

**PRESS STATEMENT
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Contact:

Robin Carr, Landis Communications Inc.
Phone: (415) 971-3991 | Email: redwoods@landispr.com

Governor’s proposed funding for wildfire, state parks are bold steps in the right direction

Funding will acquire new State Park land, restore fire resilience in California’s forests and launch renewed future for Big Basin and other state parks impacted by last year’s wildfires

San Francisco, Calif. (May 15, 2021)— Today Governor Gavin Newsom announced a bold, responsible investment in funding for land conservation, forest restoration, climate adaptation, wildfire resilience and recovery. Earlier this year, the Legislature approved a \$536 million “early action” package to address wildfires, and now Newsom is asking for an additional \$708 million, bringing the total investment to \$1.2 billion.

The governor’s revised budget includes \$217 million earmarked to rebuild Big Basin Redwoods State Park and repair other state parks impacted by last year’s intense wildfires. With Big Basin still closed in the aftermath of the CZU Complex Fire nine months ago, this budget allocation is a big step toward reopening this Bay Area park that is visited by a million people each year.

Significant investment in wildfire preparedness is of foremost concern to Save the Redwoods League. Climate change and 150 years of fire suppression and exclusion of Indigenous stewardship have left forests and other natural lands statewide vulnerable to severe wildfires. As a result, California’s iconic fire-adapted coast redwood and giant sequoia forests are facing an unprecedented threat.

Statement from Save the Redwoods League President and CEO Sam Hodder:

“Gov. Newsom’s revised budget is an historic investment in our parks and forests at a time when we need them more than ever. We all witnessed how the crises of 2020 deepened our dependence on equitable access to parks and elevated the need for increased forest protection and stewardship to restore fire resilience in our landscape. The revised budget is a huge step forward in addressing those critical needs, including beginning to rebuild Big Basin and many other parks impacted by last year’s fires.

“State Parks are vital refuges for Californians to find inspiration, education and well-being. Our park system needs to grow to meet the needs of a growing and diversifying population,

especially after last year's fires. It is vital that we set our parks on a course to better serve future generations.

“Investing in wildfire resilience and preparedness is the smart, responsible choice for the people of California, the environment and the economy. The cost of putting out wildfires and rebuilding our communities after the fact is so much higher than the cost of restoring resilience in our forests. I applaud the governor for shifting our thinking to public investment to do the advance work on the ground to get our forests ready for our new normal.”

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For more information or to schedule an interview, contact Robin Carr at (415) 971-3991 or redwoods@landispr.com.



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 26,000 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.