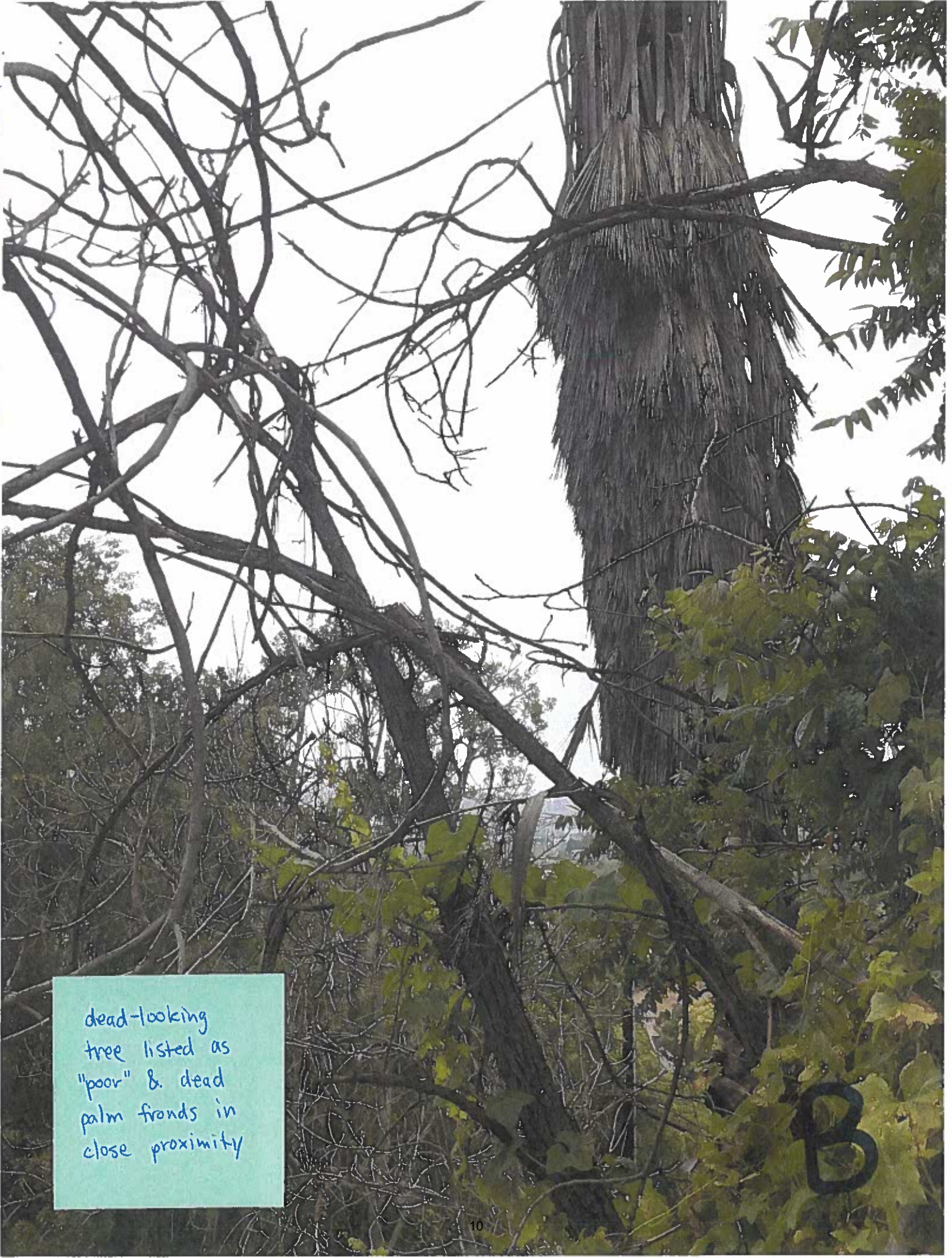
Large brush bushes & Fire Chief requested "dead" tree removal



large brush bushes
& Fire Chief
requested "dead"
tree removal

A

SHINY BROWN PINE 11870 AS FW



dead-looking
tree listed as
"poor" & dead
palm fronds in
close proximity

B

clearly dead tree listed as poor



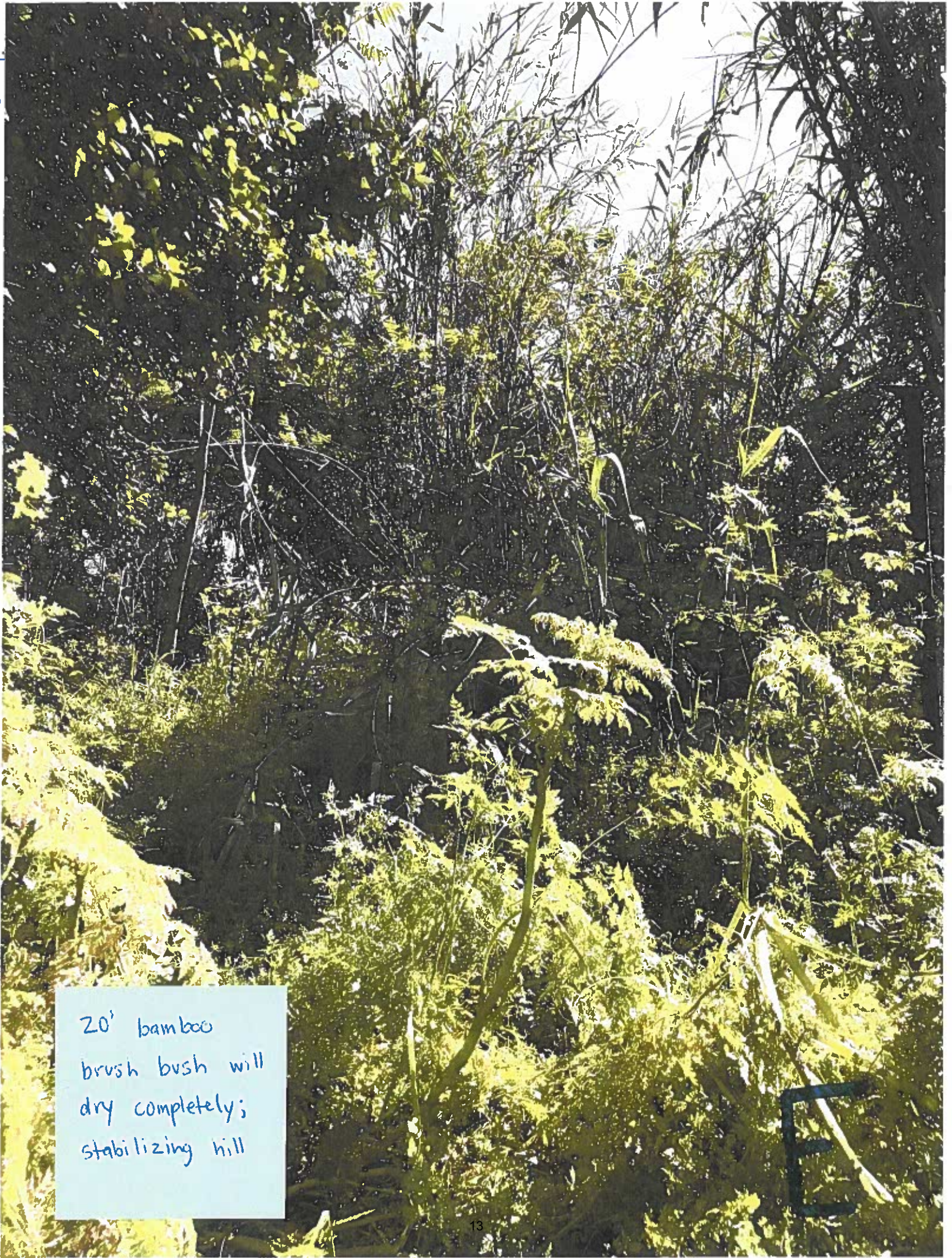
dead looking
tree listed as
"poor"



