

# Mountain Echo

THE NEWSLETTER OF SEMPERVIRENS FUND

SPRING 2010



## 267 More Acres of Redwood Forest Land Saved!

A banner hangs at the intersection of State Highways 9 and 236 in Boulder Creek announcing the protection of 107 acres of coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*), which until recently were slated for timber harvest. Further north, the marbled murrelet, an endangered seabird, nests in the uppermost branches of old-growth redwoods on another

property recently protected by Sempervirens Fund. In January 2010, thanks to the generosity of our donors and our staff's expertise, we were able to purchase these two properties from the Smartwood-certified Redtree Properties, a local timber company with whom Sempervirens Fund has been working for over 30 years.

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Preserving redwood forests  
since 1900

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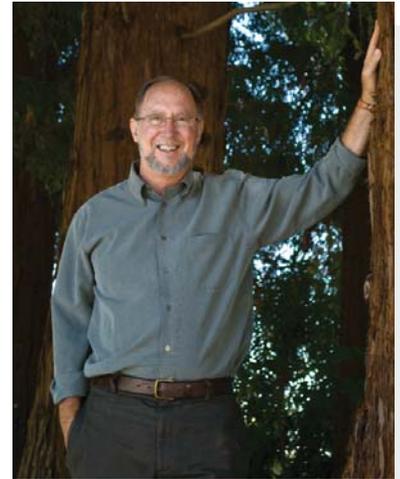
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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

# Keeping State Parks Open

Sempervirens Fund is supporting a statewide initiative to place the California State Parks and Wildlife Conservation Trust Act on the November 2010 ballot to keep our state parks open and adequately funded and maintained. The act, if approved, will generate approximately \$500 million in annual revenues, which will be used to address the \$1 billion in deferred maintenance and fund all of State Parks' operating costs. These funds would come from an \$18.00 increase in vehicle registration fees in exchange for giving everyone who pays these fees a free state park pass.



Sempervirens Fund helped establish the first California State Park, Big Basin Redwoods State Park, and the state park system in 1909. Today there are 278 state parks that generate \$4.32 billion in annual park-related expenditures that go directly into our economy. These parks are a vital part of our economic and spiritual recovery and keep us physically fit too! We need our parks now more than ever.

Passage of this measure will ensure that our State Parks are open to the 80 million people who visit them each year and to you and me. For the first time in our history, State Parks would have a stable and dependable funding source that no one could cut or raid. I cannot think of a better use of our vehicle registration money, can you?

We had a world-class State Park system at one point. If we are going to dig our way out of the hole we are in, this may be one of the places to start.

Please join us in supporting this important voter initiative. If you would like to help or contribute to the campaign, please go to [www.calparks.org](http://www.calparks.org).

Reed Holderman  
Executive Director

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**Sempervirens Fund**

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Please remember to notify Sempervirens Fund when you change your address. (A note to our friends: occasionally we make our mailing list available to carefully screened organizations with goals similar to those of Sempervirens Fund. If you would prefer that your name not be shared, please contact us—we will be happy to honor your request.)

Sempervirens Fund is a nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

# Forest Land Saved

Continued from cover



The 107-acre property located near Boulder Creek serves as the visual gateway to Big Basin Redwoods State Park. It is covered with a healthy forest including 80 to 100 year-old second growth redwoods. Redtree Properties had an approved Timber Harvest Plan to cut about 35 percent of the property's large redwood and Douglas fir trees and they intended to begin harvesting the trees this spring. With our acquisition of the property, these trees have been saved!

The property sits between Big Basin Redwoods and Castle Rock State Parks, is crossed by the Saratoga Gap Trail along a prominent mountain ridge, and is adjacent to the 35-mile Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail that connects Castle Rock State Park to the Pacific Ocean. Because of the property's location and existing recreational amenities, it has been a high priority acquisition for Sempervirens Fund and California State Parks for many years. We will steward the property and its resources while we work to transfer the property to California State Parks as an addition to Castle Rock. This acquisition will be our organization's 35th addition to Castle Rock State Park, which we helped to establish in 1968.

