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## **Donors Worldwide Contribute \$543,000 to Big Basin Redwoods State Park Recovery Following 2020 Wildfires**

Sempervirens Fund and Save the Redwoods League Collaborate for First Phase to Improve Access and Public Safety

**Boulder Creek, Calif. (December 16, 2020) —** [Sempervirens Fund](#) and [Save the Redwoods League](#) have raised \$543,000 to date for California State Parks and the massive recovery effort at Big Basin Redwoods State Park.

As the wildfires raged in August, Save the Redwoods League joined Sempervirens Fund in asking supporters for donations to the Big Basin Recovery Fund. Both organizations have been involved in supporting Big Basin, California's oldest state park, since its founding in 1902.



The 86,509-acre CZU Lightning Complex wildfires centered on Big Basin Redwoods State Park, burning over the entire park and destroying nearly all the buildings and infrastructure in its 18,000 acres.

Today's announcement follows the recovery fund's first disbursement of \$200,000, which will primarily support staffing and equipment costs for removing damaged and fallen trees that pose a hazard to other trees, personnel and future visitors. This first phase of the recovery operation will allow California State Parks to prepare for the winter storms and will impact fewer than one percent of the park's trees.

The effort will allow for deeper access into the park to evaluate other effects of the wildfires and also expedite plans for re-opening the park. Coast redwood trees that need to be taken down will remain in the park and continue to play an essential role in the forest ecosystem, as they have for millennia.

A portion of the funding is also helping California State Parks initiate long-term planning for rebuilding Big Basin. California State Parks is organizing a planning process for rebuilding Big Basin's operations and infrastructure. That process should begin in 2021.

“State Parks is grateful for this outpouring of support and the ongoing partnership with people who care so deeply about Big Basin,” said **Chris Spohrer**, Santa Cruz District Superintendent for California State Parks. “This initial funding will allow us to access the backcountry, inventory damages, continue hazard mitigation and take the first steps toward recovery.”

“We are all eager to visit Big Basin again, and that begins with clearing the way for a safe park to emerge from the wildfire’s aftermath,” said **Sara Barth**, executive director, Sempervirens Fund. “State parks can be lighter on the land, have more resilient infrastructure and be welcoming and inclusive for all, and Big Basin can lead the way. We are grateful for the generosity of our donors, to Save the Redwoods League for joining us in this effort and to California State Parks for their thoughtful approach to recovery.”

“We are encouraged by the resilience that the redwood forest in Big Basin is already showing,” said **Sam Hodder**, president and CEO of Save the Redwoods League. “We look forward to working closely with our longtime partners Sempervirens Fund and California State Parks to reimagine and rebuild the state’s original redwood park for a 21st-century California—to create a visitor experience that will be welcoming and resonant to our full community in a time when people need to both access and witness the healing power of nature more than ever.”

For more information on the Big Basin Recovery Fund and other efforts by Sempervirens Fund and Save the Redwoods League to help redwoods recover, visit: [sempervirens.org/redwoods-recovery](http://sempervirens.org/redwoods-recovery) or [SaveTheRedwoods.org/RedwoodParksFund](http://SaveTheRedwoods.org/RedwoodParksFund).

### **About Sempervirens Fund**

California’s first land trust, Sempervirens Fund protects and permanently preserves redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) forests, wildlife habitat, watersheds, and other important natural and scenic features of the Santa Cruz mountains, and encourages public appreciation and enjoyment of this environment. [sempervirens.org](http://sempervirens.org)

### **About 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 forest. The nonprofit’s 24,000 supporters have enabled the organization to protect more than 216,000 acres of irreplaceable forest in 66 state, national and local parks and reserves. For information, please visit [SaveTheRedwoods.org](http://SaveTheRedwoods.org).

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