

# Mountain Echo

THE NEWSLETTER OF SEMPERVIRENS FUND

SPRING 2012

## A New Future for the CEMEX Redwoods

The earthquake and fire of 1906 brought destruction to San Francisco and started a building boom that had a lasting impact on the Santa Cruz Mountains. Trees were downed for lumber to rebuild the devastated city and a new industry grew along the Santa Cruz Coast—cement. The Santa Cruz Portland Cement Co. established its limestone quarry and cement plant and the town of Davenport quickly grew up to house the company's workers. The quarry and plant operated for more than 100 years, stopping only in January 2010 when its newest owners, the Mexico-based company CEMEX, closed it down.

What remained was a defunct quarry and cement plant...and the largest intact expanse of unprotected redwoods and wildlife habitat in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

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Preserving redwood forests  
since 1900

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**LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## What keeps me up at night?

It's always exciting to complete a land protection project. And lately there has been a lot of excitement to go around.

Our recent purchase of the 8,532-acre CEMEX redwood forest with Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), The Nature Conservancy, the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County, and Save the Redwoods League caps a long list of Sempervirens Fund's recent accomplishments. In the last year, we added Little Basin to Big Basin Redwoods State Park with POST and expanded Portola Redwoods State Park. And we have six more acquisition projects in the works!

Our efforts have not been limited to land acquisition. We also completed the design for the new Castle Rock State Park entrance, with generous support from the Kirkwood Family, and are proceeding with construction drawings. We embarked on the creation of a resource protection plan for the 225,000-acre Great Park Planning Area. We completed a forestry study to determine how best to transition a former working forest into a forest with old-growth characteristics. And we are working closer than ever with our nonprofit partners to ensure that our forest protection work complements conservation efforts in the entire San Francisco Bay Area.

Each of these activities, of course, costs money. With one of the best real estate markets for land conservation, we need more funding to take advantage of all the opportunities out there.

This is what keeps me up at night.

Before the holidays, many of you gave us gifts, and we can't thank you enough for that. But we still need your help so we can keep the momentum going and create the Great Park—one of the largest and most significant natural areas on the West Coast, right here in our own backyard. If we do that, together we will create a lasting legacy that will inspire generations to come.

Thank you,

Reed Holderman  
Executive Director



## LAND STEWARDSHIP AND RESTORATION PROJECTS:

# Cabin Removal and Creek Realignment

As a landowner and a good neighbor, Sempervirens Fund takes its land stewardship responsibilities seriously. When our properties are headwaters or include small streams or other waterways, we take special care of the land for the sake of the forests, the wildlife, and the people living downstream.

One of the properties in our care is a 10-acre parcel located close to Castle Rock State Park along the Saratoga Toll Road. Until recently the property included a dilapidated cabin that was built years ago right next to an active stream corridor. In heavy rains as the stream widened, water would flow along the cabin's foundation, weakening its walls and carrying sediment into the waterway. The water would then pass under the Saratoga Toll Road through a failing culvert and into the main branch of the San Lorenzo River.

We knew that we needed to address these issues, so in spring 2011 after removing the cabin and other debris from the property, we began restoring the site and helping the stream return to its natural course.

In partnership with the Resource Conservation District of Santa Cruz County (RCD), we planted redwood seedlings and recontoured the area of the stream that was formerly beneath the cabin. With the approval of California State Parks, which manages the Saratoga Toll Road, we also replaced the culvert with



*(left) Site before cabin removal and restoration. (above) Restored site today.*

a longer and better-angled channel designed to more efficiently capture flow in storm events.

RCD Program Specialist Bryan Frueh says of the project, "the work we completed with Sempervirens Fund will have tremendous benefits downstream. The restored stream corridor and rebuilt culvert will reduce the chronic and episodic sedimentation impacts to improve water quality in the San Lorenzo River, which is both the main source of drinking water for the city of Santa Cruz and critical habitat for fish and other aquatic wildlife." 🌲

## A Forest Tragedy—A Learning Opportunity

In August 2009, the Lockheed Fire burned 7,819 acres near the communities of Bonny Doon and Swanton. Swanton Pacific Ranch, owned by California Polytechnic State University, lost almost 1,200 acres to the massive fire.

In response to this tragedy, Swanton Ranch staff designed a forest recovery plan for the affected areas and Sempervirens Fund has been helping the Ranch put this plan into action. With funds from our Planted Tree program, we have helped plant over 30,000 redwood seedlings on the property.

Sempervirens Fund's support of this reforestation project allowed for implementation of an experimental method of tree planting. With climate change scenarios predicting drier weather

and more frequent wildfires, and with a limited body of knowledge regarding redwood forest recovery on a large scale, identifying effective methods for reforesting large areas is critical.

