The Redwood Highway

SIGHTS & EXPERIENCES BETWEEN CALIFORNIA'S SOUTHERN HUMBOLDT COUNTY & CRESCENT CITY
In the summer of 1917 when Highway 101 was under construction, three famous American scientists traveled north to see the redwoods. They were concerned that the new highway might result in serious damage to the north coast’s primeval redwood forest. They were especially concerned about the magnificent stand of very old, very tall redwoods on Bull Creek and the nearby Dyerville Flat. That area was already famous. John Muir and others considered it one of America’s great scenic and natural treasures. But the whole area was privately owned, and absolutely no protective measures were yet in place.

Traveling alongside the Eel River north of Garberville, the three scientists were increasingly delighted by the beauty of the redwood forest. But delight turned to astonishment and silence when they reached Bull Creek and walked among its undisturbed ancient redwoods. All their lives they had known great forests, but in this grove—in the presence of such awe-inspiring beauty and serenity—they felt compelled to remove their hats and speak only in whispers.

That evening in their hotel in Arcata, the three scientists agreed that a state or national park was needed to save some part of the north coast redwood forest for future generations. As a first step, they wrote an impassioned letter to the Governor of California, asking him to make arrangements to protect some portion of the Eel River redwoods. The movement to save the north coast redwoods had begun. Save the Redwoods League was formed the next year.

The mission of Save the Redwoods League is to protect and restore redwood forests and connect people with their peace and beauty so these wonders of the natural world flourish. We are dedicated to the long-term protection of healthy redwood ecosystems. The League acquires redwood forests and connecting landscapes, supports forest science research, educates the public about redwoods, and is at the forefront of conservation planning and restoration in the redwood region. We work with California State Parks, the National Park Service and other agencies in establishing and expanding redwood parks and reserves.

This is a guide to just some of the redwood forests the League has helped protect. We hope you enjoy these sights and experiences along the Redwood Highway.
Suggested trips and sights:

**1-1.5 hours:** Head to Founders Grove (named for the founders of Save the Redwoods League). Founders Grove is a short half-mile nature trail that takes you through a gorgeous grove of old-growth redwoods. Hike the Mahan Plaque Loop Trail (0.5 mi.) which connects with the Founders Grove Trail. See if you can spot the albino redwood tree growing on Mahan Trail. At the end of the loop is a plaque honoring Laura and James Mahan, early Humboldt County activists in the movement to save the redwoods.

**1-1.5 hours:** Drive the scenic, low-speed Avenue of the Giants which meanders through this park for more than 30 miles. Along the way there are many points of historical interest. Look for the amazing roadside high-water marks that commemorate the floods that occurred here in 1955 and 1964. At each end of the Avenue, you can pick up a brochure and do a self-guided auto tour.

**Half-day:** Hike the Bull Creek Trails North and South. This eight-mile hike will take you through the famed Rockefeller Forest with occasional glimpses of beautiful Bull Creek.

**Half-day:** Along your drive through the Avenue of the Giants, stop at several of the stunning groves.

- The Women’s Federation Grove was acquired by the League during the 1930s using funds donated by thousands of garden club members from across the nation. Look for the rustic four-sided Hearthstone Fireplace in the heart of the grove. It was designed by Julia Morgan, architect of Asilomar and Hearst Castle.
- The League’s highly successful memorial grove campaign began in 1921 with the Colonel Raynal C. Bolling Grove, which was named in honor of the first American soldier of high rank to be killed in combat during World War I.
- Lane Grove is another of the earliest groves acquired by the League. In August 1924, the grove was named in honor of Franklin K. Lane, a San Franciscan who served as Secretary of the Interior under President Woodrow Wilson. Lane also served briefly as president of the League before his death in 1921. He was replaced by John C. Merriam who went on to lead the organization for the next two decades.
- Take a detour on Mattole Road into Rockefeller Forest. Hike the Rockefeller Loop Trail at Lower Bull Creek Flats. Also on Mattole Road is the Giant Tree Day-Use Area where you can take another short hike across Bull Creek to see the Giant Tree and the Flat Iron Tree.

