



## COASTAL REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS

This area encompasses the coastal shores and forests of Redwood National and State Parks (RNSP) from Crescent Beach south to Mussel Point, near the town of Orick and include portions of adjacent private lands east of the parks. Portions of this area include the lower stretches of the Smith River, Klamath River, and Redwood Creek watersheds. The Smith and Klamath Rivers are part of the federal and state wild and scenic river systems. Offshore the numerous seastacks provide habitat for many seabirds and contributes to the scenic view.

The climate along the coast area is cool and moist, with only minor variations in temperature, and heavy fogs are nearly a daily occurrence during the summer. The coastal forests receive the heaviest rainfall of any area in California - 60 to 100 inches annually. Redwood National and State Parks is designated as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations in recognition of its extraordinary natural ecosystem values and is also recognized as one of 226 International Biosphere Reserves

Prior to European settlement within Redwood National and State Parks, at about 1850, the Yurok, Tolowa, and Chilula lived along the coast and rivers of the parks. American Indians were displaced by incoming miners during this period and a number of coastal towns were established as supply centers for the gold miners. Farmers and ranchers were soon attracted to the north coast. Commercial fisheries were established in the last quarter of the 19th century, and the dairy industry also became important. Toward the end of the 19th century, the timber industry was established in the area and is recognized in the 20th century as a major industry contributing to the economic viability of the area. Now recreation and tourism are important contributors to local economies.



## I. Resource Values

### Natural

- Redwood National and State Parks preserve one of the largest expanses of **ancient coast redwood forest** in northern California.
- Over 35 miles of scenic **Pacific Ocean coastline**.
- A variety of **biotic communities** from the Pacific Coast to interior mountains, including ancient redwoods, coastal prairies, and riverine, coastal, littoral, and near-shore marine environments.

### Plants and Animals

- **Listed bird species** include the northern spotted owl, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, western snowy plover, California brown pelican, and short-tailed albatross.
- The federally endangered **western lily** may be found in coastal bogs or prairies near the ocean where fog is common.
- Three listed species of **salmon and trout** are found in the area's streams:
  - Coho salmon
  - Chinook salmon
  - Steelhead trout
- Four listed species of **sea turtle** may occur offshore in the ocean and occasionally be found on the beaches:
  - Leatherback Turtle
  - Green Turtle
  - Olive Ridley Sea Turtle
  - Loggerhead Turtle
- The federally listed **stellar sea lion** may occasionally be found on some of the area's beaches
- The recently federally de-listed endangered **peregrine falcon** also occurs in this zone
- Non-threatened and endangered species of interest include the Roosevelt elk, black bear, and mountain lion.

### Cultural

- Because the subject area includes portions of the aboriginal territories of both the **Tolowa and Yurok Indians**, the zone has important cultural values. Sites containing over 1500 years of prehistory and ethnographic history are distributed throughout the zone. These cultural resources include village sites, trails, ceremonial places, and subsistence areas. Equally important, contemporary traditional Native American use is ongoing. The mouth of the Klamath River and adjacent coastal lands are used by local Yurok for fishing and eeling, for gathering berries, tea, seaweed and shellfish, and for an annual ceremony. To the north, the Tolowa also hold an annual get-together.
- The landscape of the park represents more than **150 years of land use** practices by non-Indian peoples, including exploration, mining, fishing, ranching, timbering, and settlement.

## Recreation

- There are many **camping** possibilities in the State Parks, including developed campsites at Nickel Creek, DeMartin Prairie, Flint Ridge, Elk Prairie, and Gold Bluff Beach.
- Both marine and freshwater **fishing** is popular.
- The area includes many **excellent hiking trails** through ancient and second growth redwood forests and along wild coastal bluffs.
- Opportunities for **wildlife viewing** abound, including bird watching on coastal bluffs, forests, coastal prairies, and wetlands; watching for gray whale on their annual migration, and elk in prairies.
- **Surfing** is popular along the beaches.