At Swanton Ranch, Cal Poly students and staff planted the seedlings with minimal site preparation. This differs from reforestation work that we have undertaken on smaller properties where seedlings were painstakingly planted with great attention to location and soil quality. Swanton Pacific Ranch will be monitoring the success of the reforestation efforts and will regularly share their findings with us so we can use the information to improve our restoration efforts on other properties. 🌲



# CEMEX Redwoods

For those of us working in land conservation, the closure of the CEMEX plant meant an opportunity to protect over 8,500 acres of redwood forests lands, coastal hillsides, rare species, local unique habitats, stream corridors, and critical drinking water sources. It also presented the possibility of linking several large protected properties adjacent to the CEMEX property (including Cal Poly's Swanton Pacific Ranch, Coast Dairies, and Wilder Ranch State Park) to create a contiguous permanently protected landscape of over 26,000 acres.



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***“the largest intact expanse of unprotected redwoods and wildlife habitat in the Santa Cruz Mountains”***

After more than a year of negotiations, CEMEX agreed to sell 8,532 acres of its landholdings to an innovative conservation collaborative comprising Sempervirens Fund, Peninsula Open Space Trust

(POST), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Land Trust of Santa Cruz County (LTSCC), and Save the Redwoods League (the League). CEMEX retained the cement plant and some beachfront parcels. The property was appraised at a fair market value of \$36,300,000 and CEMEX agreed in September 2011 to sell the property for \$30,000,000 if the deal could close by December 16, 2011.

With creativity, perseverance, and the tremendous support of our donors, this land—the largest single piece of redwood forest in the entire Santa Cruz Mountains—was saved! A unique funding package was pulled together to cover the sale price, including an \$8 million grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation provided through the Living Landscape Initiative Challenge Grant Program of Resources Legacy Fund; a \$500,000 grant from TNC from its Central Coast Opportunity Fund created by the Packard Foundation; and a \$150,000 grant from The San Francisco Foundation. Sempervirens Fund put in \$5 million (\$2.5 million of this was borrowed from the Packard Foundation) and POST put in \$16 million to purchase the land in December 2011. LTSCC and the League are taking the lead in preparing a conservation plan for the property in collaboration with Sempervirens Fund and POST. This plan will identify and recommend how best to protect the significant biological resources on the property, including old-growth forests, riparian corridors, wildlife habitat, and stream corridors.



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The acquisition of the CEMEX property is complete and we are thrilled, but our work is far from over. Acquisition of the property by Sempervirens Fund and POST was just the first phase of this project. The second phase involves placement of a conservation easement on the land, which will remove all the development rights from the property and include the recommendations contained in the conservation plan. The easement will ensure the protection of important natural resources on the property, including older redwood forest stands, habitat for sensitive and endangered species, and stream corridors, as well as eventual public access. Additionally, it will identify select areas of the property's forestlands suitable for sustainable timber harvesting.

