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Save the Redwoods League Names Joanna Nelson, Ph.D., as Director of Science and Conservation Planning

Nelson brings more than 20 years of conservation experience to the 103-year-old organization

San Francisco, Calif. (July 7, 2021) — [Save the Redwoods League](#) today announced that Joanna Nelson, Ph.D., has been named director of science and conservation planning. This is a key staff position for the League, one of the nation's first science-based conservation organizations. The League relies on high-quality scientific research to inform its protection and restoration of the coast redwood and giant sequoia ecosystems. Nelson joined the League staff on July 6, and she reports to Paul Ringgold, chief program officer.

“Our redwood and sequoia forests are facing extraordinary challenges, including intense wildfires, drought and other effects of climate change,” said Ringgold. “Joanna is joining the League at a critical time and will strengthen our capacity in science and conservation planning. With her expertise, we can continue answering today's most pressing questions about how the redwoods are faring and make evidence-based management decisions to build resilience back into these iconic forests.”

“I'm excited to be joining the League at this important time with climate disruption, science and conservation values top-of-mind in our society,” said Dr. Nelson. “I admire the courage of the League to commit to redwoods and giant sequoias in the midst of rapid change. I stand with our organization's self-reflection, courage to face present-day injustices and reckoning with past injustices, in order to move forward and co-create stewardship with multiple communities, including Indigenous people who are culture bearers and forest stewards. The League is poised to make a significant difference for the future of redwoods, and I'm looking forward to working with this impressive team.”



Photo of Dr. Joanna Nelson by Cindi Stephan, twoirises.com.

Nelson has more than 20 years of experience designing, directing, implementing and evaluating research to support conservation objectives. Her work has been focused in California and includes international research initiatives as well. Nelson is an expert in conservation sciences, including forest, coastal and fire ecology, and she will use that expertise to direct all aspects of the League's scientific research programs. Chief among them are the League's [Redwoods and Climate Change Initiative](#), [Redwood Genome Project](#) and [Research Grants programs](#), in addition to understanding wildfire and drought effects in the coast redwood and giant sequoia ranges.

Before joining the League, Nelson was the founder and principal of [LandSea Science](#), where she built interdisciplinary teams to create conservation solutions that support ecosystem resilience and the well-being of humans and nature. In this role, she was an invited collaborator working with Indigenous communities and land trusts, and she supported communities, public agencies and nonprofits to adapt to and take evidence-based actions on climate change. In her career, she has done science-to-action work in fire ecology in interior Alaska, Greece and California.

Nelson served as a postdoctoral fellow with the Natural Capital Project at Stanford University and as a NatureNet Science fellow for The Nature Conservancy. She earned her doctorate in environmental studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and her Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Earth Systems from Stanford University.

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 29,000 members 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.

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