

# FOREVER FOREST

THE CAMPAIGN  
FOR THE  
REDWOODS

CAMPAIGN IMPACT REPORT  
2017-2022

*Save The Redwoods*

L E A G U E

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## ON THE COVER:

Coast redwoods rise above the fog in Redwood National Park. Redwoods Rising, the most ambitious restoration project ever attempted in the coast redwood range, is an effort by Save the Redwoods League, the National Park Service, and California State Parks to reverse the extensive damage from logging that began in the 19th century in what is now Redwood National and State Parks. Gifts from the Forever Forest Campaign supported this historic project.

PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER, @MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY

## Foreword

By President and CEO Sam Hodder, Save the Redwoods League

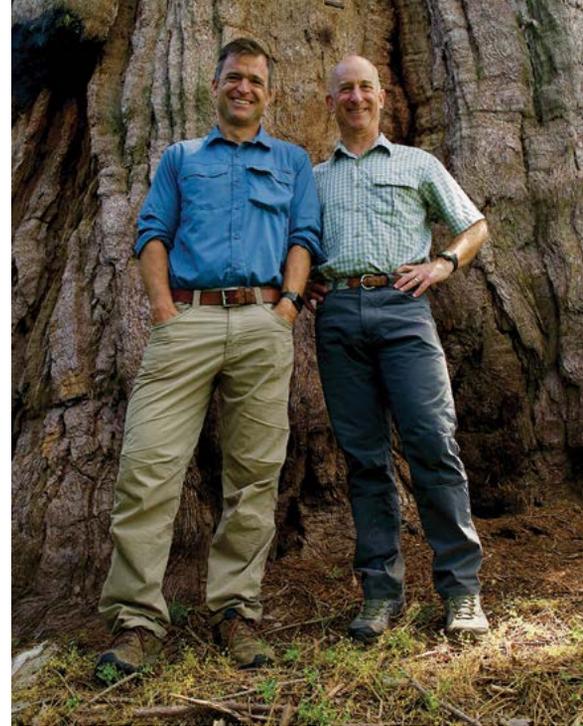
When we celebrated the Save the Redwoods League centennial in 2018, we reflected on the very best conservation strategies and achievements that saved what's left of the world's tallest and largest trees, and we used that legacy to propel us forward and set ambitious goals for our second century. We launched Forever Forest: The Campaign for the Redwoods to realize our bold vision for a vibrant redwood forest of the scale and grandeur that once graced the California coast and Sierra Nevada, protected forever, restored to grow old again, and connected to all people through a network of parks and protected areas that inspire the world with the beauty and power of nature.

The first comprehensive fundraising campaign in the League's 100-year history, the Forever Forest Campaign raised the funds to dramatically scale up our work across all pillars of our mission: Protect, Restore, and Connect. At our centennial, we recognized that the work of our first 100 years to protect the remaining old growth had resulted in islands of ancient trees in a sea of commercial forestland and that these extraordinary groves were at risk of becoming museum exhibits of what the forest used to be. We saw that over a million acres of young coast redwood forests surrounding and connecting those protected groves were still in private hands, and we saw the existential threat to the survival of our ancient giant sequoias. We witnessed the increasing role that parks play in our public health and our community connections, and we recognized the need to further invest in these places. And we got to work.

From 2017 to 2022, the Forever Forest Campaign spanned a period of extraordinary crisis, stress, and anxiety for our country and the world. Amidst the enormous challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and worldwide lockdown, social unrest, the Black Lives Matter movement, escalating climate change, and catastrophic wildfires, we were enormously successful in meeting our conservation goals. With your support, we saved most of the remaining old-growth forests in private ownership, restored thousands of acres of formerly cut-over and younger forests, built climate resilience into our landscapes, and welcomed diverse visitors to our redwood parks.

Throughout these pages, you'll read about these conservation successes and the work across the redwood range that you have helped to set in motion. I am tremendously grateful to the League's volunteer leadership—the Campaign Committee and Board of Directors—for their generosity and commitment to our vision to accelerate the pace and scale of our work. I could not be prouder to be leading this organization at this pivotal time.

And to all of you—a heartfelt thank you! Through your commitment and generosity, we were successful at launching a new era of healing and resilience for our redwood forests and catalyzing a renewed commitment to land conservation at a truly extraordinary scale. Thank you for making our work possible. For saving the redwoods. And for committing to leaving the world better than you found it.



League President and CEO Sam Hodder, left, and Board of Directors Chair Matt Berler.

PHOTO BY ANDY MILLER



## **Board of Directors 2017-2022**

Matt Berler  
(chair, 2020-present)

Justin Faggioli  
(chair, 2016-2019)

Rosemary Cameron

Sara A. Clark

William Croft

Melissa Harris

Wendy Hayward

Kristy Hsiao

Caryl Hart

Peggy Light

Rob Mellor

John Montague

John Scharffenberger

Jim Sergi

Abe Tarapani

Andrea Tuttle

Andy Vought

C. Blake Williams

Michael K. Woo

Mike Wyatt

Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve was the largest old-growth redwood forest remaining in single private ownership when the League acquired the 730-acre property in 2018.

PHOTO BY MIKE SHOYS

## Introduction

By Forever Forest Campaign Chair John Scharffenberger and Vice Chair Peggy Light

We were honored to lead the Forever Forest Campaign at such a pivotal time for the redwood forests. We recognized that our work has never been more urgent or more important—and this campaign has given us agency in our future, a great sense of hope, and the opportunity to lend support and galvanize others to invest in the health and well-being of the natural world around us.

As campaign leaders, what excites us most is all that we have accomplished with your support. We have funded a remarkable body of work over the early years of our second century and have set the redwood forests on a new trajectory. This campaign has not only made our work in the redwoods possible, but it has also transformed our organization in ways we could not imagine when we began this effort.

We are grateful for the outpouring of support for the campaign, with many donors stretching to make the largest philanthropic contributions of their lifetimes. The Forever Forest Campaign was supported by over 50,000 people from across the United States and 40 countries, and it raised over \$143 million—exceeding our goal of \$120 million! We thank *all* who have given so generously to this effort, and in doing so, positioned the League for great success as we embark on our second century of conservation across the redwood range.

We are especially grateful to our honorary campaign co-chairs Ralph Eschenbach and Carol Joy Provan, who were instrumental in our ability to advance critical conservation initiatives in a timely manner. They deserve our most profound appreciation. We would also like to acknowledge our fellow board members and the Forever Forest Campaign Committee and Honorary Committee for their early and generous commitments, which set the pace for our fundraising success.

