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Torrey Pines State Reserve

Global Forest Link Project

Many of the photographs that we took showed that the forest was very dry and barren. It was obvious that plants had to be removed for the large road that runs through the park. Parts of the trail included walking on the shoulder of the road. The forest had a lot of the same plants such as torrey pines and cacti. The photos also included signs to inform the people walking the trails of the plants found in the forest, to stay on the trail, of beetle trapping, and of closed areas.

The conditions of the forest are poor. Much of the trees and other plants in the forest were dead, fallen over, or very weak. Because of the drought that California is experiencing, it is not surprising. Though the forest has great views of the ocean, many of the plants do not support the views. The trails are great trails, but the road that runs through the forest is not as “natural” as the trails and does not fit in with the forest.

According to Global Forest Watch, a lot of garbage is found on the trail and in the marked-off areas that hikers are not supposed to enter. The pollution that the park receives is not surprising because of its close proximity to roads and the freeway. Global Forest Watch emphasizes that the pollution has a great impact on the wildlife and plants that live in the reserve. As a result of the pollution, deforestation becomes more prevalent in the park through the years. The drought that California is experiencing is not contributing to the wildlife either. Because of the increased temperatures over the past year, the vegetation in the forest is not receiving the water that it needs to thrive. Bark beetles are also a problem to the park. We observed a sign that was put up that informed the hikers of bark beetle trapping and observation in progress and to not enter into that area.

Along with pollution, other sources tell us more about the severe drought that San Diego has been experiencing the past couple years. Multiple different sources, including the Torrey Pines State Reserve website, pinpoint the distinct impact this drought has had on not only the park, but also the wildlife as well. In particular, there have been many devastating effects on the

park's greenery. This is evident in the photos we have taken as it shows how many of the plants are dead, and the forest as a whole looks dry... almost to the point of looking like a fire hazard. In addition, record high temperatures have been recorded over the past few year and a decrease in amounts of water in the area has been reported. According to the Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve website<sup>1</sup>, the drought has made it easier for bugs, such as bark beetles, to feed on the environment.

After reading these sources, I can conclude the damages of the forest are not only a result of human destruction, but also natural causes as well such as the drought. On the bright side, State parks like Torrey Pines are doing the best they can to preserve their natural forest environment for future generations. Throughout our hike there were countless signs cautioning hikers to pick up trash and take care of the environment. Even huge fines have been put in place if anyone were to be caught littering in the environment. At the end of the day, it is up to San Diegans and active volunteers to do their part and take care of the environment. Hopefully the beautiful Torrey Pines State Reserve can be a success model for other endangered forests around the world.

#### ADDITIONAL SOURCES:

1: <http://www.globalforestwatch.org/stories/275>

2: <http://torreypine.org>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://torreypine.org/nature-center/insects-spiders/beetles/>