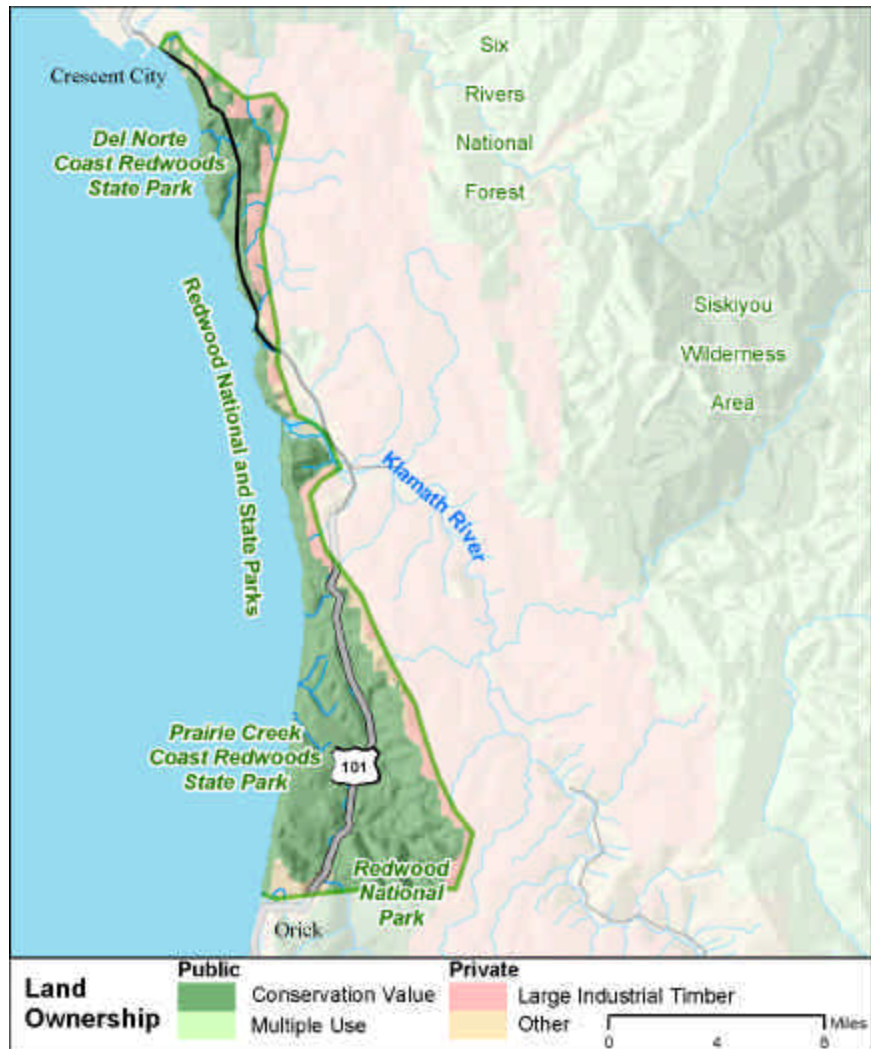
## Visual

- **Coastal panoramic vistas** at many of the overlooks, for example Footsteps Rock, Klamath, and High Bluff.
- **Scenic views** observed while driving along Highway 101.
- Walking along many of the Park's **coastal trails** provide exceptional aesthetic rewards.

## II. Community Values

### Land ownership

- **Government ownership** includes four units that comprise Redwood National and State Parks - Redwood National Park, Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park and Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park
- **Industrial timberland** owned by Stimson Lumber and Simpson Timber Companies border much of the park to the east. In addition, several small private landholdings in the northern section are adjacent to the Park.
- Lands included within one mile on both sides of the Klamath River are within the boundaries of the **Yurok Reservation**.



