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Save the Redwoods League and California State Parks Expand Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve

80-acre Rocky Ridge property transfers to California State Parks; first land acquisition by the state agency in the Sonoma-Mendocino District since 2008.



The 80-acre Rocky Ridge property, named for the large rock outcrop at its center, was added to Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve in March 2024. Photo by Adrianna Andreucci, Save the Redwoods League.

San Francisco, Calif. (April 16, 2024) —[Save the Redwoods League](#) today announced the transfer of 80 acres in Mendocino County to [California State Parks](#) as an addition to the adjacent 2,743-acre Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve. The parcel, known as Rocky Ridge, was directly deeded to the state park system in March from the former landowners, the Weger family, as part of a deal negotiated by the League to conserve [Weger Ranch](#). Rocky Ridge is the first land acquisition by California State Parks in the Sonoma-Mendocino District since 2008.

“Rocky Ridge is an ideal addition to the adjacent Montgomery Woods. It contains old-growth redwoods, Douglas-firs and the headwaters of Montgomery Creek, which flows

through the heart of the Reserve, before joining the South Fork Big River,” said **Paul Ringgold**, chief program officer at Save the Redwoods League. “The river provides critical spawning habitat for steelhead trout and coho salmon, which are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Montgomery Woods and the forests around it comprise a strikingly beautiful and ecologically important corner of the coast redwood range, for both recreational visitors and conservation. It is a unique and special place.”

The property got its name—Rocky Ridge—from a large rock outcrop in the center of the property that provides peregrine falcon nesting habitat. While Rocky Ridge is steep and isolated, a future trail extension from the existing Montgomery Woods loop trail could afford Reserve visitors the opportunity to experience the 360-degree views from atop Rocky Ridge while gazing over the old-growth redwood crowns below.

Montgomery Woods expansion brings a host of benefits

The acquisition provides an opportunity for California State Parks to expand public access for visitors to the Reserve. The park is also adjacent to a Bureau of Land Management parcel and nearby properties protected by Save the Redwoods League. With Rocky Ridge added, these properties and the Reserve form a protected greenbelt of more than 11,500 acres in the upper reaches of the Big River watershed. Protected wildlife corridors are critical for unimpeded migration and movement potential for endangered or threatened species that inhabit the area.

“The conservation ethic of Save the Redwoods League is engrained in the DNA of California State Parks,” said **Bill Maslach**, Sonoma-Mendocino district superintendent for California State Parks. “The League continues to help State Parks evolve and create innovative solutions to the preservation and stewardship of California’s landscapes. We are grateful to the Weger family for bringing their private land into the Montgomery Reserve. This generous contribution assures greater wildlife connectivity and increases public access to a remarkable place in Mendocino County.”

Montgomery Woods Initiative

This purchase and transfer of the Rocky Ridge property is the latest effort in fulfilling Save the Redwoods League’s vision for the [Montgomery Woods Initiative](#), which is expanding the area of protected lands surrounding the park and improving trails and park experiences for visitors in the park. The Initiative, announced in September 2022, began with the purchase and protection of the adjacent 453-acre [Atkins Place](#) property in 2022 as a future fee addition to Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve. In August 2023, the League secured a conservation easement on the 3,862-acre Weger Ranch, safeguarding its coast redwood and Douglas-fir forest. The easement protects the ranch from subdivision, development and excessive logging in perpetuity. The deal also ensures that the property will remain as a sustainable working forest buffering Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve.

The League has now protected more than 64 square miles (40,974 acres) in Mendocino County.

To access hi-res images and b-roll, please [visit the League’s online newsroom](#).



Save the Redwoods League

One of the nation's longest-running conservation organizations, Save the Redwoods League has been protecting and restoring redwood forests since 1918. The League has connected generations of visitors with the beauty and serenity of the redwood forests. Our 600,000 supporters have enabled the League to protect more than 220,000 acres of irreplaceable forests in 66 state, national, and local parks and reserves. For information, please visit SaveTheRedwoods.org.



California State Parks

California State Parks and the recreational programs supported by its divisions of Boating and Waterways, Historic Preservation, and Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation provide the opportunity for families, friends and communities to connect. Off-highway motor vehicle recreation, boating activities, horseback riding, cycling, hiking, camping, rock climbing, tours, hikes, school group enrichment, and special events are just some of the activities enjoyed in 280 park units organized into 21 field districts throughout the state. Learn more at www.parks.ca.gov.

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