*“Although we may not be able to solve all the world’s problems, we can endeavor to restore balance in the redwood forests that are so close to our hearts. We are working hard to do the things that restore and protect America’s most iconic forests. In doing so, we hope to invest in what matters most: the health and well-being of our landscape, our people, and our future.”*

—John Scharffenberger

*“As a third-generation League board member, I was so proud to serve in this important role and have the privilege of meeting campaign donors across the country. It was tremendously gratifying to meet so many new donors and families who care so passionately about the mission—I know we’ll be around for another 100 years!”*

—Peggy Light



Forever Forest Campaign Vice Chair Peggy Light and Chair John Scharffenberger.

PHOTO BY DREW ALTIZER  
PHOTOGRAPHY

## Forever Forest: The Campaign for the Redwoods, 2017-2022

### THE IMPACT OF YOUR SUPPORT

#### **\$143 million in private philanthropy**

For 100 years, Save the Redwoods League has stood between California's iconic redwood trees and the axe. We held the line, saving the last of the world's ancient redwoods. As we embarked on our second century, we launched the Forever Forest Campaign to secure a new future for our redwood forests: to shift from degradation to restoration and healing of our redwood forests, to build resilience into redwood ecosystems, and to ensure the people of California have iconic and inspiring experiences in redwood parks.

Generous support of the Forever Forest Campaign enabled the League to dramatically scale up our pace, reach, and impact across both the coast redwood and giant sequoia ranges. In this report, we share the impact of the collective \$143 million investment in the redwoods and commemorate the historical conservation successes that the Forever Forest Campaign made possible across all pillars of the League's mission: Protect, Restore, and Connect.

#### **Protect—\$77.4 million**

With gifts to the Forever Forest Campaign, Save the Redwoods League protected 20,500 acres of coast redwood and giant sequoia forests. This included four of the most important old-growth forests that remained in private ownership and added to the 206,000 acres of forests the League protected over the previous century.

We began the critical work of acquiring second-growth redwood forests at scale, including key puzzle pieces to link hundreds of thousands of acres of protected lands and watersheds. We secured conservation easements on working forests, partnering with private landowners to retire the threat of development and keep forests intact and managed to the highest ecological standards. And we pursued opportunities to

engage with Indigenous communities and tribal nations in the protection and ongoing stewardship of their traditional lands.

Our land protection work provides the opportunities for implementing our restoration and parks and public engagement efforts.

#### **Restore—\$26.7 million**

Gifts to the Forever Forest Campaign supported the expansion of forest restoration on public lands and League-owned properties. This work included thinning overly dense forests, decommissioning miles of abandoned logging roads, restoring miles of streams, and planting thousands of trees to bring back healthy forests at a landscape scale. With existential threats of climate change, drought, and catastrophic wildfires, our investments in science, active management of redwood forests, and building resilience into the landscape have never been more important. Our goal to set forests on the path to growing old again is ambitious, and it would not be possible without the shared vision of our supporters.

#### **Connect—\$18.3 million**

The Forever Forest Campaign has enabled the League to make significant investments in redwood parks and public engagement. While connecting people with the redwoods has always been core to our mission, we deepened that commitment by elevating the communities that were excluded in the past and inviting underrepresented audiences to lead in healing the forests and building parks of the future. In reimagining redwoods experiences to inspire a new generation of visitors, the League is helping to make our parks and programs more welcoming and resonant while ensuring the sense of well-being and community that redwood forests provide is available to all.

## Forever Forest Campaign initiatives



## Your legacy—priceless

The Forever Forest Campaign has set in motion a new future for the redwoods. Together we have shown the world how we care for California's redwood forests and people. The League is grateful to our generous supporters for answering our call to reclaim one of the most treasured landscapes in the world and advancing and accelerating a new future for the redwoods, protected forever, for all people.

### Forever Forest Campaign Committee

John Scharffenberger, chair  
Peggy Light, vice chair  
Matt Berler, board chair  
Sam Hodder, president & CEO  
Steve Butler  
James Campbell  
Justin Faggioli  
Michael Helms  
David Horn  
Kristy Hsiao  
Allegra Quinn  
Lisa Ortiz  
Julia Sherwin  
Andy Vought  
David Weinberg  
Mike Wyatt

### Honorary Campaign Committee

Ralph Eschenbach and Carol Joy Provan, honorary co-chairs  
Nancy Eccles and Homer M. Hayward Family Foundation  
Larry and Bronia Holmes  
Susan E. Juhl  
The Mailliard Family  
Peter and Patty Mattson  
The Fred Maytag Family Foundation  
The Wendling Family  
Dr. John Woollam

# PROTECTHIGHLIGHTS

The League's vision for its second century commits to accelerating the pace and scale of redwood forest land conservation. To that end, support from the Forever Forest Campaign has helped secure the remaining viable old-growth redwood forests and advance the effort to double the protected coast redwood forest reserves over the next 100 years. This work will ensure that the forests' health and beauty will endure for generations to come. With campaign support, the League protected 20,500 acres of coast redwood and giant sequoia forests, including four key old-growth forests. We started acquiring larger second-growth redwood forests, connecting hundreds of thousands of acres of protected lands. We secured conservation easements on working forests, partnering with private landowners to keep forests intact and managed to the highest ecological standards. And we engaged Indigenous communities and tribal nations in protecting and stewarding their traditional lands.



Lost Coast Redwoods includes 5 miles of California coastline, the largest stretch in private ownership in the redwood range.

PHOTO BY MAX WHITTAKER



# Lost Coast Redwoods

## 5 miles of spectacular California coastal forest

Protected: 2021

On the rugged and remote Lost Coast in northern Mendocino County, where traditional territories of the Sinkyone, Cahto, and Coast Yuki peoples converge, a lush coast redwood forest meets the vast deep blue of the Pacific Ocean. With steep cliffs plunging into secluded beaches, Lost Coast Redwoods encompasses 5 miles of California coastline, the largest stretch in private ownership in the redwood range. Managed for commercial timber production since the 1880s and faced with an immediate threat of aggressive logging if acquired by another buyer, this spectacular 3,181-acre property was acquired by the League for \$36.9 million in December 2021.

With just three months to raise the funds for the purchase, donors to the Forever Forest Campaign contributed over \$21 million in gifts to acquire the property and care for it during our ownership. With over 5 miles of coast redwood forest now protected, Lost Coast Redwoods will benefit future generations through greater climate and fire resilience across the landscape, carbon storage, and biodiversity, all while providing an extraordinary place for people to picnic and hike at the edge of the Pacific Ocean in the future.

The League's vision is to protect significant swaths of industrial timberland and set them on the path to become the old growth of the future. Succeeding at this acquisition was critically important to the future of the coast redwood range and positions us well for future opportunities.

