

Media Alert



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CONSTRUCTION OF ELEVATED WALKWAY IN JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS STATE PARK BEGINS ON NOVEMBER 6, 2019

***First Phase of Plan to Safeguard the Grove of Titans and
Improve Visitor Experience in Redwood National and State Parks***

Mill Creek Trail will close from Howland Hill Road to the Smith River

SAN FRANCISCO (Nov. 6, 2019) – On November 6, 2019, construction will begin on a 1,300-foot-long elevated walkway through the Grove of Titans (Grove) in [Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park](#), part of Redwood National and State Parks in Del Norte County, California. This work is the first phase of a three-year, \$3.5 million project organized and implemented by [California State Parks](#), [Save the Redwoods League](#), [Redwood Parks Conservancy](#), and the [National Park Service](#). The project, [first announced in November 2018](#), was conceived to provide environmentally sensitive access to the Grove and adjacent forest. Thousands of visitors have been finding their way on “social trails” or unofficial pathways since the location of the Grove was first shared online in 1998, which has caused considerable damage over time.

During construction, from November 2019 to May 2021, the **Mill Creek Trail will be closed from Howland Hill Road to the Smith River**. *See below for dates and alternative routes.*

The renovation project will establish official, safe access to the Grove, provide ecosystem protections for the trees, visitor services and amenities, including a new restroom facility where the Mill Creek Trail meets Howland Hill Road.

Here’s what you need to know if you’re planning to visit the park during the construction:

CLOSURES AND GROVE ACCESS

Access to the Grove of Titans is closed.

- For park visitors’ safety, the area around the Grove of Titans will be fenced off and closed. Any park visitors in violation of the posted closure will be subject to a citation.

From November 6, 2019 to May 2021 (anticipated), the Mill Creek Trail will be closed from Howland Hill Road to the Smith River.

- Park visitors may use the nearby Boy Scout Tree, Nickerson Ranch, Little Bald Hills, or Stout Grove trails, which are accessible from Howland Hill Road. For more recommendations on trail alternatives to avoid the potentially hazardous construction area, visit the [California State Parks website](#).
- As always, please recreate safely and protect you and your loved ones, as well as your natural surroundings. Always use official, open trails and avoid walking along roadways or on the forest floor. Be sure to actively supervise children at all times. For more safety tips, click [here](#).

BACKGROUND ON THE GROVE OF TITANS AND THE NEED TO SAFEGUARD IT

The Grove of Titans was identified deep in the old-growth forests of Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park in 1998. Following the unofficial publication of its location, in print and online, visitation increased dramatically over the past 20 years, with peak travel of 13,000 cars per month along Howland Hill Road during the busy summer months, often resulting in gridlock.

With increased visitation, the negative impacts anticipated by California State Parks materialized. Over the years, a complex web of “social” trails has formed. The resulting influx of foot traffic has destroyed understory plants and compacted soil. It has inhibited the uptake of water and nutrients by the shallow roots of the redwoods and is threatening the long-term survival of the Grove itself. Additionally, unplanned trails can cause soil erosion and corresponding runoff that can affect streams where coho and steelhead live, feed, and spawn.

“Instead of looking like a prehistoric and pristine forest, it’s been looking increasingly like the LA freeway system,” said **Brett Silver**, California State Park’s Deputy District Superintendent, North Coast Redwoods District. “I know it will be frustrating for people not to have access during this extended construction period. We ask all visitors for their patience and cooperation as we work to preserve and protect this incredible place for future generations to enjoy.”

For further information on the project and to donate to support this important work, visit SaveTheRedwoods.org/Titans or GroveofTitans.org. You may also make donations by calling Save the Redwoods League at **(415) 820-5800** or Redwood Parks Conservancy at **(707) 465-7329**.

Project updates are available at SaveTheRedwoods.org/project/grove-of-titans.

To access images, videos, or maps please [visit the League’s newsroom for resources](#). To schedule an interview, please contact **Polly Ikonen, Landis Communications at (415) 359-2315** or redwoods@landispr.com.

- See maps on the following pages -

GROVE OF TITANS

JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS STATE PARK, DEL NORTE COUNTY

Save The Redwoods
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Aerial view of the closed Mill Creek Trail.