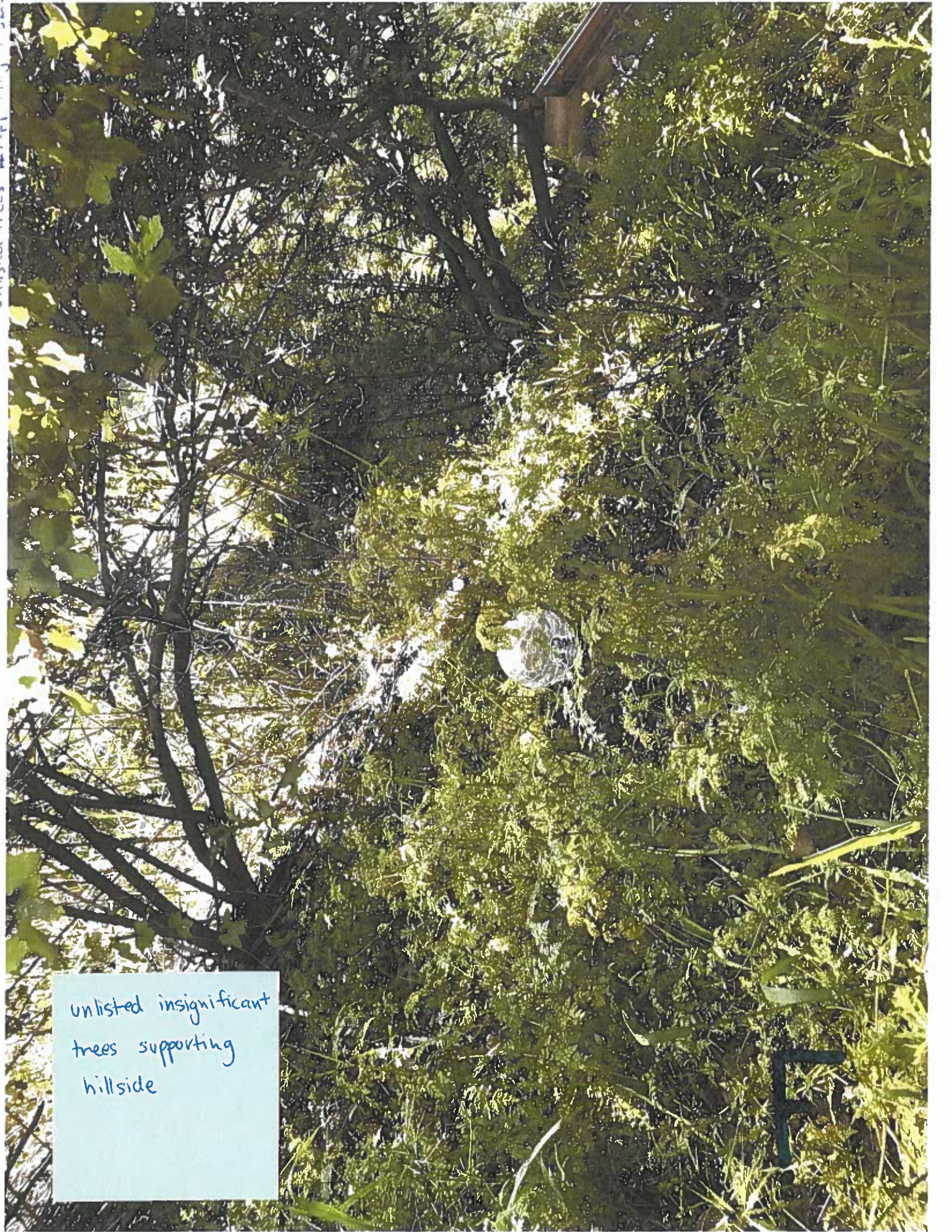


unlisted oak
at center of
property

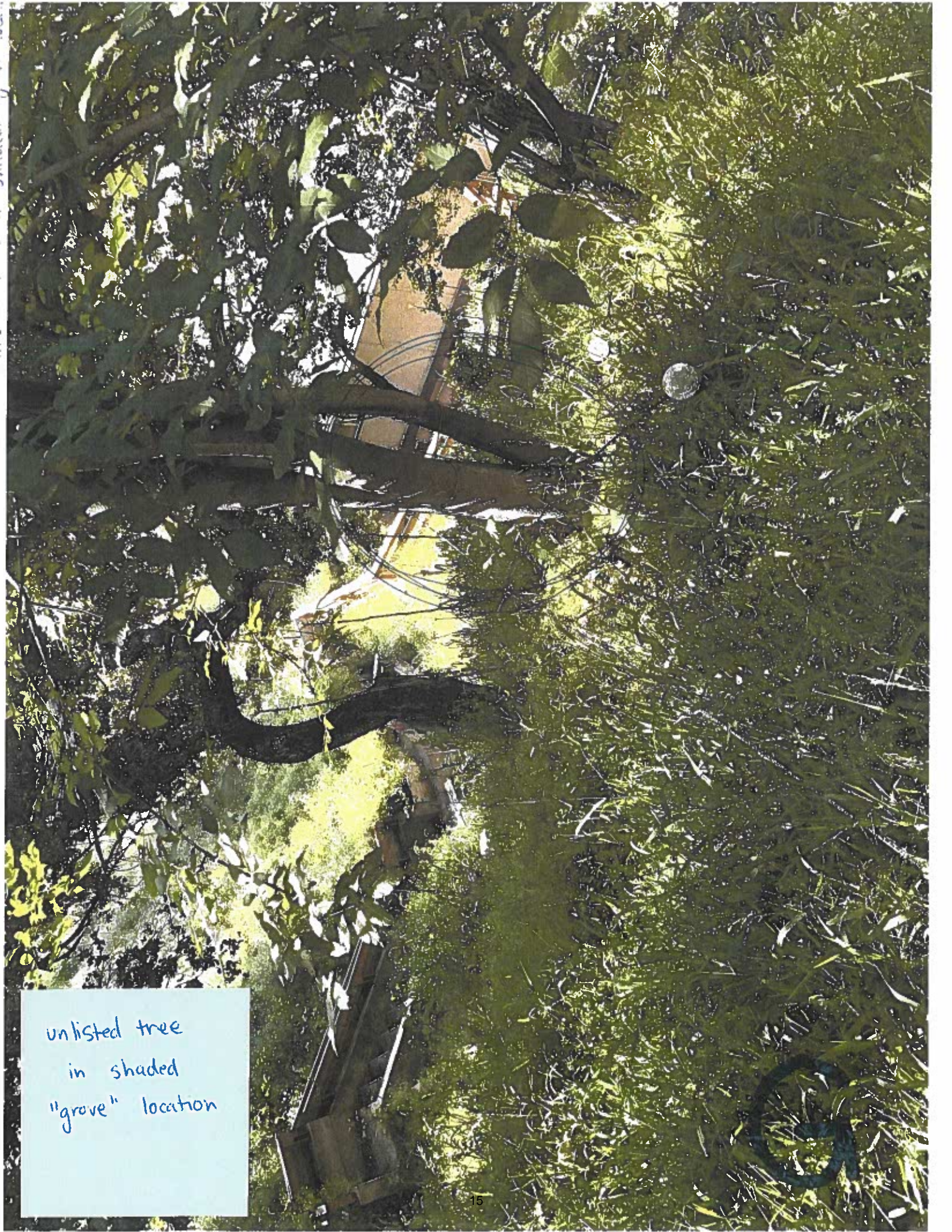
11/10/13 11:00 AM



20' bamboo
brush bush will
dry completely;