*“This is the moment we’ve been waiting for—the moment this campaign prepared us for. With this capstone project of the campaign, we were able to assemble the necessary cash in three short months to succeed at this once-in-a-generation opportunity and purchase this stunning coast while we had the chance.”*

—Matt Berler, board chair, Save the Redwoods League

The League purchased Lost Coast Redwoods, protecting more than 3,100 acres of lush coast redwood, Douglas-fir, and grand fir forest, coastal prairies, and steep bluffs overlooking 5 miles of spectacular and remote California coastline.

PHOTO BY MAX WHITTAKER



# Alder Creek

## Crown jewel of Giant Sequoia National Monument

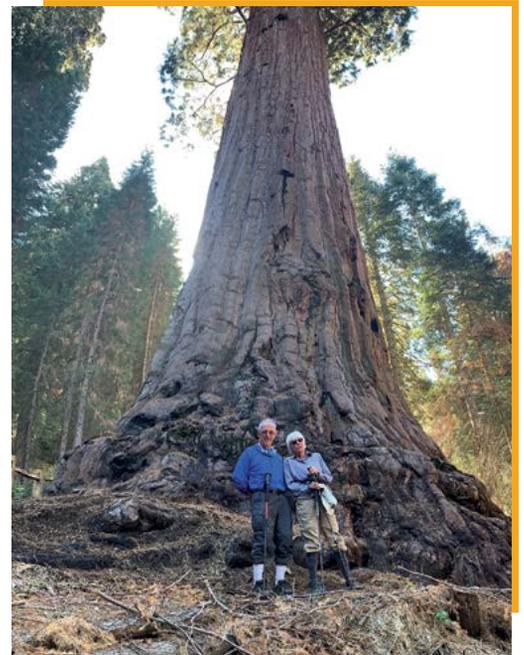
Protected: 2019

Alder Creek, the most consequential giant sequoia acquisition of the last century, was the last remaining unprotected ancient giant sequoia forest in the world when the League secured the opportunity to protect it in 2019. Harboring nearly 500 ancient giant sequoias, this landscape evokes the beauty and power of beloved places like the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias in Yosemite National Park and the Giant Forest in Sequoia National Park. With support from more than 8,500 individuals and foundations from more than 30 countries, the League purchased the 530-acre forest for \$15.65 million. Among the many giants here is the Stagg Tree, the fifth-largest tree known in the world.

Within the first year of ownership, Alder Creek experienced the SQF Complex fires in August 2020. While the edges of the property need restoration treatments after experiencing high-severity fire, the heart of the forest remains healthy, and the ancient giant sequoias are as stunningly beautiful as ever. Building fire resilience into the property remains a top priority, and we are focusing our efforts on post-fire research and recovery to inform stewardship across the giant sequoia range as these lands face the threat of more severe wildfires. Ultimately, the League intends to transfer Alder Creek to the USDA Forest Service for inclusion in Giant Sequoia National Monument, securing greater protection and stability for the giant sequoia range.

*“This is why the League exists: to protect iconic landscapes when we have the chance. The League had waited 50 years for a willing seller of this last remaining unprotected ancient giant sequoia forest, and we simply had to act. Carol and I contributed the lead gift to ensure this grove would be protected. We couldn’t be prouder that we were able to contribute and inspire others to play a role in this historic conservation success.”*

—Ralph Eschenbach, honorary co-chair, Forever Forest Campaign



Ralph Eschenbach and Carol Joy Provan, honorary co-chairs of the Forever Forest Campaign, at Alder Creek.

PHOTO BY SUZANNE MOSS

One of the many iconic giant sequoias at Alder Creek contrasts with a blanket of snow.

PHOTO BY ROY E. WILLIAMS II

## Red Hill

### The heartland of the giant sequoia forests

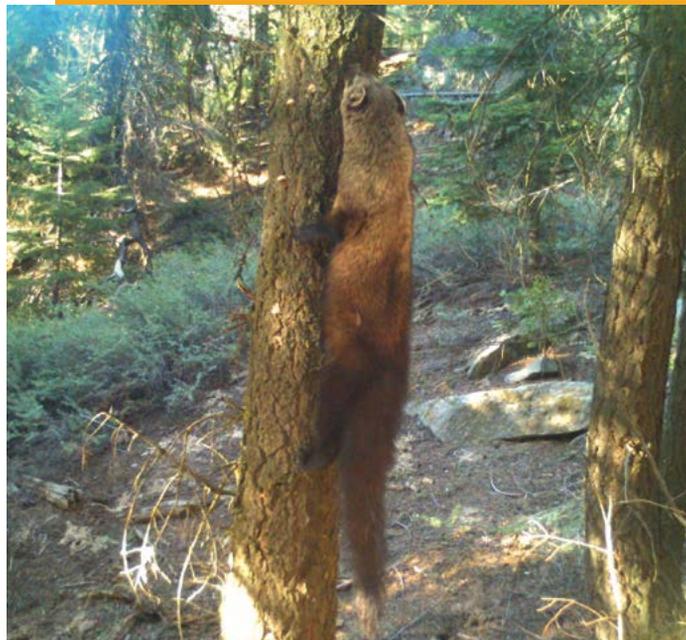
**Protected: 2018**

A hidden world lies about a four-hour drive northeast of metropolitan Los Angeles; a place of pristine rivers, lush forests, meadows spangled with wildflowers and ancient giant sequoias so majestic that they take your breath away. Red Hill, a magnificent 160-acre ancient sequoia forest, was the next largest private giant sequoia property in the world after Alder Creek and one of the last unprotected until the League acquired it in 2018.

Within Giant Sequoia National Monument and adjacent to the Tule River Reservation, Red Hill is in the heartland of the giant sequoias and is home to massive trees that have stood for millennia. More than 3,100 League members from across the country and local and regional foundations contributed to the effort to reach the \$4 million goal to acquire and steward the property. The League has been working to restore fire resilience and help with the forest's recovery after the Windy Fire in 2021, and in December 2022, transferred Red Hill to the USDA Forest Service to be managed as part of Giant Sequoia National Monument.

A remote camera at Red Hill in 2020 captured this image of the elusive Pacific fisher, which is endangered in the southern Sierra Nevada.

PHOTO BY JOE MEDLEY,  
COLIBRI ECOLOGICAL CONSULTING





League staff members take in the wonder of Red Hill's giant sequoias.

PHOTO BY PAOLO VESCIA



Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve, a hidden gem on the hilltops of Sonoma County, is home to hundreds of massive, ancient redwoods.

