

Mountain Echo

THE NEWSLETTER OF SEMPERVIRENS FUND

FALL 2013



Making Connections



Lachenbruch



Photo by Laura McLendon

Lachenbruch and Redwood Meadows Ranch

Sempervirens Fund’s newly created conservation plan has provided one principal goal: to make connections. For the health of the water and air that our local forests naturally clean and protect, for the wildlife that live in the forest and the trees, for our redwood parks and for all of us who depend on them for hiking, camping, birding, or simply finding refuge, we must protect and re-connect our local redwood forests into resilient habitat, healthy ecosystems, and recreational space for all. With this goal in mind, Sempervirens Fund recently completed two projects—Lachenbruch and Redwood Meadows Ranch—protecting more than 250 acres of redwood forests and connecting them to over 30,000 acres of already protected natural lands.

LACHENBRUCH

Like many of the landowners with whom we work, Edie and Art Lachenbruch care deeply about their land, and especially about the redwoods growing on it. So when they were preparing their estate and making plans to sell their property, the Lachenbruchs came to Sempervirens Fund. Art Lachenbruch says, “My wife Edie and I have always felt incredible places like this should be protected forever.”

The Lachenbruch property is indeed incredible. The 76-acre property is almost entirely covered by forests, including approximately 115 old-growth redwoods. Whitehouse Creek originates on the property, flowing through the forest into Cascade Creek and to the Pacific Ocean. The old-growth

redwoods on this property are important nesting habitat for the marbled murrelet—an endangered seabird that spends its life on the open ocean and nests in old-growth trees. Additionally the water of Whitehouse Creek, which is shaded and cooled by the towering redwoods on the Lachenbruch property, provides important habitat for endangered steelhead trout downstream.

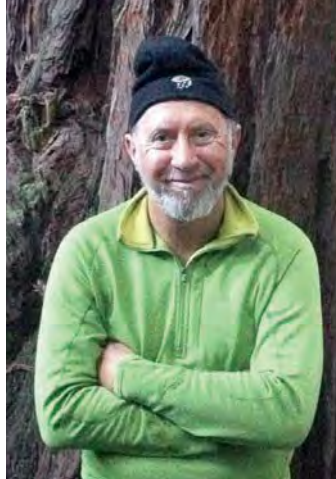
The property is surrounded on three sides by Big Basin Redwoods State Park and is located just a few properties to the east of Skylark Ranch (which Sempervirens Fund protected with a conservation easement in March 2012) and Año Nuevo State Park. Sempervirens Fund has identified the area between

continues on page 4

Getting Outdoors

Every year I hike the 31-mile Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail, which goes through Castle Rock and Big Basin Redwoods State Parks. I hike this trail because it is one of Sempervirens Fund's signature projects and a reminder of our mission to protect redwood forests and connect people with them. Surrounded by redwoods and stunning coastal views from the skyline to the sea, it is no wonder that thousands of people hike this trail each year.

A few months ago I hiked the trail with my 24-year-old daughter Ellen. It was a great way for us to share time together, and yet our experiences were so very different! While I lay each night spellbound by the height of a single redwood, Ellen was moved by the sheer number of trees that surrounded us. We each focused on something different—me, the tree, and she, the forest—which ultimately heightened our connection to this place and to each other. (For Ellen's detailed description of the hike visit www.sempervirens.org or our Facebook page.)



As we alternately strolled and toiled up and down the trail, meeting interesting people along the way, I couldn't help but think about the many beautiful, important forests Sempervirens Fund has already protected and of the forests still left to protect. Right now we are working on 15 redwood protection projects as the real estate market strengthens and more and more landowners are interested in working with us, embracing Sempervirens Fund's vision of re-establishing a resilient redwood forest ecosystem in the Santa Cruz Mountains. As you read through this newsletter you will see that we are both nimble and innovative as we approach each new project. We need to work this way in order to take advantage of this unprecedented protection opportunity.

All of you have seen the difference charitable giving can make. It is because of your contributions that Sempervirens Fund has been able to protect over 34,000 acres of redwood forests, plant more than 93,000 trees, and build and maintain more than 60 miles of hiking trails. Please join me in giving again to Sempervirens Fund this year, so we can complete what our organization started 113 years ago. This is our time to do something magnificent. Thank you.