stabilizing hill

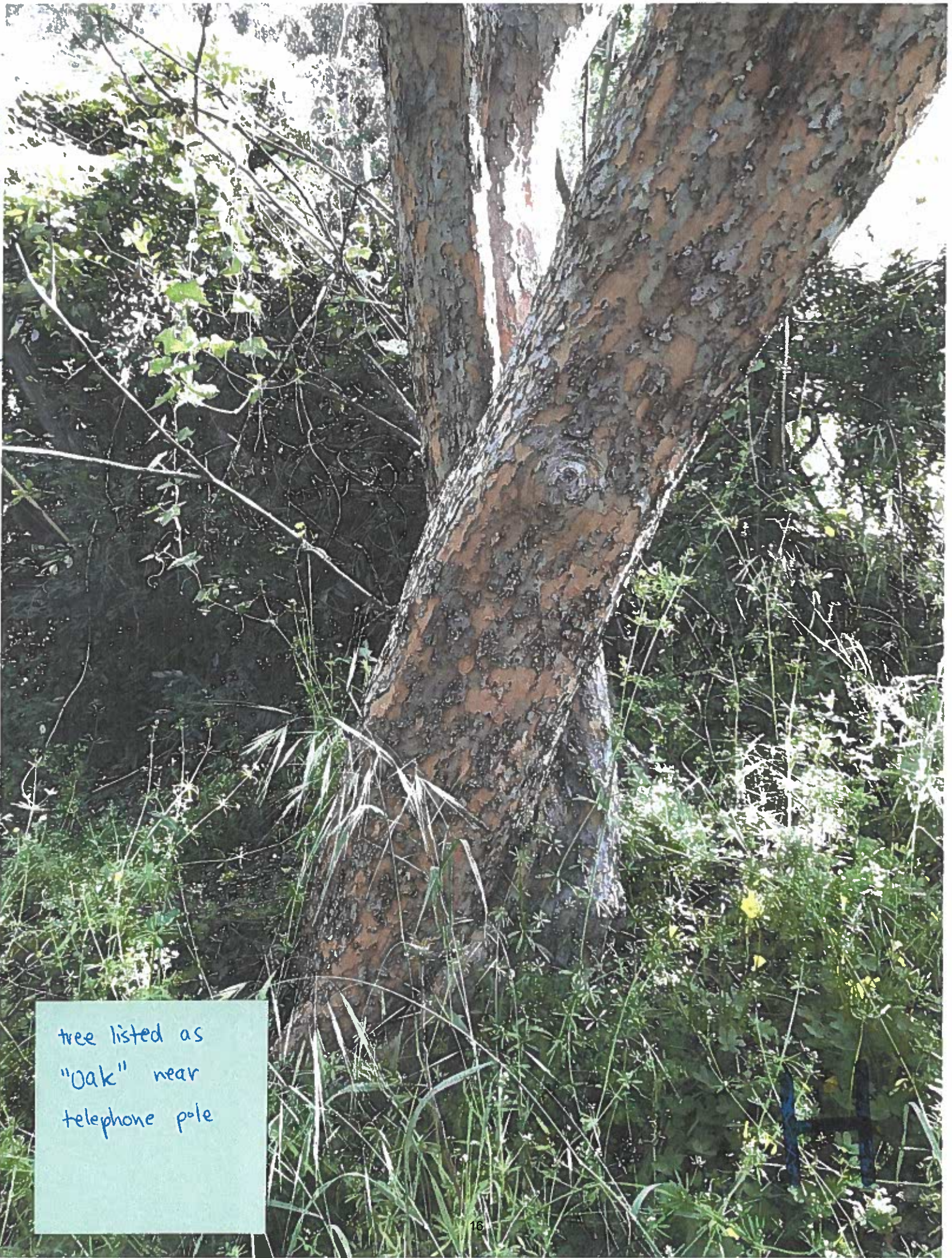


unlisted insignificant
trees supporting
hillside



unlisted tree
in shaded
"grove" location

