



NEWS RELEASE

Save the Redwoods League launches fundraising efforts to protect some of the tallest and oldest redwood forests left in the Santa Cruz Mountains

--- Campaign preserves old-growth redwood forests and protects wildlife habitat

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (November 18, 2012) — **Save the Redwoods League**, the only nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting ancient redwood forests throughout their natural range, launched a public fundraising campaign today **to seize a rare opportunity to protect some of the tallest and oldest redwood forests** left in San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties. To succeed, the League must raise \$2 million by the end of 2012, and an additional \$6 million by the end of 2013, to purchase the stunning Peters Creek Old-Growth Forest in San Mateo County and protect the Boulder Creek Forest in Santa Cruz County with a conservation agreement.

Peters Creek Old-Growth Forest features 145 acres of jaw-dropping old giants. Here, Peters Creek ripples through deep canyons and past five-finger ferns and carpets of redwood sorrel. This coveted forest would make a spectacular addition to **Portola Redwoods State Park in the future** and offer easier access to one of the area's most beautiful old-growth redwood grove, access that now entails an arduous 11-mile round trip hike from the nearest trailhead. **Without protection Peters Creek could be subdivided for development in the near future.**

Boulder Creek Forest, a beautiful 214-acre tract of old-growth redwood forest features 72 acres of spectacular ancient redwoods. Adjacent to Big Basin Redwoods State Park in Santa Cruz County, this property will be safeguarded by a conservation agreement that prohibits harvesting of its massive redwoods and subdivision of the land.

"This is an urgent situation in which the public and our key partners will play a crucial role," said Sam Lawson, director of land protection for Save the Redwoods League, who along with League Project Manager Catherine Elliot reached agreements at significantly below market value with the family owners of the Peters and Boulder Creek tracts. "Our Santa Cruz Mountains Old-Growth campaign will safeguard iconic old-growth forests for all time and make it possible for future generations to experience and enjoy California and the Bay Area's truly unique natural wonders. With less than 5 percent of the ancient redwood forest remaining, we must seize every opportunity and continue to work diligently to protect ancient redwoods and giant sequoias throughout their natural range."

The Peters and Boulder Creek tracts are critical elements of the **Living Landscape Initiative**, an comprehensive effort by five Bay Area land trusts to protect the natural environment and inspire a renewed connection to the land in the heart of coastal California. In 2011, **Save the Redwoods League, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, The Nature Conservancy, Peninsula Open Space Trust and Sempervirens Fund** with critical financial support from the More and Packard Foundations united to implement a share vision of preserving an environment that supports a high quality of life for communities surrounding Silicon Valley— both now and in the future. The Initiative supports clean air and water, landscape preservation, habitat protection, biodiversity, natural beauty and access to recreation. The Peters Creek and Boulder Creek projects are flagship Living

Landscape protection protects.

"It's astonishing to think that old-growth redwoods have stood on these lands for centuries and survive to this day, right next to the urban hustle of Silicon Valley," said Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) President Walter T. Moore. "Not only are these two properties gorgeous to hike through, but their value as wildlife habitat and watershed land is tremendous. POST is committed to preserving 20,000 acres of redwood forest in the Santa Cruz Mountains, and we are pleased to partner with Save the Redwoods on this project. Our board has pledged \$1.125 million toward this purchase if Save the Redwoods League succeeds in raising the down payment. Our hope is that one day Peters Creek can be added to the State Park system instead of fenced off as private luxury estates. The habitat and trail connections these lands provide are exceptional and deserve our most diligent care and protection."

In addition to helping ensure that current and future generations will be able to experience and enjoy these remarkable ancient giants forever, the League's science-based Master Plan identifies the Peters and Boulder Creek tracts as extremely high priority for protection because of their concentration of ancient redwoods and wildlife habitat. **Protecting redwoods in the Peters and Boulder Creek forests will safeguard a wide variety of animals** that depend on this complex forest ecosystem for their survival, including imperiled coho salmon, steelhead trout and marbled murrelet, plus the Santa Cruz garter snake, Dudley's lousewort, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, newts, lizards, frogs, mountain lions and many more.

About Save the Redwoods League

Since 1918, Save the Redwoods League has protected and restored redwood forests and connected people with their peace and beauty so these wonders of the natural world flourish. Unfortunately, some ancient redwoods remain unprotected, and forests that are protected face threats from a changing environment, disease and devastating government budget cuts. Donations help us save these special places, allowing us to purchase redwood land, restore logged forests, research how to best protect them and teach children and adults about these magical expressions of life. To date the League has completed the purchase of more than 190,000 acres of redwood forest and associated land. For more information, please visit SaveTheRedwoods.org, or to receive monthly email updates, sign up at SaveTheRedwoods.org/signup.

League contact: Jennifer Benito, Director of Outreach

Tel: (415) 820-5814 | Email: jbenito@SaveTheRedwoods.org | SaveTheRedwoods.org

About Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST)

POST is a leading private nonprofit land trust that protects and cares for open space, farms and parkland in and around Silicon Valley. Since its founding in 1977, POST has been responsible for saving more than 70,000 acres as permanently protected land in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties.

Post contact: Nina Nowak, Director of Marketing and Communications

Tel: (650) 854-7696, x306 | Email: nnowak@openspacetrust.org | openspacetrust.org

About the Living Landscape Initiative

The Living Landscape Initiative is a collaborative effort among five land conservation organizations in and around Silicon Valley to create and maintain a vibrant and sustainable living landscape in the heart of coastal California. Through the partners' expertise and shared focus on a healthy ecosystem, the Living Landscape Initiative exists to protect landscapes and inspire a renewed connection to the land. The Initiative seeks to benefit local communities with an environment that supports a high quality of life through clean air and water, landscape preservation, farms and working landscapes, habitat protection, biodiversity, natural aesthetics, recreational access and economic vibrancy in the region.

###