Reed Holderman
Executive Director



Preserving redwood forests
since 1900

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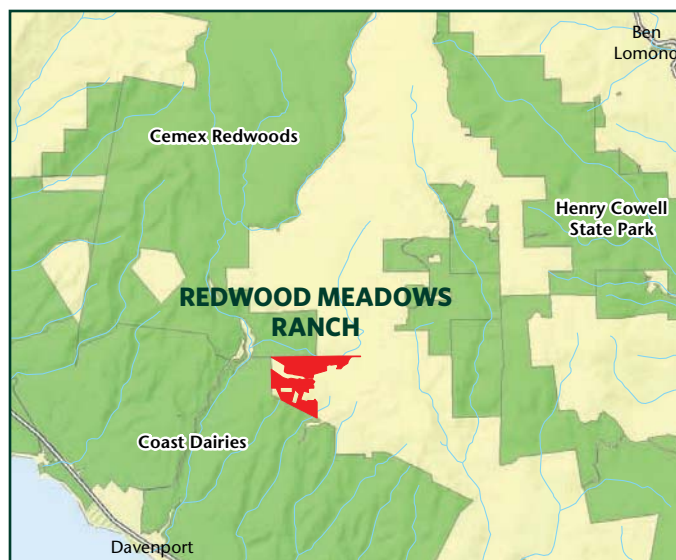
the two parks as a high priority for protection because of its water resources and healthy forests as well as the tremendous values for habitat and recreation connectivity it provides. Our goal is to protect the area's redwood forests so we can preserve the integrity of the Whitehouse Creek watershed, expand protected habitat, create safe wildlife corridors, and open the possibility for establishing trail connections between the two existing state parks.

In May 2013, with support from a grant made through the Living Landscape Initiative Challenge Grant Program of Resources Legacy Fund, which is funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, Sempervirens Fund purchased the Lachenbruch property and moved one step forward in reconnecting our local redwood forests.

REDWOOD MEADOWS

Redwood Meadows Ranch is a residential subdivision built in 1984 near Bonny Doon. As the name suggests, it is also a beautiful redwood forest that includes breathtaking old-growth trees.

In 2012, the residents of Redwood Meadows Ranch learned that the company that built the subdivision (and had retained timber rights over property) had filed a timber harvest plan. This meant that the beautiful redwoods standing, literally, in the residents' backyards were at imminent risk of being harvested and lost forever. The residents needed to act fast so they contacted Sempervirens Fund for help.



View from Redwood Meadows Ranch

Photo by Laura Mc Lendon

This presented a new opportunity for Sempervirens Fund. We had never purchased timber rights severed from the land before, but we knew that purchasing the timber rights to Redwood Meadows would also mean protecting a healthy redwood forest, the headwaters of a significant watershed, and a key connection to other protected local lands. We began negotiations and in May 2013, with approximately half of the \$525,000 needed to complete the purchase donated by residents of Redwood Meadows Ranch, we acquired timber rights over 151 acres of the property.

As a result of this purchase, Mill Creek, which originates at Redwood Meadows Ranch and serves as an alternate source of drinking water for the town of Davenport, will continue to flow freely through towering redwoods. Furthermore, 151 additional acres of redwood meadows that connect the vast 8,500-acre Cemex Redwoods (owned by Sempervirens Fund and Peninsula Open Space Trust) and the 7,000-acre Coast Dairies (owned by The Trust for Public Land) are protected forever. 🌲

Creative Conservation

Conservation in the Santa Cruz Mountains has changed in many ways over the past century, and particularly over the past 10 or so years. For many decades, Sempervirens Fund worked in close partnership with California State Parks and other agencies to acquire and then transfer key redwood properties into public ownership. It was a simple and effective model that worked. However, with the fiscal challenges facing California in recent years, agencies have less funding to acquire and manage public land—*yet, there are tens of thousands of acres of redwood forests in the Santa Cruz Mountains that still need to be protected...and connected.*

Sempervirens Fund is strategic in its planning, and creative in its approach to find ways to protect and connect our local redwoods. Here are some examples:



© Sempervirens Fund

Lompico



© William Matthias

CEMEX



© Dan Quinn

Girl Scouts

■ **Lompico Carbon Credits:**

In 2006, we purchased the beautiful 425-acre Lompico property, which includes the headwaters of Lompico Creek. To help pay for the purchase and the ongoing cost of caring for this property—which Sempervirens Fund still owns—we are selling carbon credits to PG&E. The credits represent the carbon stored by the trees growing in the Lompico Forest and have been verified using the Climate Action Reserve forest protocols.