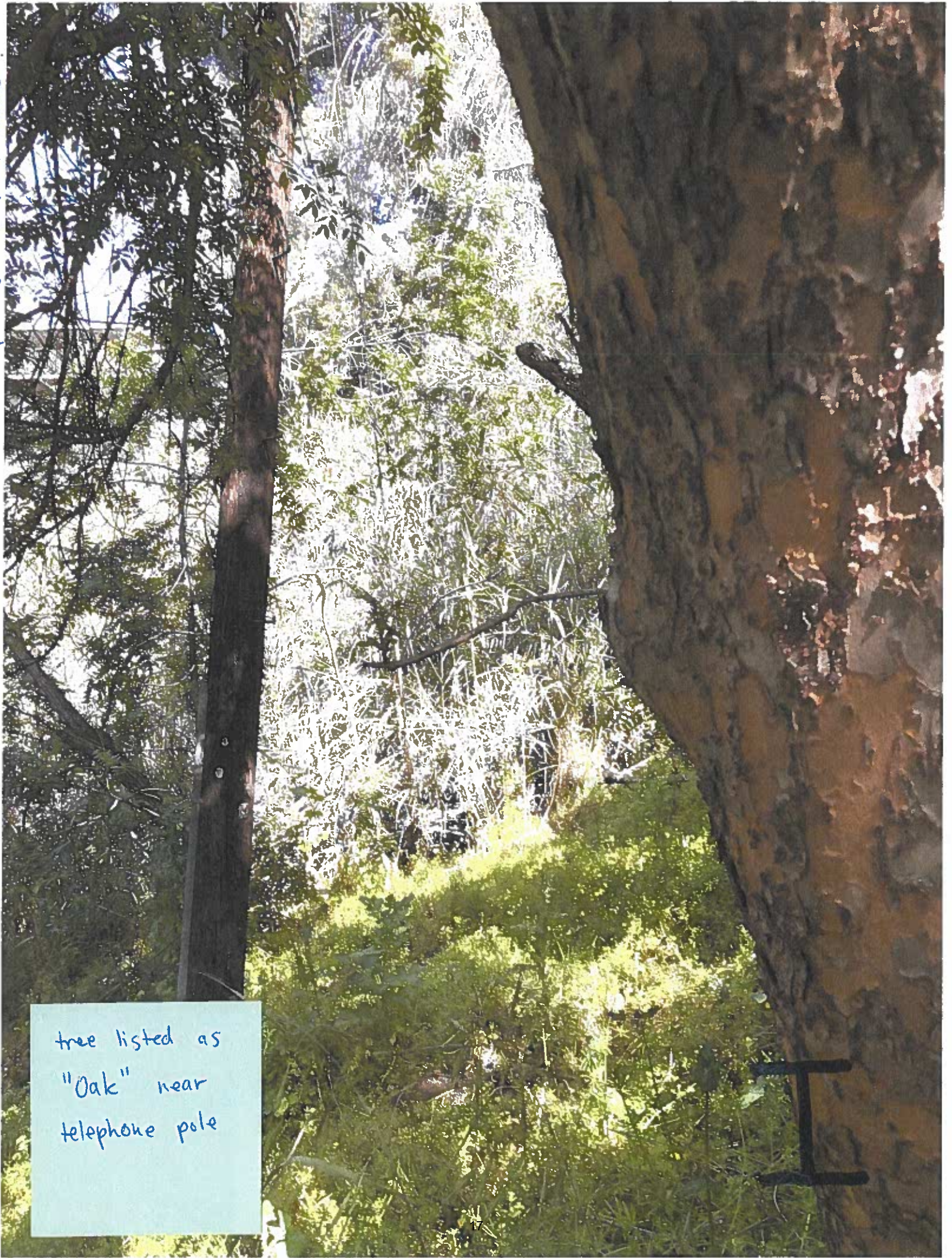
SHOWN UP SITE FROM 750m. INUT UNIN



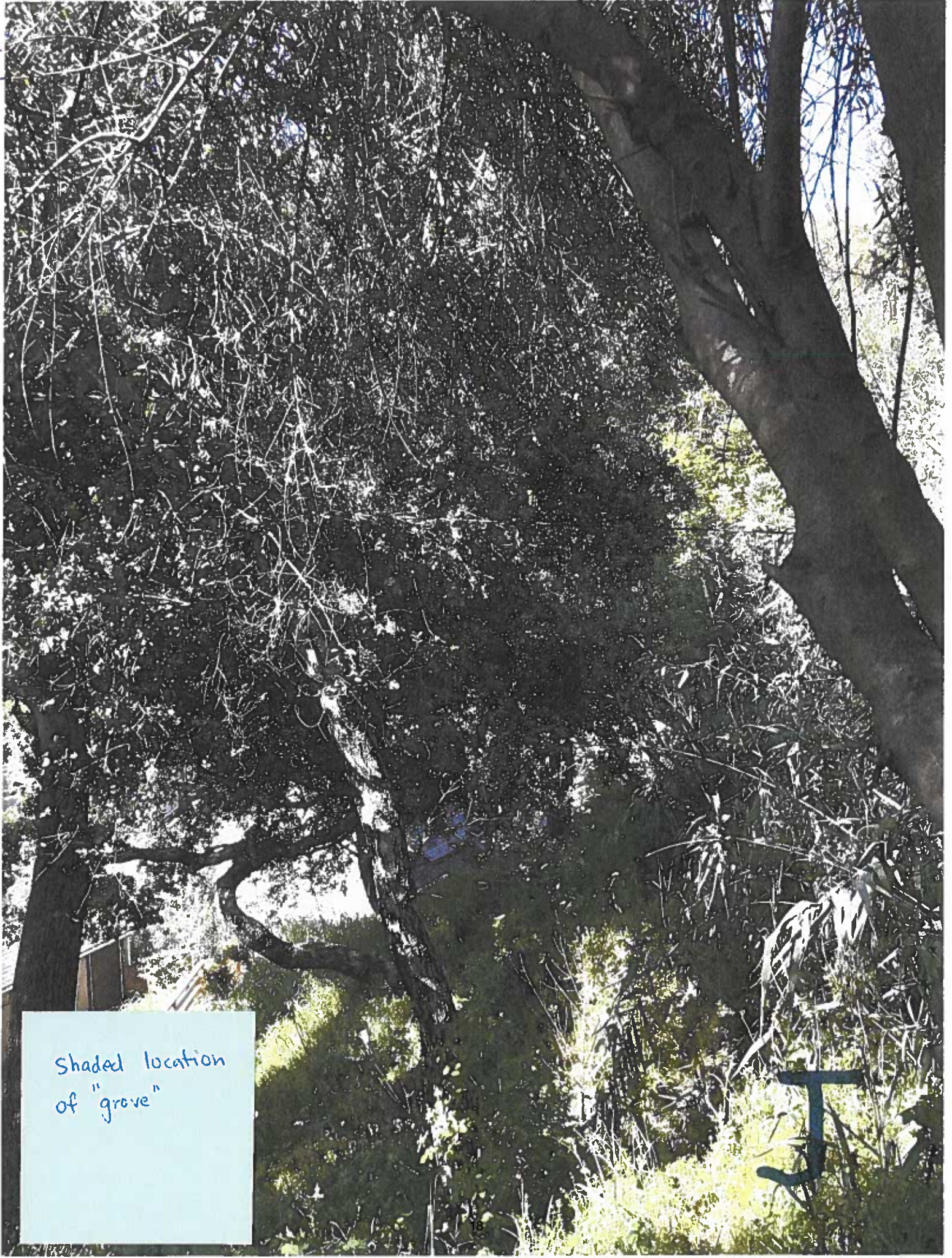
tree listed as "Oak" near telephone pole

shown on site plan as oak. NOT OAK.