PHOTO BY MIKE SHOYS

# Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve

## An extraordinary ancient forest previously unknown to the public

**Protected: 2018**

Reached by winding roads through the remote hills of Sonoma County, Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve is home to enormous, ancient trees that have stood since the days of the Roman Empire. Owned by the Richardson family for nearly 100 years, this forest was the largest old-growth redwood forest remaining in single private ownership when the League acquired the 730-acre property in June 2018. The \$18 million acquisition permanently protects hundreds of old-growth coast redwoods from timber harvesting and the entire forest from development and fragmentation.

The Kashia Band of Pomo Indians, whose traditional lands encompass the reserve, have been important partners in this project since its protection. The League is working closely with the Kashia to plan for tribal and public access and to develop site interpretation. This magical place will be the first new ancient redwood park created in a generation.

*“When I learned about the fate of these trees, I had to act—and act quickly with a big heart to save them. Just think what is at stake: We who can live about a century can save hundreds of trees that have lived thousands of years! For generations into the future, these awesome trees will continue to grow and be loved by others.”*

—John Woollam



Thru-hiker Amanda Jameson, right, visits the League’s Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve with other outdoor advocates and leaders to help inform public access planning.

PHOTO BY THE OUTBOUND COLLECTIVE / WONDERCAMP

*“Protecting land that will be available for the public is the most important way to heal our relationship to the earth, and ourselves ...”*

—Anonymous

Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve gives Save the Redwoods League its first opportunity to open our own old-growth redwood park. The League invited a group of environmental leaders from diverse backgrounds to be among our first visitors and share their vision for how a park experience could be developed to engage and inspire their communities. With the early and important input, the League is planning a new trail system through ancient trees, a day-use area with parking and restroom facilities, and state-of-the-art interpretation to enhance visitors’ understanding of this unique ecosystem and the Indigenous people who have been in relationship with this place for millennia.

## Cascade Creek

# Creating a continuous protected forest from mountains to ocean

**Protected: 2020**

Featuring a glorious ocean view from the Santa Cruz Mountains and home to redwoods young and old, Cascade Creek secures continuous protected forest from the mountains to the sea, linking Big Basin Redwoods State Park with Año Nuevo State Park. The League purchased the 564-acre property in December 2020. Donors to the Forever Forest Campaign, including Peninsula Open Space Trust, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and the California State Coastal Conservancy contributed funds toward the purchase price and stewardship costs of \$9.6 million.

Despite the forest burning during the CZU Lightning Complex fires in August 2020, the League moved forward with the purchase to prevent development on the land and ensure the long-term ecological health of the forest. Home to substantial old-growth and mature second-growth redwoods, Cascade Creek shows the potential to restore the ancient coast redwood habitat that once dominated the San Francisco Bay Area. Already well on its way to recovery, it will provide stable carbon storage in a fire-impacted landscape once it has healed. In addition to post-fire research, we are developing a public access plan before transferring the land to a permanent steward.

Coast redwoods cover the Cascade Creek property before the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex fires. Despite being charred by fire, almost all of the coast redwoods appear to have survived, and the forest is recovering.

PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER,  
@MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY





# Mailliard Ranch

## Ensuring the future of this redwood landscape forever

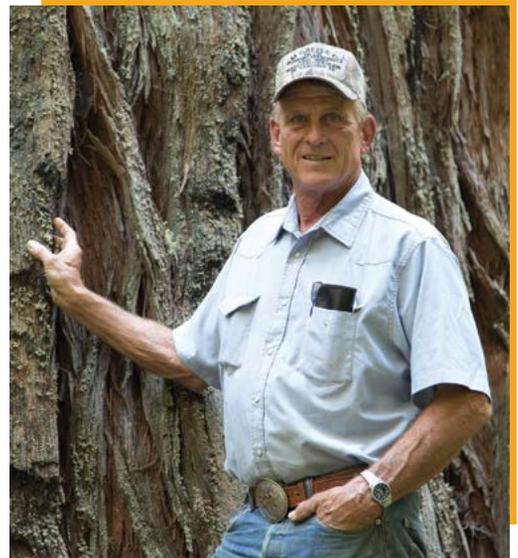
**Protected: 2021**

The expansive 14,838-acre Mailliard Ranch in the scenic Anderson Valley of southern Mendocino County is a wonderland of old-growth redwoods, mature mixed-conifer forest, and 28 miles of healthy salmon-bearing streams. With nearly 1,000 acres of reserves and harboring majestic stands of old-growth redwoods, this land provides optimal habitat for a wide range of rare and endangered plants and animals. It is the largest coast redwood forest still in private family ownership.

In partnership with the Mailliard family, Save the Redwoods League permanently protected this landscape through conservation easements in February 2021. The Mailliard family will retain ownership of the land and continue their exemplary stewardship, while the agreement secures the entire property from the threat of subdivision and development. Generous donors to the Forever Forest Campaign contributed \$8.15 million to fund the \$24.7 million cost of the three easements. The easements complete a puzzle of more than 82,000 acres of contiguous protected lands and nearly double the amount of land that the League has safeguarded in Mendocino County.

*“I am tremendously grateful that after 100 years of family stewardship our ranch will remain intact. The redwood forest will be managed for fire resilience and to grow bigger trees long into the future, thanks in large part to our partnership with the League.”*

—Larry Mailliard, ranch manager and general partner,  
Mailliard Ranch



Larry Mailliard, rancher and owner  
of Mailliard Ranch.

PHOTO BY PAOLO VESCIA

The vast Mailliard Ranch in Mendocino  
County is now permanently protected.

PHOTO BY JOHN BIRCHARD

## Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ (Fish Run Place) Returning land to Indigenous guardianship

Protected: 2021

More than 200 acres of old-growth coast redwoods still tower among younger redwoods, Douglas-firs, and tanoaks in a remote Mendocino County forest called Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ. Pronounced *tsih-ih-LEY-duhn*, the name means “Fish Run Place” in the Sinkyone language. The League acquired the 523-acre property formerly known as Andersonia West in July 2020 with habitat mitigation funds from Pacific Gas & Electric Company. The League then donated the land to the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, a nonprofit consortium of 10 federally recognized tribes with cultural connections to the lands and waters of traditional Sinkyone and neighboring tribal territories. The Sinkyone Council granted the League a conservation easement and restored the original Sinkyone place name, Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ.

Building partnerships and capacity to support tribal ownership and co-management is critical to accelerating the pace and scale of redwood forest conservation. The League has prioritized deepening relationships with California tribes that have had reciprocal relationships with the redwood forests for millennia. The Sinkyone Council has designated Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ as a Tribal Protected Area that holds great cultural significance for the Sinkyone Council and its member tribes.