■ **Cemex Timber Harvest Plan:**

To fund forest restoration projects on the Cemex Redwoods property, we plan to manage a portion of the property as a working forest. Together with Peninsula Open Space Trust, Sempervirens Fund is preparing a timber harvest plan for 500 acres of working forest on the 8,532-acre property. Under the plan, we will engage in sustainable timber harvesting at levels below those currently allowed under state and local forest practice regulations; no old-growth redwoods or priority conservation areas will be harvested. Proceeds will be used to help pay for our stewardship costs and our efforts to improve the ecological health of the property.

■ **Camp Conservation Easements – Girl Scouts:**

In 2012, we purchased conservation easements over two Girl Scout outdoor education camp properties to protect over 400 acres of forests, including more than 1,420 old-growth redwoods. This project also allowed the Girl Scouts to retain ownership of their land, repair and improve camp facilities, and continue to operate the camps. We are now working with other camp operators in the Santa Cruz Mountains to replicate this model that protects the forests, keeps the camps in operation, and allows for continued important outdoor education opportunities for youth.

Sempervirens Fund will continue to lead the way—finding new opportunities, models, and partners to help re-establish a great forest in the Santa Cruz Mountains. 🌲

THREAT OF DEVELOPMENT

How Protected Are the Coast

It is easy to be complacent as we leave the city and head up into the redwoods for the day. The drive through the forest and into our redwood parks is beautiful. The trees look tall and healthy. The air is clean and fresh. We are rejuvenated and feel lucky to have this natural landscape so close to home.

But it is important to remember that, even today, large tracts of the redwood forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains are still privately owned



and unprotected. (Of the 224,000 acres in Sempervirens Fund's strategic planning area, about 135,000 are forested redwood lands, of which about 57% are in private ownership.) As there are no state or federal safeguards for the magnificent coast redwoods, only local regulations for zoning and land use restrictions protect our redwoods—including old-growth redwoods that have been alive

Sempervirens Fund and BIG BASIN REDWOODS STATE PARK



1900: Andrew P. Hill and friends organize the Sempervirens Club, successfully raising funds and lobbying the state government to purchase 3,800 acres of old-growth redwoods. California Redwood Park opens in 1902.

1904: A destructive forest fire, poor management, and a park warden scandal mar the early years of the park. Despite its problems, Big Basin becomes a highly popular tourist destination and resort. People are clearly drawn to the redwoods.

1920s: A recreational village called "Governor's Camp" grows up under the redwoods, featuring a hotel and cabins, general store, post office, photography studio, and lunch counter. Relatively unrestricted recreation begins to take its toll, and it becomes apparent that people are "loving the trees to death."

1927: The State Park system is created and the park's name is changed to Big Basin Redwoods State Park. The park grows as the state purchases available land and, by the 1930s, includes more than 10,000 acres.



Redwoods?

for over a thousand years—and these county-level regulations can be easily changed by local elected officials. Crucial pieces of land can be cut up into subdivisions, fenced, and paved. It only takes a few days of chainsaws and bulldozers to wipe out nature’s perfection forever.

With the San Francisco Bay Area’s population expected to grow exponentially in the next 50 years, there will be intensifying pressure on land for development. We need only to look to the recent acquisition of the 8,532-acre Cemex Redwoods property to see the value of land fit for home-building: the appraisal for this property valued the land’s development potential three times greater than the redwood forests!

What’s more, it only takes one local election for the political winds to change quickly from conservation to commercialization. A half-day drive down the coast to the town of Goleta, slightly north of Santa Barbara, provides just one example of what happens when population pressures weaken protective zoning policies. Thousands of acres of coastal meadows—land that many people assumed



was protected by local ordinances—have quickly been developed as Goleta continues to grow and expand.

Right now in the Santa Cruz Mountains we, as the local community, still have choices to establish a great forest and to shape our region for the long term.