tree listed as
"Oak" near
telephone pole



SHADE LOCATION OF GROVE

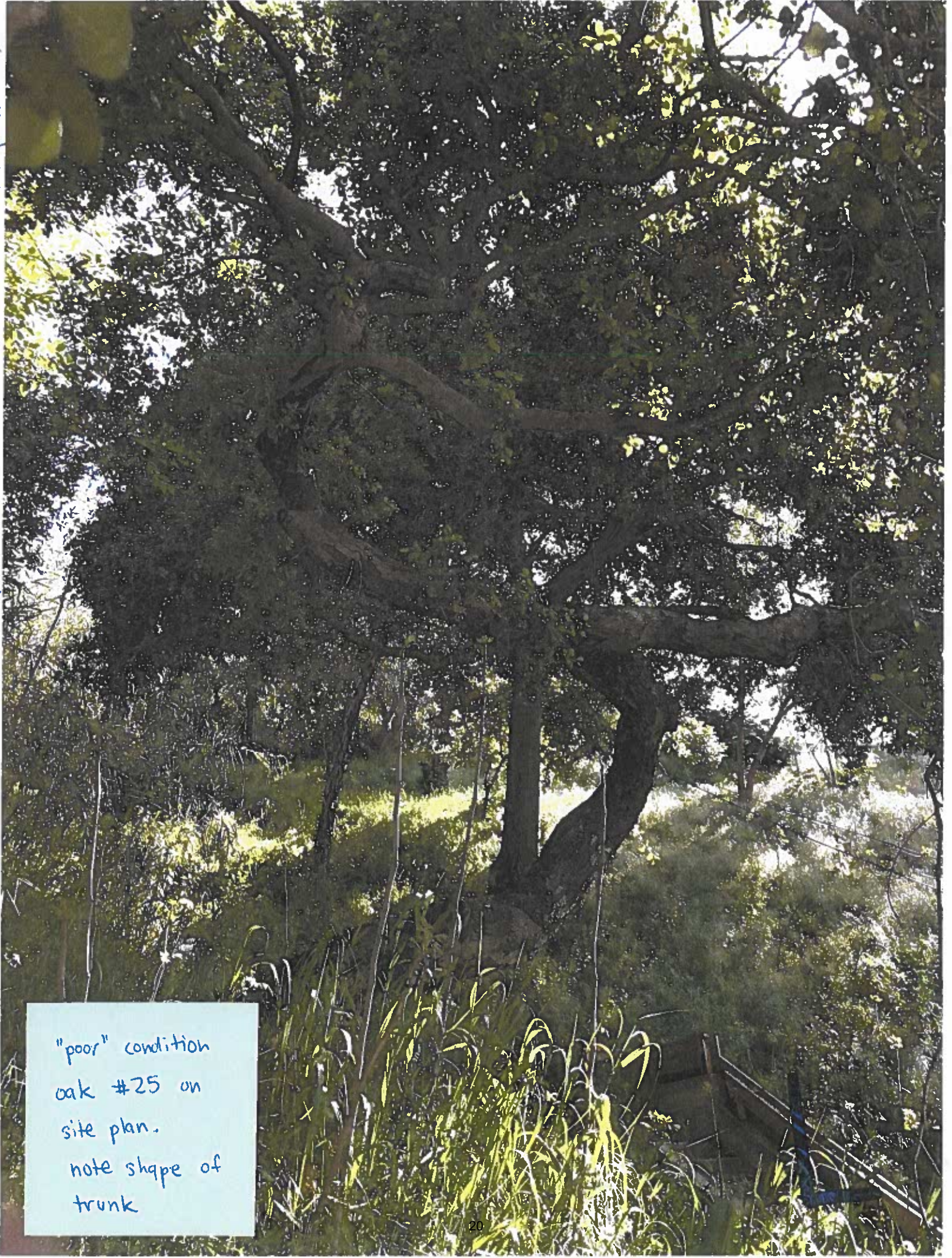


Shaded location
of "grove"

