

Mountain Echo

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Big Basin's New Forest

While wildfire still smoldered at Big Basin Redwoods State Park in August 2020, then newly appointed California State Parks Director Armando Quintero said, "I think we have an opportunity to show the world what the parks of the future could look like."

Nearly six years later, Big Basin and California State Parks are now shaping that vision. The park has remained on-track with its early timelines for planning, or "reimagining," Big Basin's future, with management and facilities plans in place and a vision for a new visitor center at Saddle Mountain, the eastern entrance to the park nestled above Boulder Creek.

The scenic gateway into Big Basin at Saddle Mountain has long been recognized as a

critical part of the landscape. But for decades, it remained in private hands, limiting its role in the broader vision for the park. Today, that gateway is protected forever.

Thanks to this community's extraordinary response to the 2020 CZU wildfire, the 153-acre NoraBella property, known as the Gateway to Big Basin, was protected in 2021, less than six months after the fire. In early 2026, Sempervirens Fund transferred NoraBella to California State Parks, marking the first addition to the park in 15 years.

Quintero called the milestone "a keystone expansion that will help accelerate the park's recovery ... and will serve as a world-class entrance to the park's new visitor center for generations to come."



What It Takes to Reopen a Trail

Each year, people come to the Santa Cruz Mountains to walk among redwoods, listen to creeks, breathe in the cool forest air, watch for wildlife, and experience the quiet that only a forest can provide. Trails make those experiences possible, but after wildfire, storms, and heavy winter runoff, a trail may need significant work before it can safely welcome visitors again.

In a recovering redwood forest like Big Basin Redwoods State Park, crews must look for fire-damaged trees, unstable slopes, washed-out trail surfaces, blocked drainage, damaged crossings, and sensitive areas where the forest is still healing. Some repairs are visible, such as clearing debris or rebuilding sections of trail. Others are less obvious, including improving how water moves across the landscape so the same trail can better withstand future storms and remain safe over time.

Your support helps restore safe, meaningful access to the redwoods, making it possible for people to return to these forests that are still recovering and reconnect with them

firsthand. As trails reopen, they offer a way to witness recovery in progress and reconnect with a place that continues to shape generations of redwood lovers.

Because of you, people can return to the redwoods and experience this recovery for themselves.

Plan your next redwoods visit and see Big Basin's recovery in progress:

sempervirens.org/updated-trails

Start Your Giving Campaign for Redwoods:

- 1 Set up your page
- 2 Choose your goal
- 3 Share with friends
- 4 Give to redwoods

Bring your community together for redwoods:

sempervirens.org/my-campaign

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This land transfer reminds us that recovery is also a chance to shape the future of Big Basin.

Across California, State Parks is increasingly recognized as a leader in climate resilience, with park expansion now a central priority. On Earth Day this year, Governor Gavin Newsom announced a goal of adding 30,000 acres to the State Park system.

"California's state parks are our promise in place," said Sara Barth, Executive Director of Sempervirens Fund. "Land protected for climate resilience, wildlife, and people, today and for

generations. Expanding California's state parks by 30,000 acres by 2030 is how we turn a goal into a legacy. Sempervirens Fund is ready to support that goal in the Santa Cruz Mountains."

Because of you, this land is now part of Big Basin's future. Your support helped protect a critical landscape, expand the park, and create new possibilities for how people will experience these forests in the years ahead.

Learn more about the protection of NoraBella, as the new Gateway to Big Basin:

sempervirens.org/norabella



A Place to Slow Down

For Mike and Erin Monroe's family, years of hiking, camping, and scout outings deepened their connection to these forests. What began as time outdoors became a commitment to protect the places that shaped their lives. Their support grew into redwood dedications for loved ones, living tributes rooted in a place they hope future generations will know.

*"Sempervirens is a local organization.
We know the people. We trust you."*

Erin describes how books and photos can inspire curiosity, but they cannot replace the feeling of standing in a grove. "You can't smell the Earth," she said. "You need to be able to get out there and see it." She believes preserving forests starts with more people experiencing redwoods in person.

Mike is drawn to the long arc of redwood conservation, from the people who first felt moved to protect California's forests to the stewardship work required today. He is motivated by what care over time looks like: understanding fire, restoration, and the responsibility that comes after land is protected.

Trust is part of why the Monroe family continue to give. "Sempervirens is a local organization," Mike said. "We know the people. We trust you." Through their support, Mike and Erin are helping ensure that future generations can slow down, look up, and feel moved to care for the redwoods, too.

Join Mike and Erin in protecting redwood forests for future generations: sempervirens.org/donate



Redwoods of Today and Tomorrow

The Santa Cruz Mountains are already home to redwoods that future generations may refer to as ancient trees. These younger forests are especially important because they are the region's best chance to grow future old-growth, yet roughly half of them remain unprotected.

Ancient forests cannot be replaced on human timelines. It takes centuries for redwoods to grow the large limbs that can become wide enough for mosses, ferns, and nesting seabirds like the marbled murrelet. It takes time for tall canopies to cast the deep shade that keeps streams cool, for fallen logs to hold moisture like sponges, and for standing dead trees to shelter insects, birds, and small creatures.

As these older second-growth forests develop those layers of life, they also face growing threats from fragmentation, severe fire, and climate stress. Protecting them now helps ensure they can continue to grow, adapt, and support the full web of life that depends on them.

Sempervirens has been working to understand where protection can matter most, using science, stewardship, and land conservation priorities to guide decisions for redwoods, wildlife, watershed, and climate resilience across the Santa Cruz Mountains. Because of your support, more of these forests are given the time they need to become enduring.

Learn more about how Sempervirens Fund is protecting the redwoods of today and tomorrow: sempervirens.org/old-growth-protection



Sempervirens
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Timms Creek Loop Starts Here

Help Return 5 Miles of Trails at Big Basin

For many Sempervirens Fund supporters, Big Basin's trails are part of a long relationship with the Santa Cruz Mountains. They are where people have returned again and again — to hike, explore, reminisce, volunteer, and feel connected to the redwoods.

And now a major trail loop is coming back and we need your help.

Timms Creek Loop is a nearly five-mile trail loop that includes the next segment of the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail to be reopened since the CZU fire. Before people can walk Timms Creek Loop again, the trail has to be cleared and bridges rebuilt so creeks can be crossed safely. Step by step, crews are preparing the trail so visitors can once again

move through Big Basin's redwoods, creeks, and quiet forest corridors on foot.

Step by step, this campaign is helping bring people back into the heart of Big Basin. Every gift helps move the work forward toward reopening in 2027, Big Basin's 125th anniversary year.

Together, we can help people venture farther into a new Big Basin — one crossing, one bridge, and one step at a time. Turn the page to see how you can help bring Timms Creek Loop back.

To donate, sponsor a bridge, start a giving campaign, or learn how to get involved, visit sempervirens.org/timms-creek-loop



How You Can Help Bring the Trail Back

MAKE A GIFT

Your gift helps reopen this beloved trail and guides people back into the heart of Big Basin.

START A GIVING CAMPAIGN

Invite friends, family, coworkers, or your hiking group to join you. Starting a giving campaign is a simple way to multiply your impact. Your goal can be to sponsor a bridge or a section of the trail, or to support the work.



SPONSOR A BRIDGE

Individuals, families, groups, and businesses can help fund one of the crossings that will reconnect the trail and make the route passable again.

FOLLOW THE PROGRESS

Follow the trail's progress through photos, updates, and stories as crews rebuild crossings and bring Timms Creek Loop closer to reopening.



Help bring Big Basin trails back. sempervirens.org/timms-creek-loop