The threats to our local redwood forests are real and growing; the time for protection is now. 🌲

1933: The Great Depression marks big changes for Big Basin. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructs several rustic buildings, including the Park Headquarters building, the Nature Lodge and the current Campfire Circle. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) creates paintings and drawings for park exhibits.

1941: World War II changes the way people use the park. Visitors no longer stay for months at a time, sharing a camp community. The original Governor’s Camp buildings begin to decay and many are demolished.

1968: The Sempervirens Club is reborn as the Sempervirens Fund, continuing to add new lands to the park. Tony Look becomes the Fund’s first executive director.



Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail

1969: The Fund begins the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail (see Reed’s letter, pg. 3). Completed in 1976, the 31-mile trail travels through dense old-growth redwood forest, offering stunning views of Monterey Bay and coast redwoods along the way.

1996 and 2012: With support from the Jeangerard Foundation, Sempervirens Fund and State Parks renovate the Sempervirens Room, install new interpretive exhibits, and restore the historic Campfire Circle.

2007: Sempervirens Fund and Peninsula Open Space Trust purchase Little Basin, adding the 535-acre property to Big Basin.

Today: We continue our efforts to connect Big Basin Redwoods with other parks, protecting the rich natural and recreational resources of the Santa Cruz Mountains forever.



What's Next?

With so many thousands of acres of redwood forests still unprotected, how do we determine where to focus our protection efforts? The answer is not always simple.

At any given time, Sempervirens Fund is pursuing dozens of projects at various stages. Some take years of relationship building; other opportunities arise quickly and unexpectedly. Each project is unique, depending on the type of seller (private landowner, private company, government agency, nonprofit camps, etc.), the conservation values of the land, the timing of the project, the availability of financing, and so on.

When we are fortunate enough to have multiple conservation opportunities at the same time, we have to be even more strategic in our approach



© Margie Ryan

so that we can effectively devote staff time and financial resources to the most significant properties. That is why we developed a strategic plan that prioritizes properties based on robust value criteria, including biodiversity, forest condition, watershed integrity, and recreation opportunities—along with the strategic values of properties related to their size and proximity to other protected lands.

Ideally, we would first protect those properties with the highest conservation values that provide the most significant connections to other protected lands. But the reality is that not all of the high-priority properties are for sale.

Sempervirens Fund's approach is to be both strategic and resourceful, preparing and planning for key acquisitions while responding to opportunities as they arise. This is why we are so effective. With more than 113 years of experience in land conservation; with strong relationships with landowners, public agencies and partner land trusts; with an efficient and nimble organization; and with continued support from you, our donors—we will protect a healthy, beautiful and accessible great forest for people, for wildlife, and for the future. 🌲

© Carolyn Brown





The Great Park

VISION FOR THE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

The Great Park is Sempervirens Fund’s long-term vision for a healthy redwood forest ecosystem in the Santa Cruz Mountains, where wildlife and people can continue to thrive long into the future. Our goal is to ensure that the region’s most critical natural features such as watersheds and redwood forests remain intact and are well cared for, regardless of who owns the land. The Priority Conservation Zones on this map show the general areas of the Santa Cruz Mountains that contain resources essential to the long-term health of the redwood forest ecosystem yet do not currently have permanent conservation protections. We consider these areas to be conservation priorities due to factors such as biodiversity, proximity to other protected lands (important for wildlife corridors), forest size and condition (such as old growth redwoods - only 5% still exist), watershed integrity, and recreational opportunities (people protect what they connect with). Sempervirens Fund purchases or accepts donations of land or easements for conservation by working cooperatively with willing landowners. Along with public parks and open space, private landowners who loyally steward their land are crucial to the region’s long-term health.

To learn more about Sempervirens Fund and land conservation in the Santa Cruz Mountains region, please visit our website at www.sempervirens.org.