GROVE OF TITANS

JEDEDIAH SMITH REDWOODS STATE PARK, DEL NORTE COUNTY

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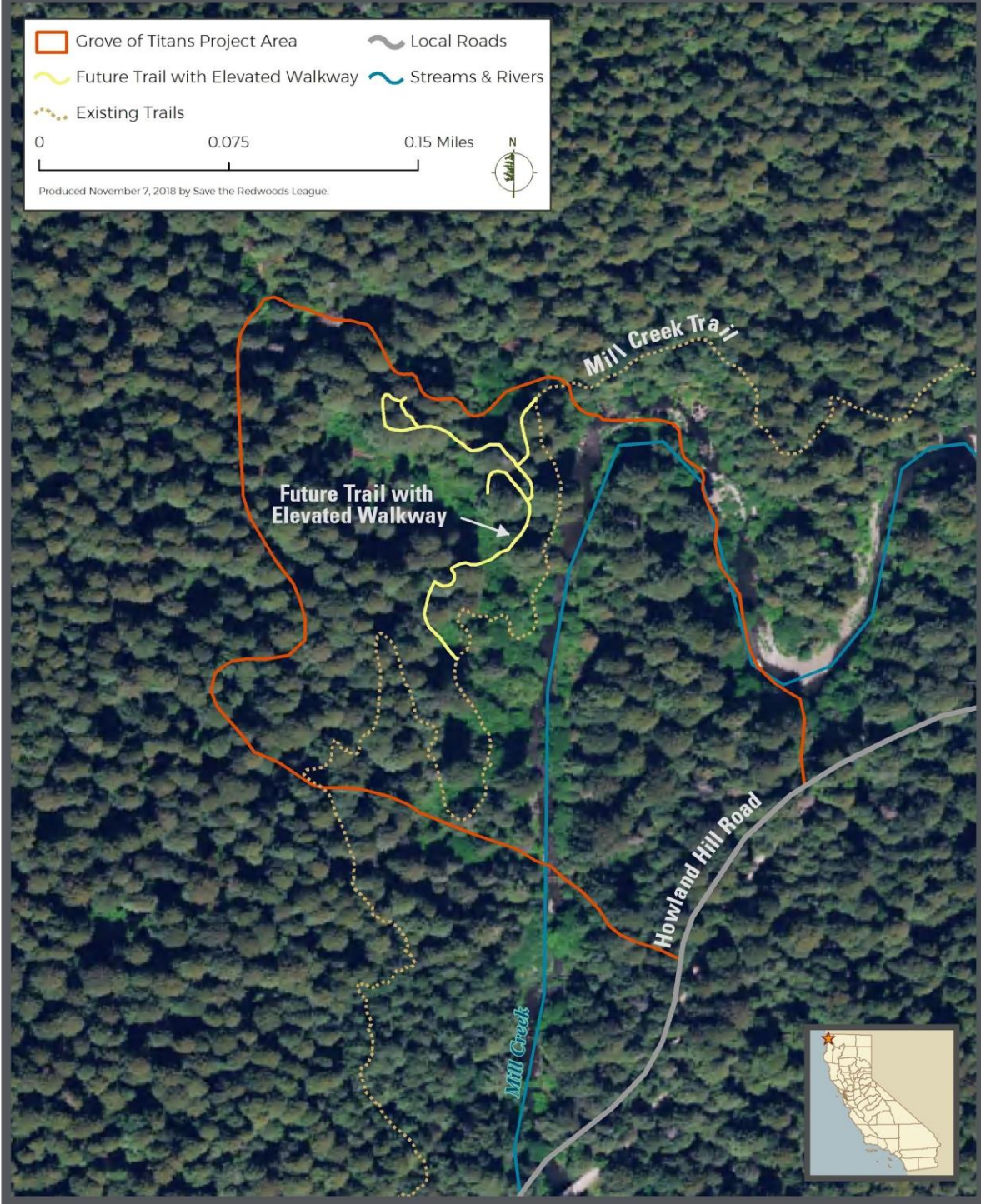


Aerial view of the Grove of Titans, with future elevated trail and new restroom facilities.

GROVE OF TITANS

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, Del Norte County

Save The Redwoods
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Zoom view: Aerial view of the Grove of Titans, with future elevated trail.



About California State Parks

The [California Department of Parks and Recreation](#) protects and preserves the state's valued natural, cultural, and historical resources while providing recreational opportunities, including hiking, camping, mountain biking, horseback riding, boating and off-highway vehicle activities. The department achieves its mission through grant programs and a network of 280 parks, which include beaches, trails, wildlife areas, open spaces, off-highway areas, and historic sites.



About Save the Redwoods League

One of the nation's oldest conservation organizations, Save the Redwoods League has been protecting and restoring redwood forests since 1918, connecting generations of visitors with the beauty and serenity of the redwood forest. Our 22,000 supporters have enabled the League to protect more than 216,000 acres of irreplaceable forest in 66 state, national and local parks and reserves. For more information, go to [SaveTheRedwoods.org](#), or to sign up for updates, please visit [SaveTheRedwoods.org/signup](#).



About Redwood Parks Conservancy

The [Redwood Parks Conservancy \(RPC\)](#) is a non-profit cooperating association established to foster understanding, enjoyment, and stewardship of our public lands through educational outreach, visitor services, and support of our partners entrusted with the care of public lands along California's north coast. Donor contributions and proceeds from sales at visitor centers are returned to the parks to fund education, restoration, exhibits, and publications.



About the National Park Service

The [National Park Service \(NPS\)](#) preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The national park system includes 417 areas covering more than 84 million acres in every state, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The NPS cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world. The variety and diversity of park units throughout the nation require a strong commitment to resource stewardship and management to ensure both the protection and enjoyment of these resources for future generations.

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