**All day:** If you have an entire day and you’re a serious hiker, hike to Grasshopper Peak. The views are amazing, but you do have to work for them. Grasshopper Road (multi-use trail) is a difficult seven mile hike, pretty much straight up the mountain. There are plenty of hikes that can take up an entire day, but that aren’t quite as difficult as Grasshopper. Visitor center volunteers are happy to recommend other options.
Redwood National Park

Redwood National Park was established by Congress in 1968 and expanded in 1978. Today, it officially encompasses 131,983 acres, about half of which is actually in three state parks—Prairie Creek, Jedediah Smith, and Del Norte Coast Redwood State Parks—and is recognized as a World Heritage Site and an International Biosphere Reserve. In 2006, Stephen Sillett, Kenneth L. Fisher Chair in Redwood Forest Ecology at Humboldt State University, climbed, measured, and explored a very tall redwood tree in the national park. At 379.1 feet in height, it is now considered to be the tallest tree in the world. The League was an early supporter of Sillett’s research, which to the surprise of many has revealed a rich community of life in the crowns of old redwoods.

Suggested trips and sights:

1-1.5 hours: Stroll the Lady Bird Johnson Nature Loop.

Half-day: Hike into Tall Trees Grove. The National Geographic Society located the then-tallest tree here in 1964, which was the impetus for the formation of Redwood National Park in 1968. Call the Orick RNP office at (707) 465-7765 to get the access code to the Tall Trees Access Road off of Bald Hills Road.

All day: Drive out Bald Hills Road and hike the Lyons Ranch Trail to get a sense of the grasslands and coastal range above the redwood forest. There are great vistas to the ocean and the tallest trees in the world.

Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park

At Prairie Creek, 58 miles north of Eureka, the redwood forest stands among a number of grass-covered prairies complete with free-roaming herds of Roosevelt elk. The Newton B. Drury Parkway, a scenic two-lane road through Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park, was named in honor of the League’s long-time Executive Director, who successfully campaigned to keep the Division of Highways from building a new, high-speed freeway right through the heart of this park. Today, the new freeway bypasses the park to the east.

Suggested trips and sights:

1-1.5 hours: Drive the scenic, two-lane Newton Drury Parkway. It’s about a 10-minute drive, but you’ll want to stop and take some of the short walks to visit the many amazing trees. Some League staff favorites include the Cathedral Trees Trail, the Corkscrew Tree Trail, the Foothill Trail from Big Tree to Cal Barrel Road and the Ah Paw Interpretive Trail.

1-1.5 hours: Elk Meadow is a good spot to sight the Roosevelt elk, which are native to the north coast. These animals, which weigh between 700 and 1,000 pounds, migrate around our coastal parks. It is estimated that there are approximately 2,000 elk living in the north coast region.

Half-day: Drive west to the end of Davison Road, off of Hwy 101, to Gold Bluffs Beach, which is a herd of elk call home. From here, it’s a short walk into Fern Canyon, a unique half-mile-long, 100-foot-high canyon covered with cascading ferns. Take a step back in time in this setting that was used as a scenic backdrop in the Jurassic Park movies.

All day: From the visitor center, hike the James Irvine Trail out to Fern Canyon and back.

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<th>#3 on the map</th>
<th>166 acres in 1923</th>
<th>total acquisitions / acres</th>
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Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park and Mill Creek Forest

Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park, 10 miles south of Crescent City, features a mixed forest of redwood and Douglas-fir, as well as a dramatic combination of redwood forest and coastal scenery. Since the 1920s, the highway alignment through this park has been the subject of debate between forest preservation interests and those who want a bigger, faster highway. Over the years, the League repeatedly employed Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., one of America’s foremost landscape architects, to work with state and local planners to come up with the best possible compromise.

In 2002, the League helped add the 25,000-acre Mill Creek redwoods watershed to Del Norte Coast Redwoods State Park. Thanks to restoration work led by the League, this once logged area is now being returned to a magnificent state and is supporting endangered species such as coho salmon and the marbled murrelet.