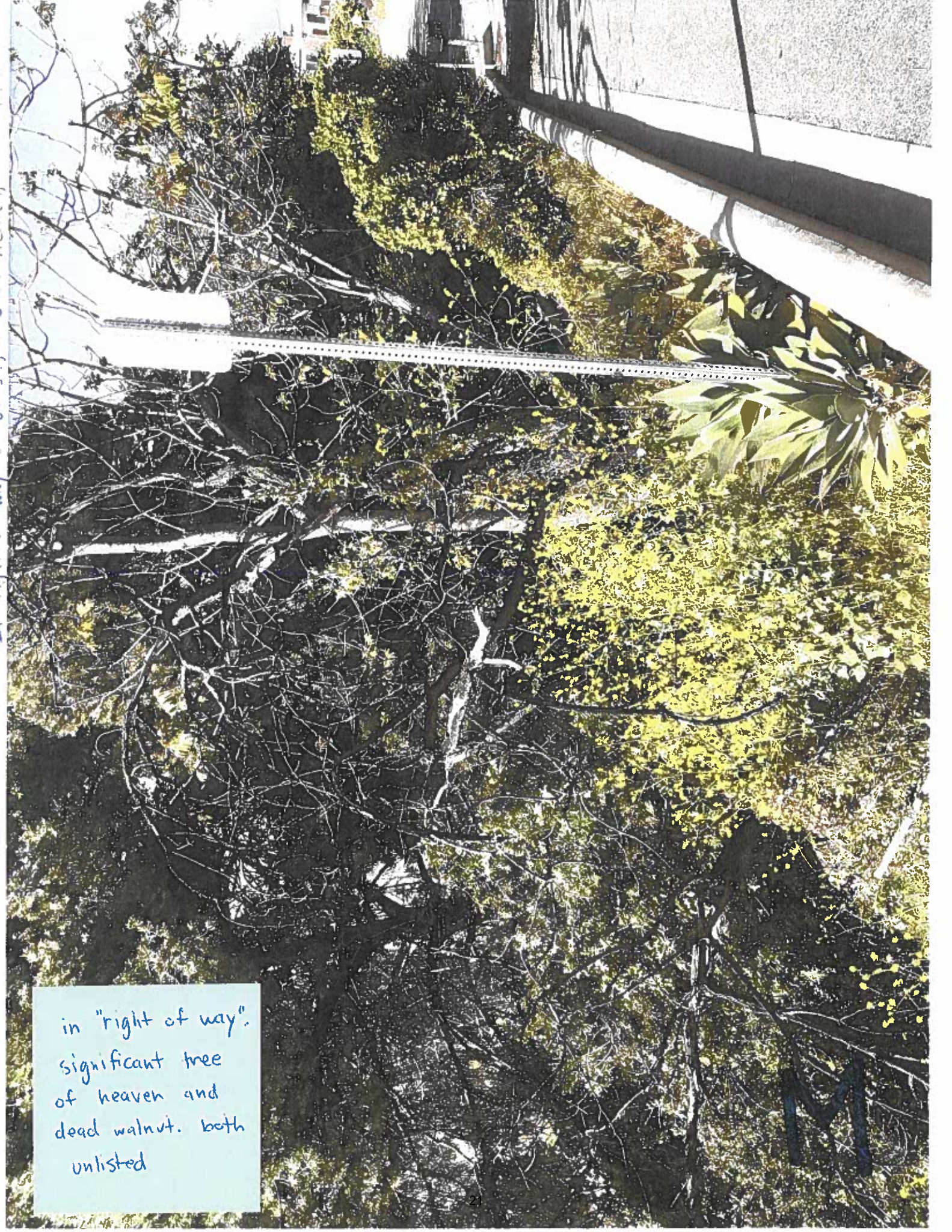
7-11-2017
Cincinnati, Ohio

unlisted neighboring
oak at corner
of property

oak #25 on site plan
poor condition



"poor" condition
oak #25 on
site plan.
note shape of
trunk

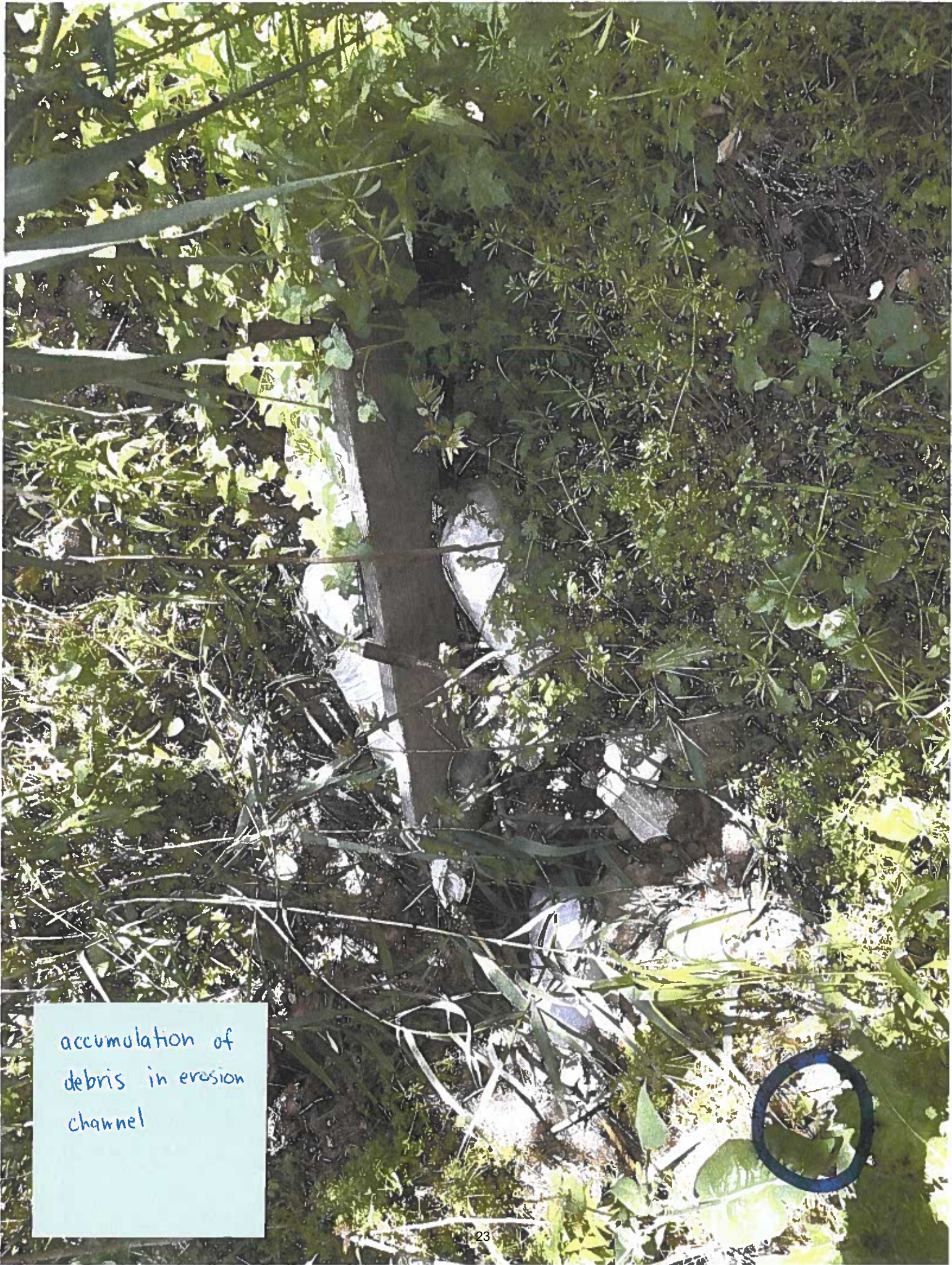


in "right of way".
significant tree
of heaven and
dead walnut. both
unlisted

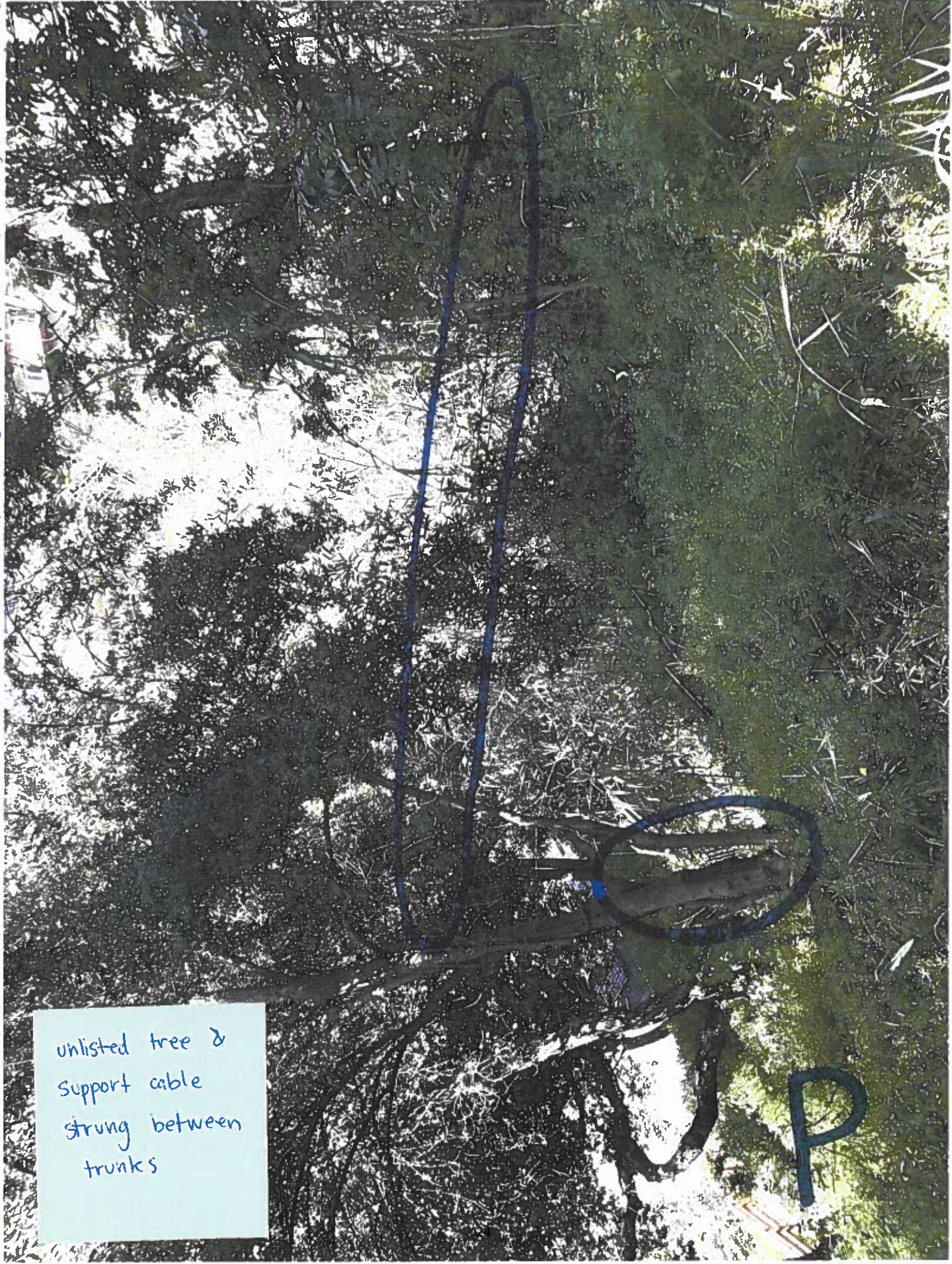
unlisted tree
in "grove"