The second property protected by Sempervirens Fund is part of a fast disappearing wilderness in San Mateo County between Pescadero Creek County Park and Butano State Park. It comprises 160 acres of forest land, including 30 to 40 acres of old-growth redwoods, at the

confluence of the north and south forks of Butano Creek. These trees provide critical nesting habitat for the marbled murrelet, a small seabird that lays its eggs inland in the tops of old-growth redwood and Douglas fir trees. Sempervirens Fund's purchase of this property permanently protects the old-growth forest, a type of forest which has experienced a 95 percent decline in the Santa Cruz Mountains due to past logging practices, subdivisions, and development. For the marbled murrelet—and in particular for the Santa Cruz Mountain population, the most endangered of all marbled murrelet populations—this acquisition is a critical step toward recovery.

The protection of these two redwood forest properties are strategic acquisitions in Sempervirens Fund's plan to link all the State Parks and public land on the Santa Cruz coast together to create a Great Park, an area of protected lands spanning San Mateo, Santa Cruz, and Santa Clara Counties that would be equal in size to Zion National Park in Utah and Redwood National Park on California's North Coast. 🌲

*"The remaining redwood forests of the Santa Cruz Mountains are too important to lose. We thank the thousands of Sempervirens donors for allowing us to protect these special places so we can all marvel at and be in awe of the tallest trees on the planet."*

Reed Holderman



Redtree Property © Jan Niccoara



# Stewarding the Land We Own

Sempervirens Fund has been protecting the coast redwoods of the Santa Cruz Mountains since 1900 by purchasing redwood forest lands, often saving them from subdivision and development. But acquisition is only the first step in the protection of these precious resources. More often than not, we steward the properties that we purchase for some period of time before transferring them to California State Parks or another public agency. Sempervirens Fund currently owns and stewards 20 forested properties and monitors one conservation easement, together totaling over 1,900 acres of land.

With the budget challenges facing the state, our stewardship activities have increased substantially in recent years, as we are holding onto land for longer periods of time before transferring it to the public. Recognizing this trend, we have been working to evaluate and enhance our organization's stewardship program. In January 2010, our board adopted

a new stewardship policy that details standards and procedures for property evaluation, baseline data collection, and the development of stewardship plans for each property



Gazos Creek © Sempervirens Fund

in our care. The policy also includes protocols for the monitoring of conservation easements held by Sempervirens Fund.

Each property that we own is unique in its natural character and stewardship needs. Some require little oversight other than regular site visits to ensure that the property's resources remain healthy and that trespassing or vandalism has not occurred. Other properties require more direct management activities, including invasive species control and the removal of man-made structures and debris. And still other properties benefit from enhancement activities, such as reforestation or trail building.

At Little Basin, for instance, Sempervirens Fund has partnered with the Wildlands Restoration Team to remove an invasive plant called the yellow star thistle from the property's central meadow and other grassland areas. In July 2009, ten steadfast volunteers pulled out

approximately 300 of these spiny flowers. Great care was taken to dispose of the star thistle offsite to ensure that they would not take seed and re-sprout. Despite our best efforts, the stubborn yellow star thistle will likely show its color again this spring, and our stewardship activities at Little Basin will continue.

When preparing properties for transfer to State Parks, we must remove all dilapidated structures and other debris from the land. This year we cleared three properties in anticipation of transfer to the state. On two properties at Last Chance and on a property near Gazos Creek, we employed a contractor to remove decaying wooden buildings. The process was relatively simple on the Last Chance properties, as the buildings had been situated under the redwood canopy where plant communities adjust easily to newly recovered forest floor. On the Gazos Creek property, however, removal of structures left an open space vulnerable to erosion. To secure the soil and prevent further erosion, we