*“The Council and the League have a mutual commitment to respect, safeguard, and tend Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ in ways that ensure its long-term protection, care, and healing. In holding and caring for this land, we are helping to lead effective ways of addressing the global climate crisis.”*

—Priscilla Hunter, a tribal citizen of the Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians  
and chairwoman of the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council



Jaime Boggs, left, a board member of the InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council, offers a hand to then-League staff member Dana Viloría as she crosses a creek in Tc'ih-Léh-Dûñ. The forest's name, meaning Fish Run Place, reflects the creek's high-quality habitat for endangered coho salmon and threatened steelhead trout.

PHOTO BY PAUL ROBERT WOLF WILSON

# RESTORE Highlights

While the League's first 100 years were focused on safeguarding the remaining old-growth coast redwood and giant sequoia forests, we are now turning our attention to regenerating the forests lost to logging in the 20th century. Funds from the Forever Forest Campaign have helped us set this vision in motion to put redwood forests back on a path to growing old again. In response to the existential threats of climate change, drought, and unprecedented severe wildfires, we've expanded the science around climate change and genomics to inform restoration techniques that will support a sustainable future for redwood forests.

Resources from the campaign enabled the League to launch Redwoods Rising, the most ambitious restoration project ever attempted in the coast redwood range, and to leverage our expertise to help land managers address the urgent challenge of high-severity wildfires in the giant sequoia range. We have gained momentum to reverse the loss of coast redwood and giant sequoia forests and start to rebuild these iconic landscapes as critical elements of the fight against climate change.

Redwoods Rising is an ambitious effort to reverse the extensive damage from logging in what is now Redwood National and State Parks. As part of Redwoods Rising, a worker marks a Sitka spruce for removal in an overly dense stand that grew after historical logging.

PHOTO BY JIM CAMPBELL-SPICKLER



# Redwoods Rising

## A historic restoration initiative

**Launched: 2018**

Redwood National and State Parks are home to almost half of the world's remaining old-growth redwood forests. These parks safeguard the tallest redwoods known to exist, imperiled salmon and trout, and rare species such as the threatened marbled murrelet and the endangered western lily. Additionally, these old-growth forests store substantially more carbon per acre than any other forest type on Earth. However, these old-growth groves, earning the parks' status as a UNESCO World Heritage site, represent a minority of the parks' land area. Approximately 66% of the redwood forests in these parks are very young, bearing the scars of decades of industrial-scale commercial logging—some as recent as the 1990s—before they were part of the parks. Many of these logged areas were replanted with extremely dense stands of other species such as Douglas-fir. Competing for precious sunlight, these young forests have grown in tall, spindly, and dark.

In April 2018, the League, the National Park Service, and California State Parks launched Redwoods Rising, now a model for large-scale forest restoration on public lands. Our goals over the next 10 years include building resilience into the landscape by restoring thousands of acres of second-growth redwood forests, improving stream health, and removing dozens of miles of failing and inaccessible logging roads.

Redwoods Rising builds upon decades of research and redwood forest restoration projects in the parks. Although 80% of the funding for this program comes from government agencies, gifts from the Forever Forest Campaign closed the gap and made this work possible.



Workers stand on a former logging road that was decommissioned in Redwood National Park. Redwoods Rising work on the ground began in 2020, and crews have removed 21 miles of failing logging roads, thinned 2,600 acres of overly dense forest, and restored 2.5 miles of stream channel.

PHOTO BY MIKE SHOYS

# SCIENCE Highlights

Science has been a critical facet of the League's work since its founding. Innovative redwoods research conducted by League staff and partners informs our conservation programs and supports improved stewardship of our redwood forests. Understanding how the forests are responding to climate change, wildfire, drought, historical logging, and other challenges enables us to make better decisions and gives us our best chance to ensure the coast redwood and giant sequoia forests survive and thrive long into the future. Foundational and original research made possible through gifts to the Forever Forest Campaign to expand our scientific inquiry, engage with leading experts in coast redwood and giant sequoia research, and elevate our collective understanding of these rare forests will have impacts beyond our lifetime.



*“I can’t think of a more important place to put our dollars: The future impact of this work will be felt for decades, if not centuries. Unlocking the secrets to the resilience of these remarkable species will not only protect the sequoias, but also will have implications for other forests across the country and world. My wife Carol and I are proud to be able to support this work.”*

—Bill Croft, League board member and chair of the League’s science and restoration committee

Bill Croft and Carol Tofaletti at Harold Richardson Redwoods Reserve.

PHOTO BY SUZANNE MOSS



As part of the Redwoods and Climate Change Initiative, research conducted by League staff and partners explores critical questions related to the trees and climate change. Learn more on the following page.

PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER,  
@MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY

# Redwoods and Climate Change Initiative

## Research shows redwoods are a climate change solution

2017-2022

While redwood forests are naturally resilient, they are not immune to the impacts of climate change. Rising atmospheric temperatures may lead to less coastal fog in the coast redwood range and less snowpack and earlier annual snowmelt in the giant sequoia range. In addition to warming temperatures and drought, other impacts may include more wildfires, flooding, and shifting relationships between the trees and pests and pathogens.

To get a clearer picture, the League partnered with researchers from a variety of institutions—including Cal Poly Humboldt; University of California, Berkeley; NatureServe; United States Geological Survey; and Colorado State University—to form the Redwoods and Climate Change Initiative and explore critical questions related to redwoods and climate change.

The results yielded inspiring news: old-growth coast redwoods and giant sequoias are powerful allies in meeting the threat of climate change, storing more carbon per acre than any other forest type on Earth. These results demonstrate that protecting and restoring these forests should be part of California’s overall effort to address climate change. Forever Forest donors contributed nearly \$3 million to these efforts over the course of the campaign.



Researchers of the Redwoods and Climate Change Initiative study a coast redwood. The Initiative revealed that coast redwoods and giant sequoias are powerful allies in mitigating climate change, storing more carbon per acre than any other forest type.

PHOTO BY SUZANNE MOSS

# Redwood Genome Project

## Sequencing the redwood genomes

Completion announced: December 2021

Gifts to the Forever Forest Campaign provided over \$1 million to support the Redwood Genome Project, a multiyear academic collaboration to sequence the coast redwood and giant sequoia genomes for the first time in history. Researchers from Save the Redwoods League; the University of California, Davis; Johns Hopkins University; University of Connecticut; and Northern Arizona University participated in this groundbreaking project over four years.

Findings show that both sequences are incredibly complex, with the coast redwood genome being nearly nine times larger than the human genome. Scientists also have discovered that the coast redwoods have hundreds of genes that help the trees fight off stress at the cellular level. These are important building blocks for future research.