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Photo by Scott Nichols



TONY LOOK SCHOLARSHIP AWARD: Diana Nguyen

Diana Nguyen is the 2013 winner of the Tony Look Memorial Scholarship, an \$1,000 scholarship awarded to a high school senior from Andrew P. Hill High School in San Jose who has distinguished herself scholastically and has a keen interest in the natural world. In summer 2012, Diana volunteered in Costa Rica where she helped build trails in two national parks. During her senior year in high school, Diana created her art portfolio “Go-Green!” to encourage an appreciation of and respect for the environment. Diana will begin studies at the University of California at Berkeley in the fall. We congratulate Diana and wish her all the best in her studies. Thank you to the Robert C. and Janie Pace Rempel family for its generous donation in support of this scholarship. 🌲

SEMPERVIRENS PICNIC: Celebrating Together

In May, more than 300 donors and supporters gathered at the site of the future entrance to Castle Rock State Park to enjoy a day of barbecue, cake and ice cream, inspiring hikes, kids activities, rock climbing, and live music. Many thanks to Devil’s Canyon Brewing Company for its generous donation, and to the more than 30 volunteers who helped to make this day so much fun. 🌲



©Scott Peden

A guided Castle Rock hike at the Sempervirens Picnic.

Photo by Ann Blanchard



Meet Michael Kawalek

We are pleased to introduce Michael Kawalek, Sempervirens Fund’s new Associate Director of Development. Michael brings great experience in managing effective fundraising programs for large and small organizations, including Bay Area Wilderness Training, Oakland Museum of California, and KQED. At Sempervirens Fund, Michael is utilizing his skills in both the art and science of fundraising to manage our annual giving campaigns, events, and donor database. 🌲

Tributes

Dedicated Redwood Trees and Legacy Grove gifts were established in honor or memory of the following people between March 16 and June 30, 2013:

Dedicated Redwoods

Stan Barnes

Given by Friends and Family

Nicole Bryan Byrd and
Nathaniel Bryan Byrd

Given by Jacqueline and Paul Wender

Evelyn Flanary

Given by Friends and Family

Harry F. Jackson

Given by Ed Heyl

Bob Jones

Given by Robert and Jean Baer

Walt Kerl

Given by Dorothy Lazier

Claire Kingsted and Matt Baker

Given by Anne Dimock

Eugene W. Kopp

Given by Mary and Paul Kopp

Katherine Bryan Larson,

Bruce Larson and Family

Given by Jacqueline and Paul Wender

Carolyn Cooper Lindemuth

Given by Robert Lindemuth

Robert Lindemuth

Given by Robert Lindemuth

Mildred Look

Given by Friends and Family

Nolah McCahon

Given by Leo and Mary Brenneisen

Herb and Margarita Rosenthal

Given by Herbert and Margarita Rosenthal

Betty J. Saarni

Given by Betty Saarni

Frank A. Saarni

Given by Betty Saarni

The Weinberg Family Tree of Life

Given by Elaine Weinberg

Dr. Richard Wheat

Given by Robert C. and Janie Pace Rempel Family

Legacy Groves

Ethel and Jack Blake

Given by Dorothy J. Kennedy

Casey Cadile

Given by Mary Shannon

David Farris

Given by The Driving Machine Inc.

Esther Garcia

Given by Joann Johnson

David G. Sager

Given by Laurel Nicholson

Jeanine Swafford née Giusti

Given by Sunni V. Burns

JEANGERARD FOUNDATION

Connecting People with Nature

The Jeangerard family sees the value of connecting people to the natural world. For many years the Jeangerard Foundation has supported Sempervirens Fund and our shared interest in increasing public enjoyment of and access to our local redwood parks. Thanks to the generosity of the Jeangerard family, Sempervirens Fund has worked with California State Parks to renovate both the Sempervirens Room visitor center and the Campfire Circle at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. On your next visit to Big Basin, stop by the visitor center to learn more about the redwood forest and the history of the park, or loosen your hiking boots and rest your feet as you roast marshmallows at the campfire.



(left to right) Kelli Sutherland, Mike Sutherland, Doris Peterson, Jack Jeangerard, and Reed Holderman

Thank you, Jeangerard family!



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Fall in the Redwoods

Now is the time to get out on the trails to enjoy the spectacular views of our redwood forests and the coast—without risking the heat but before clouds and rainy days set in. With careful attention and the help of a crisp clear fall day, you can make out all the vibrant colors of the forest palette—the green needles, tinged red beneath, of the redwoods; the dark green of the Douglas fir; the yellow-green of the knobcone pine; and the red berries of the manzanita and toyon. The Ocean View Summit hike from Big Basin Redwoods State Park Headquarters is a moderate hike that features beautiful redwoods, manzanita with fall berries, and clear ocean views. Get out and enjoy the season!



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Fall leaves in the stream, Big Basin

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