Suggested trips and sights:

1-1.5 hours: Just south of the park, drive west on Requa Road to overlook the mouth of the Klamath River. In September, there are usually great salmon runs, and there’s always good bird watching.

Half-day: Take an easy hike to Endert’s Beach, which has marvelous tide pools.

Half-day: Bike or hike the Historic Highway 101, which many consider one of the best biking experiences in northern California. The rugged Coastal Trail follows the route of old U.S. 101 as it winds along ocean bluffs through giant redwoods.

All day: Take the very strenuous Damnation Creek Trail down the bluffs to the ocean through some stunning old-growth redwood forest.

Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park

The first step toward creation of what is now Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park took place in 1929 when the 44-acre Frank D. Stout Memorial Redwood Grove was donated to the League by his widow. In 1945, the 5,000-acre National Tribute Grove was established in honor of all those who served in World War II.

Suggested trips and sights:

1-1.5 hours: Drive the narrow Howland Hill Road as it winds through the redwood forest to Stout Grove. Stop for a walk at Stout Grove or on any of the other trails off Howland Hill Road.

Half-day: Lounge on the Smith River on the north side of the Day Use Picnic Area.

All day: Hike the Boy Scout Trail, one of the most spectacular, pristine trails through old-growth forest and different environments, with miles of huge trees and a wonderfully remote feeling.

#5 on the map

44 acres in 1929
72 projects / 5,567 acres
### Amenities Along the Redwood Highway

**Crescent City**  
(7 hr. north of San Francisco)

- **Ambrosia Grill**  
  Front Street and M Street  
  Located in a little strip mall next to Sherry’s Boutique.  
  (707) 964-2400

- **Beachcomber Restaurant**  
  1400 Highway 101 South  
  (707) 464-2205

- **Best Western Northwoods Inn**  
  655 US Highway 101 S.  
  (800) 780-7234

- **Bistro Gardens**  
  110 Anchor Way  
  (707) 464-5627

- **Cazaderos Family Mexican Restaurant**  
  1461 Northcrest Drive  
  (707) 464-2388

- **Continental Bakery**  
  503 L Street (on Highway 101 South)  
  (707) 465-5652  
  Good for picnics and lunches.

- **Good Harvest Café**  
  525 Hwy 101 South  
  (707) 465-6028

- **Hampton Inn**  
  100 A Street  
  (707) 465-5400

- **Northwoods Restaurant**  
  675 Highway 101 South  
  (707) 465-5656

- **Thai House Restaurant**  
  105 N Street  
  (707) 964-2427

**Trinidad**  
(5 hr., 15 min. north of SF)

- **Kahish’s Catch Café**  
  355 Main Street, Saunier’s Shopping Center  
  (707) 677-0390

- **Larrupin Café**  
  1658 Patrick’s Point Drive  
  (707) 677-0230

- **Moonstone Grill**  
  100 Moonstone Beach Road  
  (707) 677-1616

- **The Sunset Restaurant at Cher-ae Heights Casino**  
  27 Scenic Drive  
  (707) 825-2760

**Eureka/Arcata/ McKinleyville**  
(5 hr. north of SF)

- **Daybreak Café**  
  768 18th Street, Arcata  
  (707) 826-7543  
  Great for breakfast or brunch (not open later in the day).

- **Golden Harvest Café**  
  1062 G Street, Arcata  
  (707) 822-8962

- **Howard Johnson Express Inn**  
  4700 Valley West Blvd.  
  Arcata  
  (707) 826-9660

- **Northcoast Co-op**  
  8th & I Streets, Arcata  
  (707) 822-5947  
  4th & B Streets, Eureka  
  (707) 443-6027  
  Organic groceries and deli.

- **The Northcoast Environmental Center**  
  575 H Street, Arcata  
  (707) 822-6918

- **The Plaza Grill**  
  780 7th Street, Arcata  
  (707) 826-0860

- **Tin Can Mailman**  
  1000 H Street, Arcata  
  (707) 822-1307  
  Great used bookstore in Arcata (open shorter hours than Bay Area bookstores).