The goal of uncovering the genetic structure of coast redwoods and giant sequoias is to craft better conservation and management strategies for these forests. By creating the foundation for developing genetic screening tools, we can ensure genetic diversity within a forest stand, and give the forest a better chance to tolerate or withstand drought, wildfire, and climate change.

Findings of the Redwood Genome Project show that the coast redwood genome is nearly nine times larger than the human genome. Scientists also have discovered that the coast redwoods have hundreds of genes that help the trees fight off stress at the cellular level.

PHOTO BY MIKE SHOYS



# WILDFIRE RESEARCH AND SCIENCE GRANTS

## Save Our Sequoias Creating change as the threat grows

League scientists for years were part of a growing chorus of conservation researchers warning about the increasing threat of wildfire to redwoods, but we were nonetheless stunned by the speed with which this threat has come to fruition during the course of the campaign. Since 2015, we have lost about 20% of the oldest, largest giant sequoias in the world. While fire is natural and necessary in the giant sequoia ecosystem, climate change, decades of poor forest management, and the removal of Indigenous peoples and their cultural burning practices from the landscape have created an existential crisis for these ancient forests for the first time in their history.

The League has been quick to respond, bringing national attention to the crisis through media outreach, sharing our knowledge with other land managers, advocating for changes in forest management, testing new restoration strategies in the field, and elevating Indigenous stewardship. At Alder Creek, we are embracing the opportunity to model what good giant sequoia stewardship looks like.

The League joined the Giant Sequoia Lands Coalition to act on the emergency as a united front. Leading the coalition's communications strategy, we produced and distributed to lawmakers a brief outlining the urgent action needed. Supporters of the Forever Forest Campaign contributed not only their dollars to our giant sequoia stewardship work, but also their voices in support of saving the giant sequoias.

California's already limited giant sequoia range is facing unprecedented threats from severe wildfires that have killed approximately 20% of mature giant sequoias since 2015, including trees at the pictured Black Mountain Grove. The Forever Forest Campaign enabled the League to respond quickly and set in motion a plan to protect vulnerable groves while we have the chance.

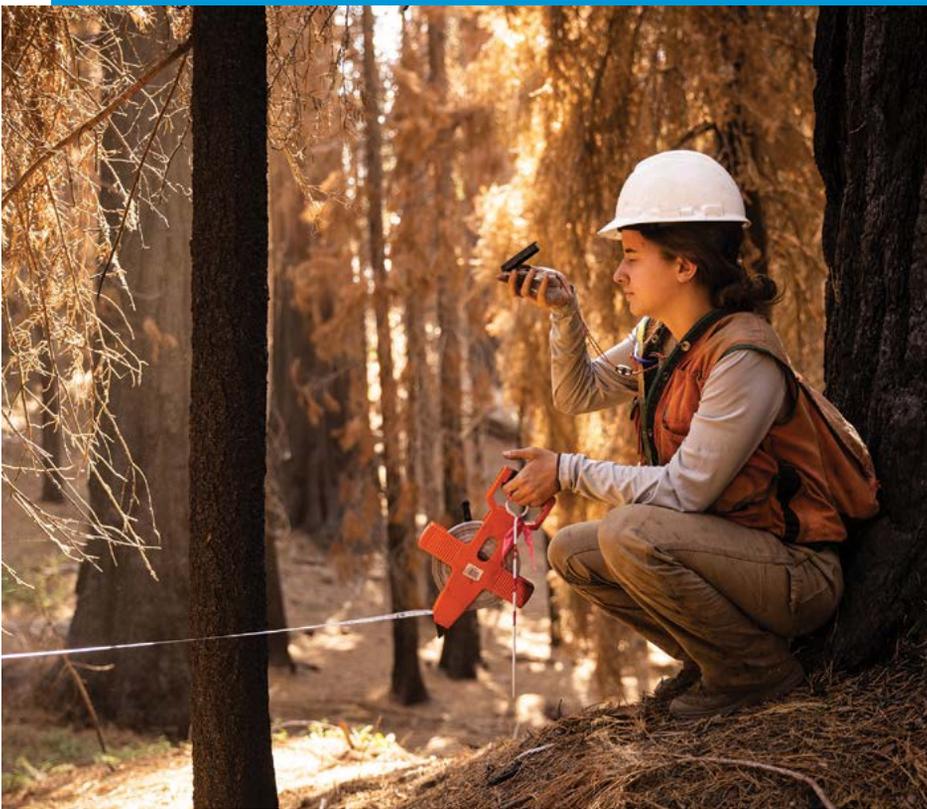
PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER,  
@MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY



## Science Grants

### Increasing understanding of redwood ecosystems

Expanding the current knowledge around coast redwood and giant sequoia ecosystems is vital to achieving the League's ambitious goals for land protection and restoration. Over the past five years of the campaign, we have helped fund 63 groundbreaking science projects, totaling \$3.5 million in grants. Thanks to these investments, we now have a better understanding of bark beetle infestation in giant sequoia groves, the importance of fog to the coast redwoods, the impact of logging on bat populations, and much more. All this research expands our understanding of ecosystem functions, forest community relationships, rare and threatened species, and the impact of escalating climate change on coast redwood and giant sequoia forests.



Thanks to science grant investments, we now have a better understanding of redwood ecosystems. Here, a technician collects data at the League's Alder Creek property after the 2020 SQF Complex fires.

PHOTO BY MAX WHITTAKER





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## **EDITORIAL SUPPORT**

The League's Marketing Communications  
and Programs departments contributed  
to this report.



# CONNECTHighlights

People came together more than 100 years ago to save California's redwood forests because they felt that the powerful experience of walking in these magical places needed to be preserved. At Save the Redwoods League, we believe that coast redwood and giant sequoia parks make people's lives better and our communities stronger. As California grows in population and cultural diversity, we are investing in creating wonderful redwoods experiences for all people.

Funds from the Forever Forest Campaign enabled us to increase our commitment to public land agencies and community partners and develop meaningful park experiences that are more welcoming and relevant to everyone. Funds benefitted more than 40,000 students through a variety of education programs designed to deepen awareness and understanding of redwood forests and the need to protect them. And most importantly, our parks, outreach, and education programs empower new and diverse audiences to explore their connections with nature and the redwoods.