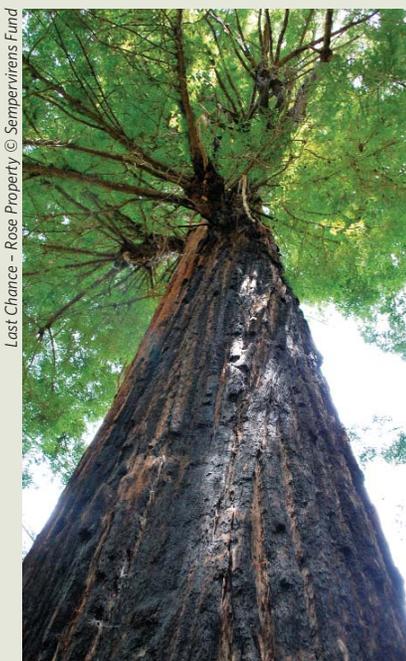
Last Chance Property © Sempervirens Fund

planted the clearing with a mixture of native grasses and other seedlings. Returning properties to a more natural state is integral to our stewardship work.

In the Lompico Forest, the removal of structures on the property has led to a one-acre clearing being colonized by the invasive French broom. We have been working with volunteers to remove the broom in this area for the last four years, but estimate that it will take approximately 40 years of annual hand pulling to completely rid the clearing of the invasive plant.

We have, therefore, adapted our stewardship plan for the property. We will continue to pull broom, but we are also working with a contractor to reestablish the native forest in the clearing. Reforestation will create shade, which in turn will present unsuitable conditions for French broom, a plant that thrives in the sun.

Successful stewardship of our redwood forests takes on a variety of forms and involves the hard work of many dedicated people. If you would like to participate in our ongoing stewardship activities, please call Lilian Ventocilla at (650) 968-4509. 🌲



Last Chance - Rose Property © Sempervirens Fund

## Matching Grant Supports Stewardship Program

We are very grateful to all of our donors and The San Francisco Foundation for supporting our stewardship program. The San Francisco Foundation provided us with a three-year \$150,000 challenge grant to support our efforts to protect redwood forests in the Santa Cruz Mountains. With your generous donations, we recently met and exceeded the \$50,000 match requirement for this year and were able to use

these funds to pay for the debris removal activities at the two Last Chance properties.

Sempervirens Fund is now working on meeting The Dean Witter Foundation Challenge: if we raise \$40,000, the Foundation will provide \$20,000 in matching funds. Please help us meet this Challenge. A giving envelope is enclosed so you can send in your donation today.



Ellie and Dick Mansfield

## Ellie Mansfield Retires after 30 years with Sempervirens Fund

Ellie Mansfield, after 30 years at Sempervirens Fund, retired in December 2009. She and her husband, Dick, have been supporters of the Fund and its mission since she joined the staff in 1980.

Ellie assumed many roles at Sempervirens — from hand-writing acknowledgment cards to typing the by-laws to installing and wiring the first computers to doing graphics and desk-top publishing. For her birthday one year, Dick and their children presented Ellie with her very own redwood grove in Big Basin. To reciprocate, Ellie and their children gave Dick his redwood grove (which is adjacent to hers). “It’s so special to have such a place to visit, knowing that the trees will be there undisturbed, for a very long time,” Ellie said. “It was hard to leave Sempervirens Fund after so many years. I have made such good friends. We’ll continue to support Sempervirens — and look forward to saving more redwoods!” 🌲

## Sempervirens Fund Welcomes 3 New Board Members

We’re pleased to welcome Philippe Cohen, Fred Keeley, and Regina Phelps to Sempervirens Fund’s Board of Directors:



**Philippe Cohen, Ph.D.**, the Administrative Director of Stanford University’s Jasper Ridge Biological

Preserve, is responsible for the continuing ecological health of the preserve and support of its mission in research and education. He has a diverse background in land management, dealing with issues of desert grazing, water rights, grazing, and his current focus on the urban/wild land interface.



**Fred Keeley** has been the Treasurer of Santa Cruz County since 2005. He served in the California State

Assembly from 1996-2002. While there, he authored the two largest park and environmental protection bonds in the nation’s history, a total of \$4.7 billion. Fred serves on a number of boards, including California Voter Foundation, Save Our Shores, California Ocean Science Trust, and California Forward.