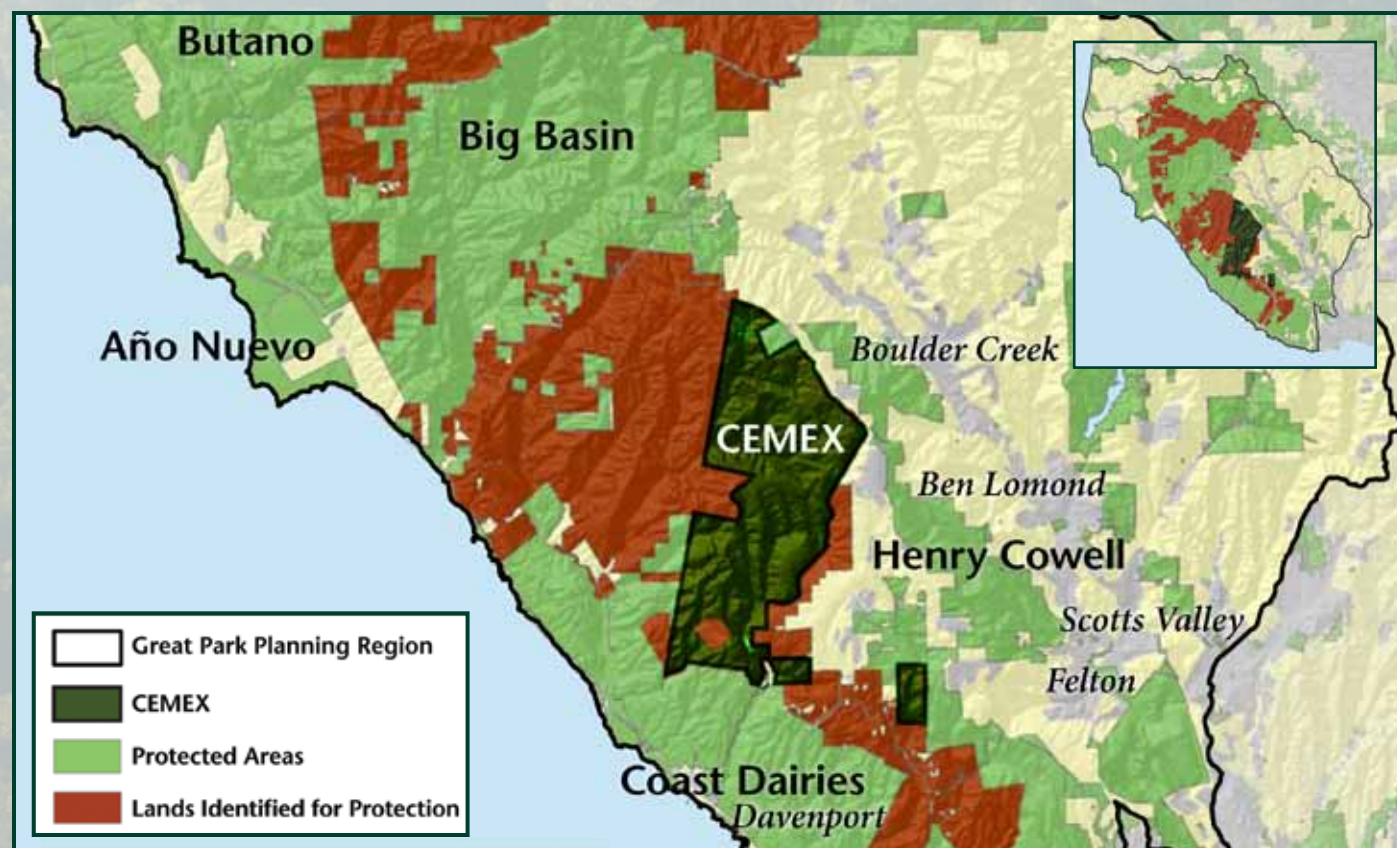
We anticipate that LTSCC and the League will purchase the easement from Sempervirens Fund and POST by the end of 2012 with public funding. The funds from this transaction will reimburse Sempervirens Fund and POST for some of the cost of the acquisition and enable both organizations to preserve other threatened lands. Ultimately, POST, Sempervirens Fund, LTSCC, and the League will share equally in the costs of protecting the land.

In the project's third and final phase—with the easement in place and the property's old-growth trees

and other critical resources protected—the property might be sold to a private party pursuant to a sustainable working forest agreement.

The CEMEX property acquisition is the first major project to result from the Living Landscape Initiative, a collaboration launched in spring 2011 with the goal of protecting 80,000 acres of land over the next 20 years in and around Silicon Valley and the Central Coast. The property falls within the Initiative's Redwood Heartland focus area, bringing much-needed protection to this type of threatened landscape.

This purchase also marks a huge step toward creating a Great Park in the Santa Cruz Mountains that will be one of the largest and most significant natural and scenic areas on the West Coast. The Great Park will protect old-growth redwoods, enhance biodiversity and wildlife movement, and create a much more resilient landscape by consolidating and connecting the pieces of the puzzle we already have in place. The CEMEX property represents almost 20% of the 48,000 acres that have been targeted for protection within the Great Park Planning Area. With the protection of the CEMEX property, we are well on our way to creating a new future for both the CEMEX Redwoods and the Santa Cruz Mountains. 🌲



*The CEMEX redwoods property represents almost 20% of the Great Park planning area.*

FROM OUR ARCHIVE:

## Sempervirens at the Palace Hotel

Courtesy of ThePalaceHotel.org



*The Palace Hotel in a photograph from the 1890's.*

On September 22, 2011 Sempervirens Fund reached back into history and out to our San Francisco, East Bay, and Marin donors with a reception at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco. Over 111 years ago, Sempervirens Fund held its very first public meeting at the Palace Hotel and there passed a resolution to establish the first state park in California at Big Basin. We were pleased to revisit the Palace Hotel and to spend time with more than 80 of our donors and friends. We are especially grateful to the San Francisco Department of the Environment and its director, Melanie Nutter, who welcomed everyone and co-hosted the event. 🌲

### PLANNED GIVING:

## A Friend For Life

Ellie Mansfield is a true friend of the redwoods and Sempervirens Fund. She grew up in California's Central Valley and spent the summers of her youth in the redwood forests of Yosemite and the Sierra. Later, as a resident of the San Francisco Peninsula, she began to explore the forests of her new backyard, the Santa Cruz Mountains—an activity that she continues to enjoy today. And she worked for Sempervirens Fund for almost 30 years—filling many roles over the years and playing an integral part in our organization's efforts to protect the coast redwoods.