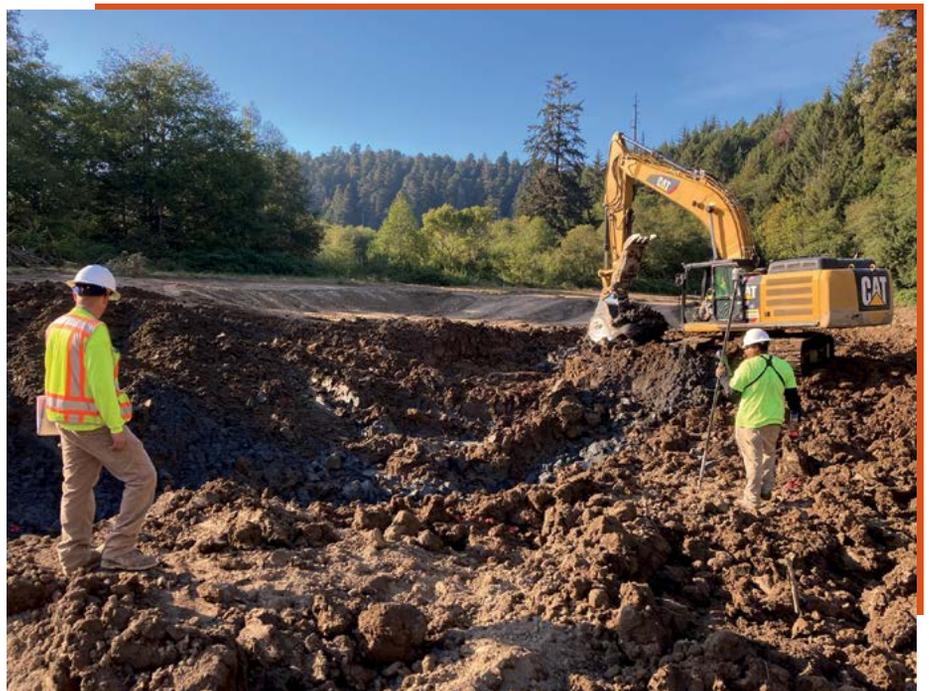
Students in the League's Redwoods and Climate Change High School Program measure a redwood. The Forever Forest Campaign supported a variety of education programs that deepen awareness and understanding of redwood forests and the need to protect them.

PHOTO BY VICTORIA REEDER



Crews removed more than 10 acres of asphalt on the League's Drick Mill Site to create the foundation for future visitor amenities as part of the Redwood National and State Parks Trails Gateway & Prairie Creek Restoration project.

PHOTO BY MIKE MALONE, SHN



The League is increasing engagement with California tribes on projects such as the Redwood Trails Gateway & Prairie Creek Restoration project. The Yurok Tribe Construction Corporation excavates a backwater channel connecting to the main stem of Prairie Creek to provide salmonid habitat.

PHOTO BY CALIFORNIA TROUT

# Redwood Trails Gateway & Prairie Creek Restoration

## Healing the landscape and human connection to it

2017-2022

For years, people have stood on the sprawling asphalt on the former Orick Mill Site in Humboldt County and recognized the dissonance between the surrounding Redwood National and State Parks and the inholding where old-growth redwood was milled for more than 65 years in what is now the heart of the park. The League purchased the mill site in 2013 and is working to remove the asphalt and concrete and re-establish the natural meander and floodplain of Prairie Creek, which is critical fish habitat. As the southern gateway to Redwood National and State Parks, the restored and improved site will be a recreational hub where visitors can explore the network of adjacent trails and connect with the natural and cultural history of the area.

The League is working with numerous local partners on implementation of this complex project, including the Yurok Tribe Construction Corporation and the Yurok Tribe Fisheries Department, which are restoring the site that lies within their ancestral lands.

There is no better metaphor for rebirth than the reintegration of this former mill site into the incredible natural landscape. Funds from the Forever Forest Campaign have made this work possible.



This rendering shows how the restored mill site, Prairie Creek, and floodplain will look when work is completed in 2025.

RENDERING BY STUDIO+5411

## Grove of Titans

### A new trail and elevated walkway

Completed: May 2022

Deep in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park is a towering grove of massive trees that, although known for generations by Indigenous people of the area, was relatively hidden until a team of researchers came upon it in 1998. Dubbed the “Grove of Titans” and promoted on social media, the area was soon overrun by visitors going off trail in search of these trees. Visitors inadvertently trampled the grove’s lush vegetation and damaged the ancient redwoods’ roots.

The League partnered with California State Parks, the National Park Service, and Redwood Parks Conservancy to develop an enhanced, ecologically sound visitor experience that would protect the trees while providing access to the spectacular grove. With gifts to the Forever Forest Campaign, the 3-mile renovated trail to the Grove of Titans was completed in May 2022, including a remarkable elevated walkway that allows visitors to walk among the giants safely. The Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation collaborated with the League in creating interpretive signage that welcomes people to the park and shares the history of the area.



Josie Merck, who made a generous challenge grant to support the Grove of Titans walkway and interpretation project, prepares to cut the ribbon to reopen the grove in 2022. The League worked with partners to build the walkway that protects visitors and the forest.

PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER, @MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY

## Pfeiffer Falls Trail

### A new trail at one of Big Sur’s most popular destinations

Completed: June 2021

Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park is home to one of Big Sur’s most magical redwood forests. The popular Pfeiffer Falls Trail had been closed for over a decade due to the Basin Complex fires in 2008. With gifts from the Forever Forest Campaign, the League partnered with California State Parks to create a newly aligned 0.75-mile Pfeiffer Falls Trail to provide an improved visitor experience while bolstering the health of the ecosystem. A 70-foot pedestrian expansion bridge above the canyon was opened in 2021, providing visitors with a safe and scenic way to span the ravine. Unfortunately, severe storms in January 2023 toppled a tree that damaged the bridge. Repairs are pending. When the trail is open, visitors can climb through the redwood canyon to see the mid-sized falls’ white ribbons of water streaming from 60 feet above over exposed rocks into a serene pool. This project was a long time in the making and is a testament to the enduring partnership between Save the Redwoods League and California State Parks.



The renovated Pfeiffer Falls Trail in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park winds through the redwoods and features a 70-foot pedestrian bridge.

PHOTO BY MAX WHITTAKER



League staff members and partners assess the condition of Big Basin Redwoods State Park after the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex fires destroyed nearly all park infrastructure.

PHOTO BY LEAGUE STAFF

## Big Basin Redwoods State Park Rebuilding California's oldest state park

After the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex fire destroyed nearly all infrastructure within Big Basin Redwoods State Park, Save the Redwoods League was one of many groups that swiftly offered to support the park on its road to recovery. Forever Forest donors contributed to an emergency fund to address immediate needs at the park and support an assessment of post-fire forest conditions across three redwood parks in the Santa Cruz Mountains. The League began working closely with California State Parks on the assessment and plans for forest management and rebuilding a park experience that will be welcoming and relevant to visitors today. The timeline for the rebuilt park reopening to a public much in need of places like this is unknown, but the League remains involved on the advisory committee and committed to supporting the efforts.