**Regina Phelps** is an internationally recognized expert in the field of emergency management and continuity planning

and founder of Emergency Management & Safety Solutions. In 1991, she was the first woman elected as the Chairman of the Board of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. Regina serves on the boards of California Audubon and International Crane Foundation. 🌲

## Announcing the Redwood Heritage Society

Through the years, donors have created their living legacy by including Sempervirens Fund in their estate plans. These gifts have made all the difference in our ability to acquire and preserve redwood forests and provide stewardship of these resources. Our recent land acquisitions near Butano and Castle Rock State Parks would not have been possible without prior bequests.

To acknowledge donors who have included Sempervirens Fund in their estate plan, Sempervirens Fund has established the Redwood

Heritage Society. As a member of the Redwood Heritage Society, you will receive invitations to special events and the satisfaction of knowing that the values that guided your charitable giving will be translated into preserving special places for people and wildlife.

To obtain information about the Redwood Heritage Society, please contact:

Kerry Bresnahan, J.D.,  
Director of Development  
(650) 968-4509  
kbresnahan@sempervirens.org.

# Tributes

Dedicated Redwood Trees and Legacy Grove gifts were established in honor or memory of the following people between August 11, 2009 and December 31, 2009:

## Dedicated Redwoods

Wilton R. Abbott

*Given by Ken and Mary Lou Schultz*

Alvin M. and

Alice E. "Betty" Anderson

*Given by Gay Anderson, James and Deidre Anderson, and Stanley Barnes*

Professor John Barton

*Given by Byron and Linda Sher*

Col. and Mrs. John F. Batjer

*Given by Frederick and Martha Davis*

The Bettencourt Family

*Given by the Genevieve Bettencourt Trust*

Elmira Cuttitta

*Given by Thomas Montelbano*

George and Laura Fairbanks

*Given by Laura Fairbanks*

Scott L. Gardner

*Given by Wilberta Gardner*

Heinz Hermann Gunther

*Given by Brian and Michelle Montgomery*

John Hohmann

*Given by Bruce Hildenbrand*

Joseph Houghteling

*Given by Byron and Linda Sher*

Elizabeth R. Jennings and

Richard W. Jennings

*Given by Bruce and Susan Stangeland*

Ben Jack Kinney

*Given by William N. Harris*

Carol Louise Kremerskotter

*Given by Fred Kremerskotter, friends, and family*

Lester Machta

*Given by Edward Lammer and Deborah Machta*

Nancy Pearlman

*Anonymous donor*

Anita B. Peters

*Given by Lorna B. Gill*

Sumner Rahr