## Economics

- **Commercial beach fishing** targeting surf smelt and redbay surfperch occur all year round
- Traditional **cultural and subsistence activities** and economic development projects are of importance on the Yuok land.
- **Timber harvest** on adjacent industrial timberland of redwood spruce, hemlock, and Douglas-fir, with occasional red alders.
- **Cattle ranching and dairying** also occur on land adjacent to the Park.
- **Commercial nurseries** grow Easter lily, daffodil bulbs, potted plants and many cut flowers.
- Fern frond/shrub (e.g., huckleberry and Oregon grape) **greenery picking for floral industry**.
- **Particle board** mill and production of **liquid fertilizer** from fish emulsion and particle board by-products.
- Crescent City serves as a **harbor** for commercial and recreational fishing. Commercial fishing primarily involves the seasonal harvesting of ground fish, salmon, shrimp, and Dungeness crab. Recreational fishing targets rockfish, salmon, and Dungeness crab.

## **III. Opportunities and Threats**

- **Protect remaining old-growth** and residual forest stands in adjacent private landholdings of Klamath and Mill Creek watersheds.
- **Logging activities** in the Klamath and upper Mill Creek watersheds that removes remaining ancient forest, and further fragments the forest habitat.
- The **Yuok brush dance site** is vulnerable to natural events, for example extremely high tidal and river flow events.
- **Inability to effectively conduct fire** in old-growth forest. The lack of fire history information in old-growth forests contributes to this impediment.
- **Caltrans work projects** have potential to impact ancient old-growth redwood trees. Projects include (1) stabilization of roadway overlooking Sister Rock area on Highway 101 north of Wilson Creek (“Last Chance Grade”), and (2) widening sections of 101 through old-growth forests in Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park.
- **Offshore ship traffic** poses a potential threat to the regions marine and coastal resources. A major oil or hazardous material discharge from this activity poses a serious threat to the Park’s coastal marine resources.
- Potential discharge of **hazardous material** (e.g., diesel, gasoline, other toxic material trucked and moved overland) along highways could degrade old-growth trees or affect listed fish and other aquatic resources.
- **Over-fishing** could potentially impact smelt fishery.

- Feeding pressure from California sea lions and Harbor seals ("Pinnepeds") on salmonids in the Klamath River mouth could be impacting the recovery of salmon and trout populations.

## IV. Conservation Action

### Current

- Park staff review and provide comments to **CALTRANS** for projects along Highway 101 for potential effects to existing old-growth forests and other significant natural resources.
- Research is needed to address the issue of whether **pinnipeds affect recovery of salmon and trout** stock in the Klamath River. Research could utilize USFWS and CDFG salmonid survey information for monitoring salmonid population trends in riverine system.
- Park geologists provide **assistance to adjacent landowners** with the expertise in developing programs to de-commission unstable or unused logging roads.

### Prospective

- Acquire **private lands** in watersheds from willing seller.
- Acquire **conservation easements** along riparian zones of salmon and trout streams, including:
  - **Stronger protection for Class 2 and Class 3 streams** adjacent to park lands.
  - **Reestablish late seral conditions** along all major riparian zones (fund riparian restoration efforts).
  - Assist in **second-growth management efforts** of RNSP with the opportunity to accelerate early to mid-seral, uneven-age stand development through management practices.

## V. Potential Partners

California Chamber of Commerce  
 California Coastal Commission  
 California Coastal Conservancy  
 California Department of Fish and Game  
 California Department of Parks and Recreation  
 California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)  
 California North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board  
 County of Del Norte  
 County of Humboldt  
 National Marine Fisheries Service  
 National Park Service  
 Non-profit land trusts and corporations  
 Private land owners  
 Save-the-Redwoods League  
 Simpson Timber Company  
 Stimpson Lumber Company  
 Tolowa Tribe  
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Pacific Southwest Research

Station  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Yurok Tribe

## VI. Linkages

- The Smith River watershed adjoins the area to the **north** with linkages to Six Rivers National Forest and ultimately the Klamath-Siskiyou ecoregion.
- Redwood Creek watershed adjoins the area to the **south and east**.
- The Klamath River and Highway 101 are **barriers to linking forests south** of Del Norte Redwoods.
- Despite the extant of second-growth forests in the Redwood Creek watershed links between the coastal forests south of **Klamath River and Prairie Creek are possible**.