Well before the CZU Complex fires, Save the Redwoods League was in the process of collaborating with California State Parks to replace the outdated Rancho del Oso ranger station at Basin Redwoods State Park's western gate with a new welcome center, including an outdoor classroom and gathering space. The center will be a crucial venue for outreach and education programs about an hour's drive from the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area.

## Outreach

### Cultivating partnerships to welcome marginalized communities

As the COVID-19 crisis took hold in March 2020 and underscored the disparities of access to parks, the League's ongoing efforts to support relevant and inclusive park experiences became even more important. We identified specific communities that are underrepresented in redwood parks: California Native communities and tribes; low-income rural communities; youths and young adults of color; and women and girls. The League has been actively cultivating relationships and programmatic partnerships with community-based organizations, public land managers, and leaders within these communities. The goal is to ensure that marginalized community members have equitable access to the redwoods and experiences that are meaningful and beneficial. Additionally, this outreach helps the League and our partners better understand how to create welcoming and resonant redwood parks for all.



The League's Jayrlin Molina shows visitors some of the smaller wonders of nature at Redwood Park in Arcata. Save the Redwoods and partners welcomed Latinx and Indigenous guests to guided walks in redwood parks in summer 2021.

PHOTO BY TONI MAGGI-BROWN

## Education

### Connecting more than 42,000 students to redwood forests

The League nurtures connections with the redwood forests by partnering with schools, educational organizations, and parks to provide innovative education and interpretation programs that encourage all youth to experience the redwoods in ways that are personally relevant and inspiring. We expanded programs from the San Francisco Bay Area to Humboldt and Santa Cruz counties, getting even more students out on free field trips to the redwoods, especially lower-income students who wouldn't have the opportunity otherwise. COVID-19 shifted the focus of the education program to provide more online resources, including virtual book readings and a curriculum encouraging students to explore outside around their home. Forever Forest donors have helped us reach more than 42,300 students through education programs, and many more by providing an extensive redwoods curriculum to teachers and schools across the state. These efforts encourage youth to build meaningful connections with redwood forests that can last a lifetime.



In a League education program, a Humboldt County fourth grader measures a coast redwood in Humboldt Redwoods State Park, exploring the forest with his class.

PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER, @MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY

# FINANCIALS

## Forever Forest: The Campaign for the Redwoods

January 1, 2017–March 31, 2022

The Forever Forest Campaign was the first comprehensive fundraising campaign in the 100-year history of Save the Redwoods League, and it included all philanthropic gifts from individuals, foundations, corporations, bequests, planned gifts, and our non-profit partners during the campaign period. We remain deeply grateful to each and every one of you for generously supporting the League’s work to accelerate the pace, scale, and impact of our work as we embark on our second century!

Because of your generosity, we are proud to report that over five years we raised \$143 million under the pillars of Protect, Restore and Connect—enabling us to protect entire landscapes through large-scale, strategic land acquisitions; restore young redwood forests to become the old-growth forests of the future; and connect all people with the beauty and power of the redwoods through transformational park experiences.

### SOURCES OF FUNDS

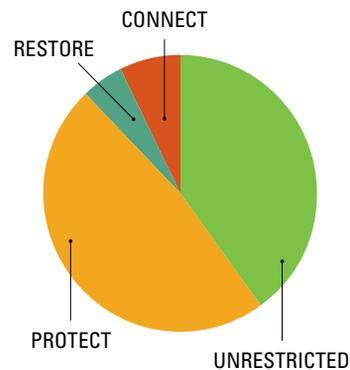
\$143 million in private support

PROTECT: \$68.7 million

RESTORE: \$7.1 million

CONNECT: \$9.8 million

UNRESTRICTED: \$57.3 million



### USES OF FUNDS

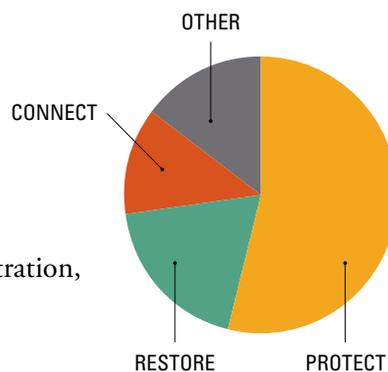
\$143 million total

PROTECT: \$77.4 million

RESTORE: \$26.7 million

CONNECT: \$18.3 million

OTHER (development, marketing, administration, operations): \$21 million



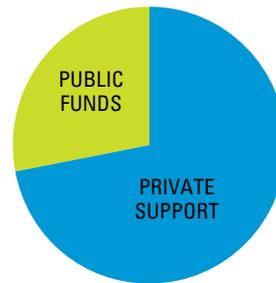
## TOTAL CONSERVATION IMPACT

\$198 million

Philanthropic funds from the Forever Forest Campaign were highly leveraged and used to secure an additional \$55 million in government grants and other public funds from local, state, and federal sources, creating a total of \$198 million available to support our work.

FOREVER FOREST CAMPAIGN  
PRIVATE SUPPORT: \$143 million

PUBLIC FUNDS AND  
GOVERNMENT GRANTS: \$55 million



A Douglas iris in a redwood forest.  
PHOTO BY MIKE SHOYS

## CONCLUSION

California's coast redwood and giant sequoia forests inspire the world with their natural beauty, massive scale, and resilience. They are among the world's oldest and richest ecosystems, and their future must be secured for the sake of nature and for all people.

Since our earliest days, Save the Redwoods League has been committed to protecting these special places, where forests reach toward the sky and connect us with something bigger than ourselves. Today we know that the work is far from finished. Together with our supporters, we are going big to safeguard and return entire redwood landscapes to their former glory.

Even as we continue our efforts, we celebrate the extraordinary achievements that have been made possible by our generous supporters from across the globe. The success of Forever Forest: The Campaign for the Redwoods gives us hope that the forests we all love and our communities that benefit from experiencing the power of the redwoods can thrive—now and forever.

**OPPOSITE PAGE:**

Twin giant sequoias stand tall at the League's Alder Creek property.

PHOTO BY MAX FORSTER,  
@MAXFORSTERPHOTOGRAPHY





With our deepest gratitude for our supporters, we commemorate the completion and extraordinary accomplishments of Forever Forest: The Campaign for the Redwoods. Our contributors' generous support enabled us to begin setting redwood forests on the path to become the old-growth wonders of the future, accelerate the pace and scale of our redwood land protection, restore landscapes of young forests across their ancient range, and connect new generations with the beauty and power of nature through transformational park experiences.