*Given by Andrea Weiss Maes and Stephane Maes*

Yet Mung (Ming) Siu

*Given by Marion Siu, friends, and family*

Katrina Smathers

*Given by Joe and Alice Oeschger*

Hero Song and Benliang Chai

*Given by Jing Chai and Ruiping Sun*

SPARC

*Given by Cheri Lewis*

Karl Stellrecht

*Given by the Karl Stellrecht Trust*

Trish Strickland

*Given by Dan and Lisa Martin*

Phyllis Thatcher

*Given by Richard Izmirian*

Will F. and Gertrude I. Thomas

*Given by Patrick and Peggy Scudero*

LaVena White

*Given By Ronald White*

Ray W. Winter

*Given by Ray and Constance Winter*

Linda and Doug Yule

*Given by Dick and Ellie Mansfield*

## Legacy Grove Gifts

Lois Bragg

*Given by Jeannette Nielsen*

Ray Brandy

*Given by Michael and Susan Brandy*

Marvin R. Jones

*Given by John and Carol Lynn Houston*

Eric Kilgore

*Given by Alan Kilgore*

Daphne Leach

*Given by Jon Leach*

Matthew and Conny's Wedding

*Given by Maria Steinmann and*

*Antonio Piccolboni*

David M. Nevins

*Given by Josh Adams and*

*Hannah Rose Nevins*

John "Jack" O'Leary

*Given by Jerrie Devore*

Bluford Lane Pinnell

*Given by Richard and Pamela Montgomery*

Steve Stein

*Given by Barbara Gross*

Inez Sulpizio

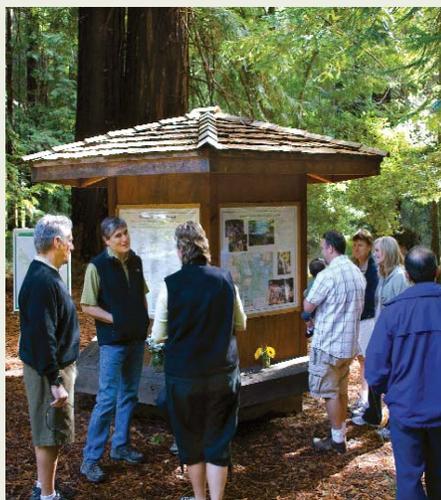
*Given by Physicians and Staff at Pacific Hematology Oncology Associates*

Penelope Louise Trueblood

*Given by Donald and Susan Burchard*

## Family and Friends Remember Michael Myers

Michael's Summit Loop Trail and Redwood Grove at San Lorenzo River Redwoods is named after Michael Myers, a special young man who died 10 years ago in a tragic diving accident. His friends and family gathered there on October 18, 2009, to celebrate his life and to visit the special place that they named in his honor. 🌲





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## Sempervirens Fund is moving!

**In May 2010 our office address will change to:**

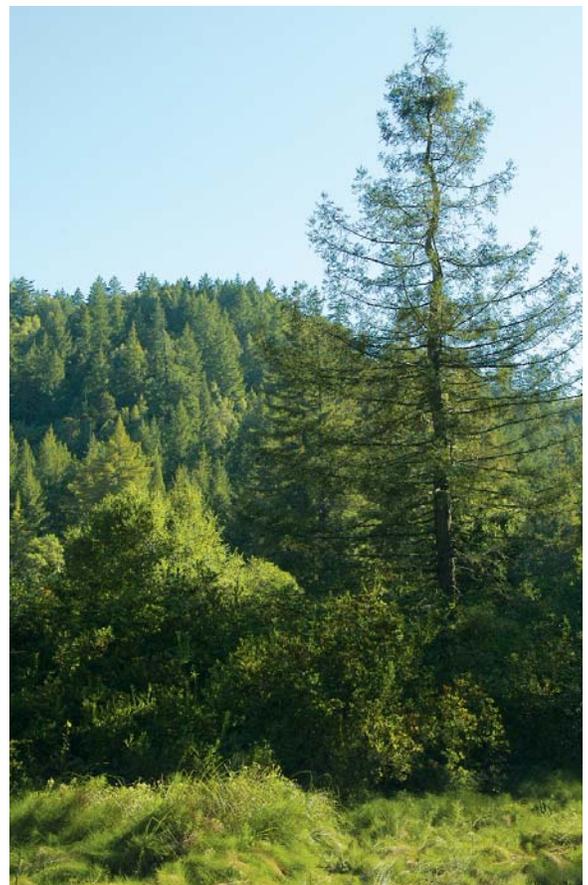
Sempervirens Fund  
419 South San Antonio Road, Suite 211  
Los Altos, CA 94022-3640

**Due to the Post Office closing a branch, our post office box has also changed. Effective February 1, 2010 it is:**

Sempervirens Fund  
Post Office Box 1417  
Los Altos, CA 94023-1417

## Visit our New Website

Visit [www.sempervirens.org](http://www.sempervirens.org) to see our new website! We've updated the site to make it easier for you to participate in our hikes and events, learn about our land conservation campaigns and successes, and be part of our online community. Let us know what you think of the new site by emailing us at [redwoods@sempervirens.org](mailto:redwoods@sempervirens.org).



Little Basin © Dan Quinn