unlisted tree in grove





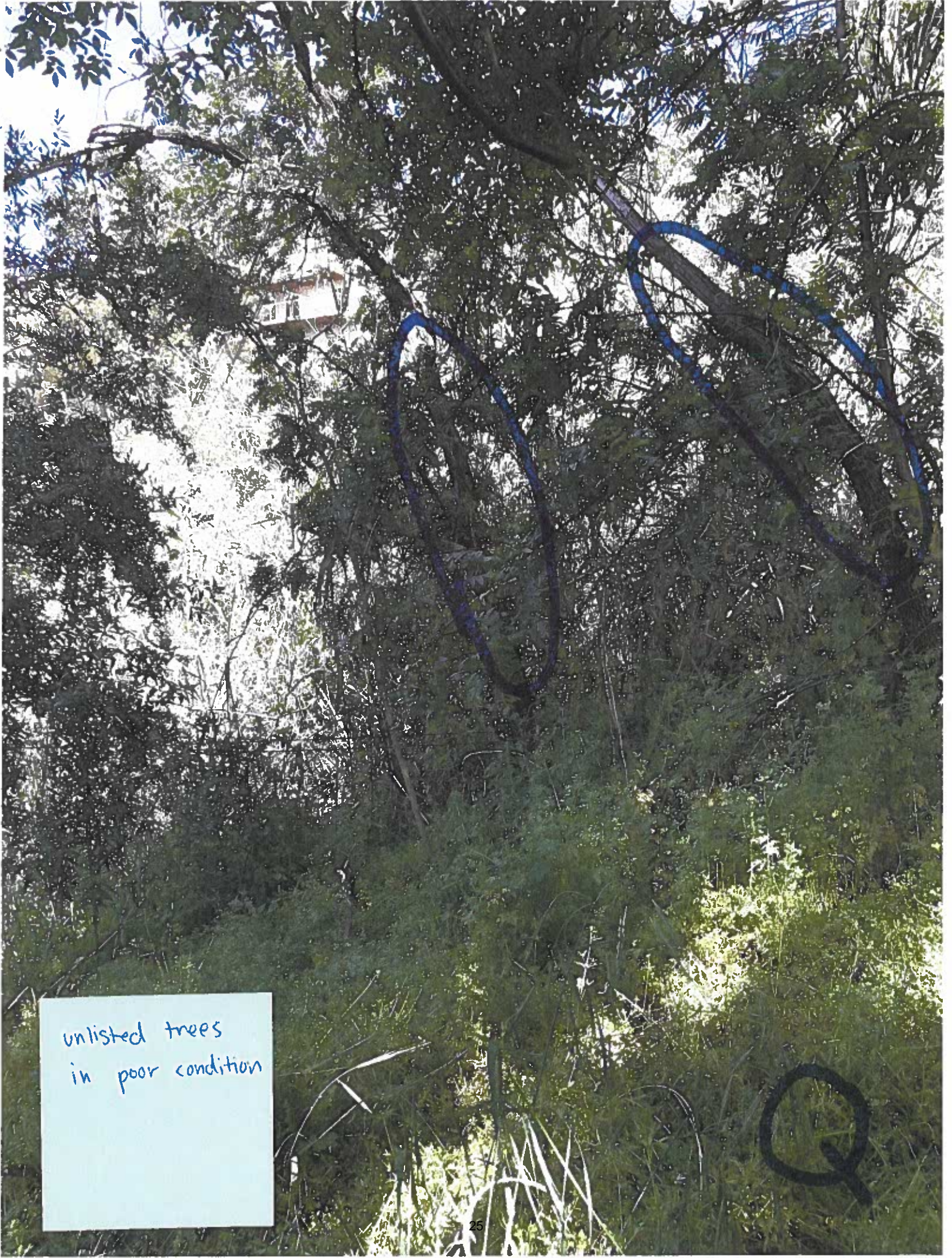
accumulation of debris in erosion channel



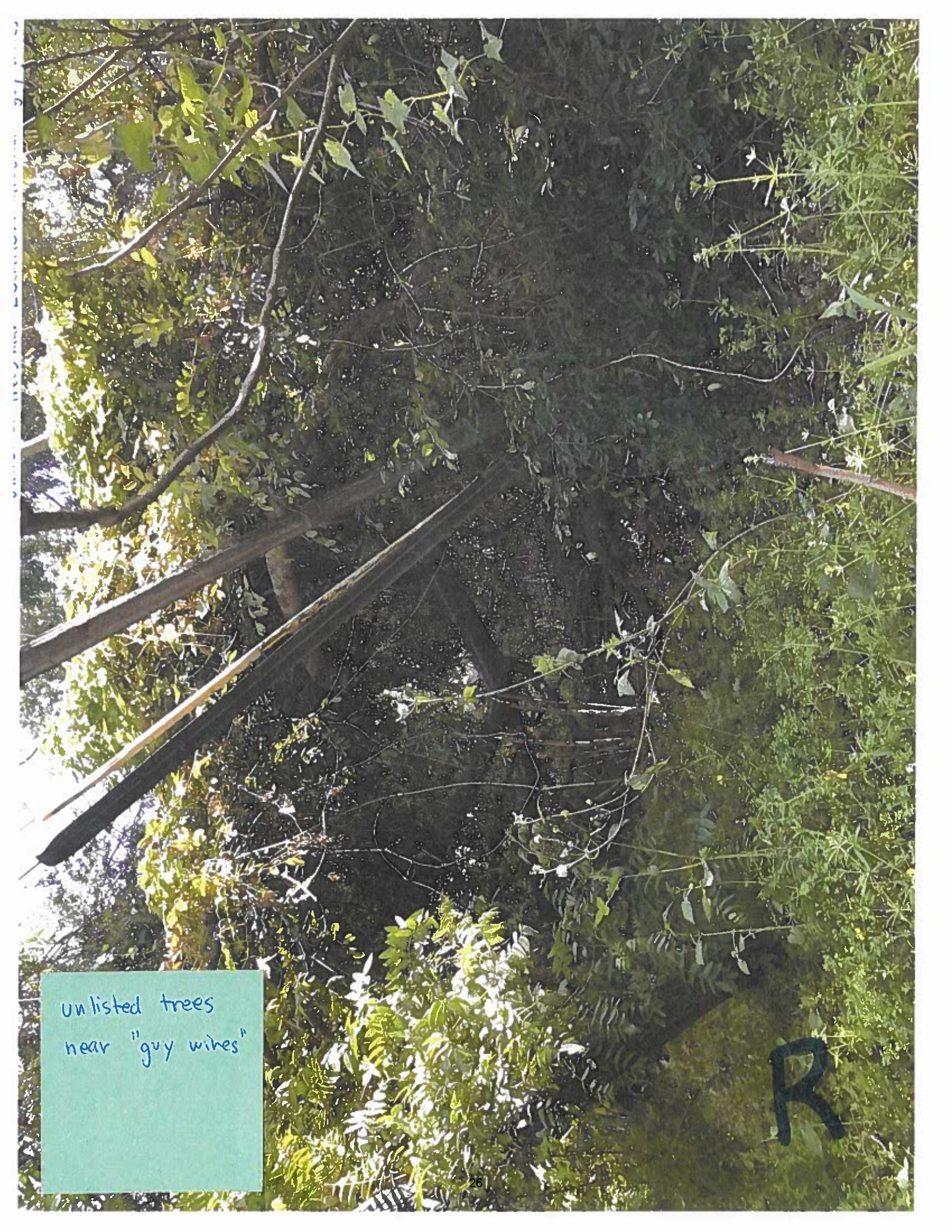
unlisted tree &
support cable
strung between
trunks