- **Tomo Japanese Restaurant**  
  708 9th St, Arcata  
  (707) 822-1717

**Carter House Inns**  
301 L Street  
Eureka  
(707) 445-1390

**Carmelas Mexican Restaurant**  
1701 Central Ave  
McKinleyville  
(707) 839-2435

**Holiday Inn Express**  
3105 Concorde Drive  
McKinleyville  
(707) 840-9305

**Scotia**  
(4 hr., 30 min. north of SF)

- **Fisheries Center Tour**  
  South side of town.  
  (707) 764-4492

- **Scotia Museum**  
  Main Street  
  (707) 764-5063  
  Open Memorial Day through Labor Day.

**Ferndale**  
(4 hr., 50 min. north of SF)

- **Curley’s Grill**  
  400 Ocean Drive  
  (707) 786-9969

- **Sweetness and Light**  
  554 Main Street  
  Arcata  
  (707) 786-4403  
  Small candy kitchen, specializes in truffles!

- **The Victorian Inn**  
  500 Ocean Avenue  
  (707) 786-4949

**Garberville**  
(4 hr. north of SF)

- **Benbow Inn**  
  445 Lake Benbow Drive  
  (707) 923-2124  
  An absolutely lovely historic hotel.

- **Calico Café**  
  808 Redwood Drive  
  (707) 923-2814

- **Sicilite’s Pizzeria**  
  445 Conger Street  
  (707) 923-2814

- **Woodrose Café**  
  911 Redwood Drive  
  (707) 923-3191

**Willits**  
(2 hr., 30 min. north of SF)

- **Burger Joint**  
  Bright yellow drive-in, north end of town, west side of 101.  
  Yummy burgers, egg rolls (yes, egg rolls) and milkshakes.

- **Fuel**  
  Willits is a great fuel stop if you’re heading farther north.  
  Less expensive options are at the town’s north end.

**Scotia museum**  
Main Street  
(707) 764-5063  
Open Memorial Day through Labor Day.

**Ukiah**  
(2 hr. north of SF)

- **Mendocino Environmental Center**  
  106 West Standley Street  
  (707) 468-1660

- **Starbucks**  
  (707) 463-2615  
  Just off the Perkins Street exit.

- **Super Taco**  
  506 East Perkins Street  
  (Perkins Street Exit)  
  (707) 462-5979

- **Ukiah Brew Pub**  
  102 South State Street  
  (707) 468-5898  
  Boasts an all-organic menu, including wild-caught seafood and organic beer.

**Hopland**  
(1 hr. 45 min. north of Sf)

- **Bluebird Café**  
  13340 Highway 101  
  (707) 744-1633  
  An excellent breakfast or lunch spot with fabulous salads and interesting burger options.  
  Leave room for dessert!

- **Hopland Brewery**  
  13351 Highway 101  
  (707) 744-1361

- **Real Goods Store and Solar Living Institute**  
  13771 Highway 101  
  (707) 744-2017

**Klamath/Orick**  
(6 hr, 30 min. north of SF)

- **Ravenwood Motel & Vacation Rentals**  
  151 Klamath Boulevard, Klamath  
  (707) 482-5911

- **Requa Inn**  
  451 Requa Road, Klamath  
  (707) 482-1425  
  A delightful hotel that caters to the redwoods enthusiast.

- **Elk Meadow Cabins**  
  4 Valley Green Camp Road, Orick  
  (866) 733-9637  
  www.redwoodparklodge.com  
  Great for groups. In Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park.

**Local Events:** For a list of local events, please visit SaveTheRedwoods.org/events

Page 7
5 WAYS YOU CAN HELP SAVE REDWOODS

DONATE to Save the Redwoods League.

PLAN an estate gift for Save the Redwoods League.

TALK to your friends about the League’s work.

VISIT the redwood forest with friends and family.

EXPLORE volunteer opportunities in redwood parks.

To learn more, visit SaveTheRedwoods.org/help or call us at (888) 836-0005.

Save the Redwoods League protects and restores redwood forests and connects people with their peace and beauty so these wonders of the natural world flourish.

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San Francisco, CA 94104
(415) 362-2352  (888) 836-0005
SaveTheRedwoods.org

CREDITS

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