Although Ellie retired a couple of years ago, she has never really left Sempervirens Fund. Together with her husband Dick, she has been a loyal donor to the organization since her first days in the office. Looking ahead, Ellie has also included a gift to Sempervirens Fund in her will—a simple way to continue her support of an organization that she knows and trusts, and to ensure that others will be able to enjoy the redwood forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains long into the future.



***"Redwoods have always been a part of my life," says Ellie. "And while working for Sempervirens Fund, I realized how lucky I was and how important it was to me and to others to be able to get away and into the forest—close to home."***

If you would like to discuss a planned gift to Sempervirens Fund, please contact Kerry Bresnahan, Director of Advancement, at (650) 949-1453 or [kbresnahan@sempervirens.org](mailto:kbresnahan@sempervirens.org). To read about various planned giving options, please visit our website at [www.sempervirens.org/plannedgifts](http://www.sempervirens.org/plannedgifts) or call Kerry to receive a copy of our planned giving brochure. 🌲



# Tributes

*Dedicated Redwood Trees and Legacy Grove gifts were established in honor or memory of the following people between June 24, 2011 and December 31, 2011:*

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Scott Ambrose Barbieri  
*Given by William Sexton*

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*Given by Frederic and Martha Davis*

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*Given by Joseph and Jean Brandon*

Joseph Brandon  
*Given by Joseph and Jean Brandon*

Leo F. Connolly  
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James K. "Jim" Craig  
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*Given by Penelope Gerbode*

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*Given by Lavenstein Family Philanthropic Fund*

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Rita Mae Carney Mathieson  
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Winona and Paul McNitt Family  
*Given by Winona McNitt*

Hannelore Mishal  
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Malcolm and Maybelle Mitchell  
*Given by The Malcom G. Mitchell 1992 Trust*

Michael O'Shea Drews  
*Given by Friends and Family*

Verlene Perry and Patricia Van Horn  
*Given by Donald and Virginia Simmons*

Linda Roberts  
*Given by Eileen Duggan*

F. Hase Rodenbaugh  
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*Given by Robert and Barbara Walton*

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*Given by Peter and Kimberly Shingle*

Donald and Virginia Simmons  
*Given by Debbe Bailey*

Bruce Spring  
*Given by Bruce Spring*

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Barbara Winter  
*Given by Ray and Constance Winter*

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*Given by Barbara and Lowell Woodbury*

## **Legacy Grove**

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*Given by Matthew and Marcia Allen*

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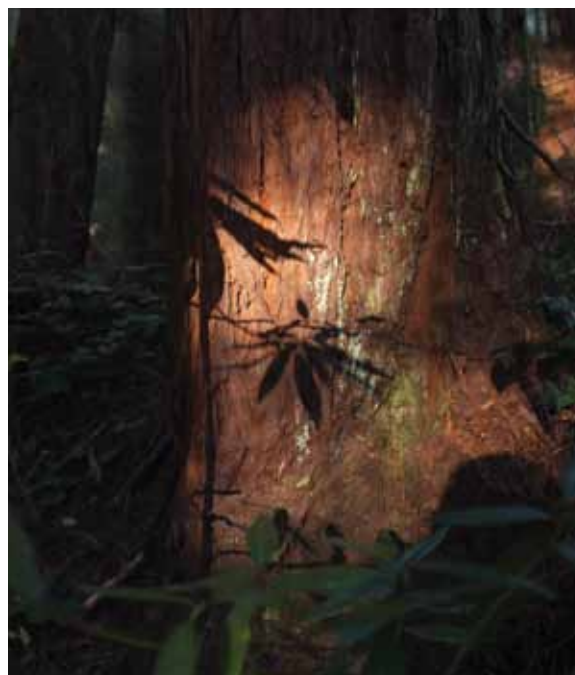


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## Sempervirens Sustainers

One of the most effective ways to support our work is through our monthly giving program as a Sempervirens Sustainer. Monthly giving provides a reliable source of income we can count on to sustain our work. As a monthly giver, your gift will be charged automatically to your credit card or debited from your checking account each month, so it's easy and economical to do. You will be invited to special donor events and, if you chose, be recognized in our Annual Report. And, of course, you can revise or cancel your pledge at any time.

To enroll in our monthly giving program, use the enclosed envelope, go to [www.sempervirens.org/give](http://www.sempervirens.org/give), or call (650) 949-1453.



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