P

SAVING THE BEST OF THE BEST



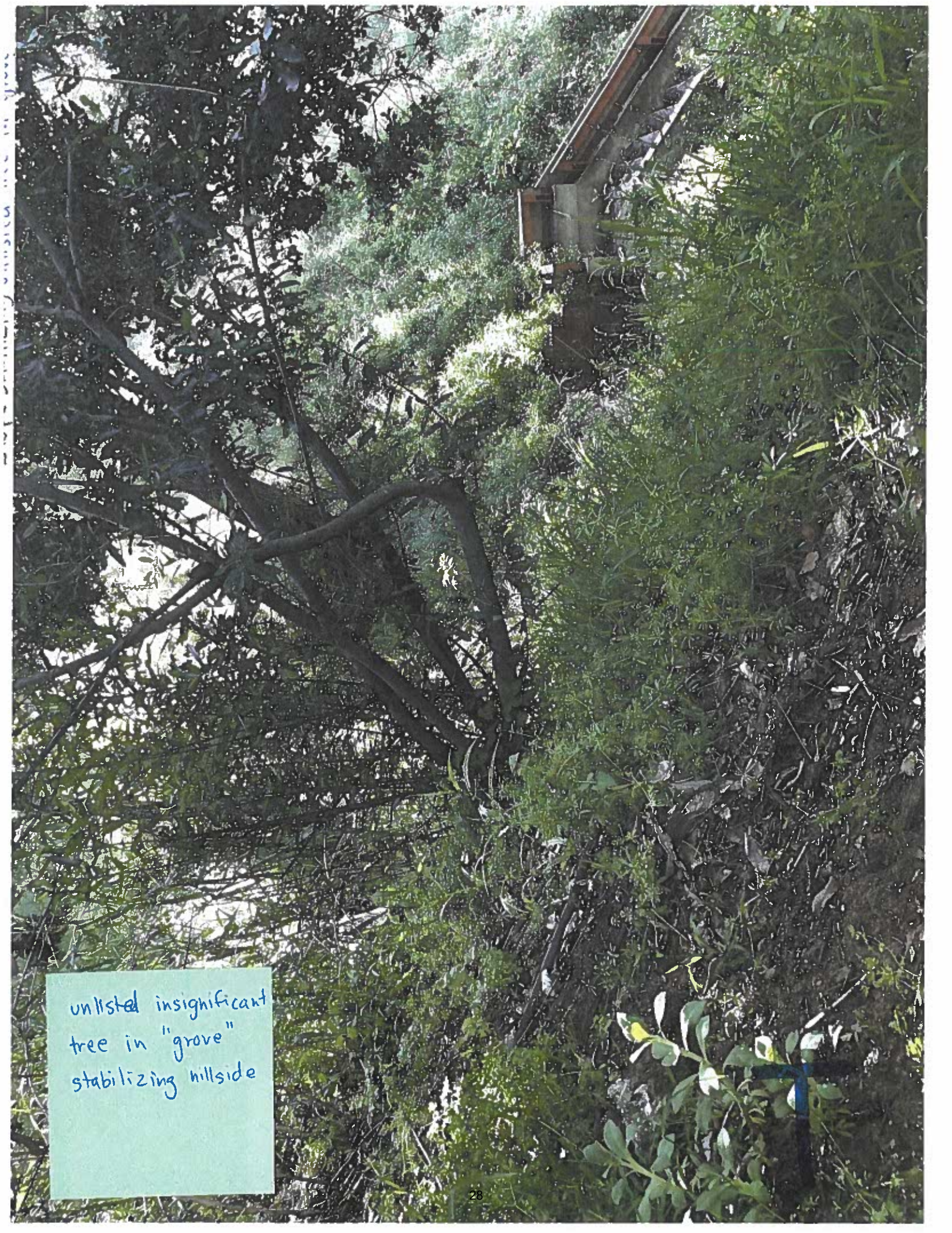
unlisted trees
in poor condition



unlisted trees
near "guy wives"



Support cables



Small tree in grove

unlisted insignificant
tree in "grove"
stabilizing hillside



"poor" condition
walnuts



CITY OF SOUTH PASADENA - FIRE DEPARTMENT

817 Mound Avenue, South Pasadena, California 91030

Telephone: 626-403-7300 FAX: 626-403-7301



Annual Brush Clearance Notice

The South Pasadena Fire Department will soon be conducting brush inspections to ensure the fire safety of our community. Certainly, fires in the past few years have highlighted the importance of this program.

Deadline to have hazardous brush removed is July 1, 2022.

It is your responsibility, as property owners, to take all necessary actions to clear dry or dangerous vegetation and hazardous brush away from structures or buildings.

This will assist in creating a defensible space which may help save your home.

The South Pasadena Fire Department shall enforce the brush clearance requirements specified in the California Fire Code (2013 Edition):

- **Remove all flammable vegetation** or other combustible growth within 30 feet of any structure, or in areas determined to be high hazard. The **brush shall be cleared a minimum of 100 feet** from any structure. The **high hazard area is defined as the section of the city located south of Monterey Road and west of Meridian Avenue.** Single trees, ornamental shrubbery or cultivated ground covers may be permitted provided they are maintained in such a manner that they do not easily transmit fire from the vegetation to the structure.
- For areas considered **extremely hazardous**, the inspecting fire officer, with the approval of the Fire Chief, may require an additional 100 feet of clearance/defensible space for a total of 200 feet minimum clearance away from any structure.
- **Dead branches shall be removed or pruned** from living trees. **Dead branches shall not be allowed to overhang** the roofs of structures or buildings. All roof structures shall be maintained free of dead leaves and flammable debris.
- A **portion of any tree that extends within 10 feet** of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe shall be removed.
- **Woodpiles or stacked wood** shall not be allowed within 30 feet of a structure. **Flammable vegetation** shall not be allowed within 10 feet of woodpiles or stacked wood.
- All chimneys and fireplaces shall be equipped with an approved metal or non-flammable spark arrester having openings not larger than 1/2 inch.
- Address identification shall be clearly visible from the street fronting the property.

Successful prevention of catastrophic fires requires a partnership between the community and the Fire Department to maintain properties free of hazards. Please use the above information to ensure that your property is protected. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If you have any questions, please contact the South Pasadena Fire Department -
Fire Prevention Bureau at 626-403-7300.

ITEM 10

Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project Flyer

Arroyo Seco Water Reuse Project

Improving water quality in the Arroyo Seco Channel

The Cities of Pasadena and South Pasadena have partnered to implement a set of design strategies that will result in improving the water quality in the Lower Arroyo Seco Channel. The project includes two locations. The first is the San Rafael Creek, west of San Rafael Avenue / Laguna Road and south of where the creeks converge into the channel in Pasadena. The second is downstream, just south of San Pascual Avenue and adjacent to Arroyo Park in South Pasadena.

Stay involved to learn how this project will contribute to achieving regulatory compliance while improving public access to adjacent amenities and opportunities for new habitat.

To learn more about the project, visit the website: bit.ly/ASWRProject or send us an email: ASWRProject@CityOfPasadena.net



For accessibility information or to request an accommodation contact (626) 744-7311 or CSC@CityOfPasadena.net Providing at least 72 hours advance notice will help ensure availability.



Community Open House

Join us for an update on the project. The project team will review project background, provide project updates, and present project concepts. Everyone is invited to attend!



When

Thursday, April 27
6 - 8 p.m.



Where

South Pasadena Community Room
1115 El Centro St.
South Pasadena