

## PRESERVING TREES, HABITAT IN SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

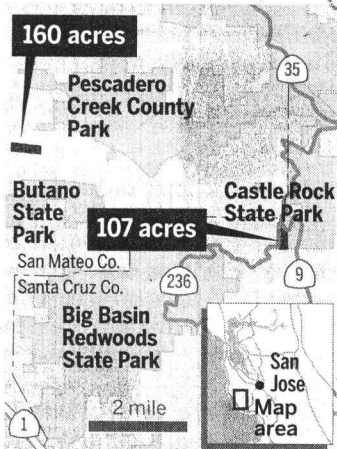


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Aaron Hebert, left, development associate for the Sempervirens Fund, and Linda Ann Yule, forest programs manager for the nonprofit trust, survey part of the newly acquired land seven miles north of Boulder Creek near Highway 9 and Highway 236.

### Preserved lands in Santa Cruz Mountains

Two parcels of land have been preserved under a deal between environmentalists and loggers.



## Deal protects redwood forests

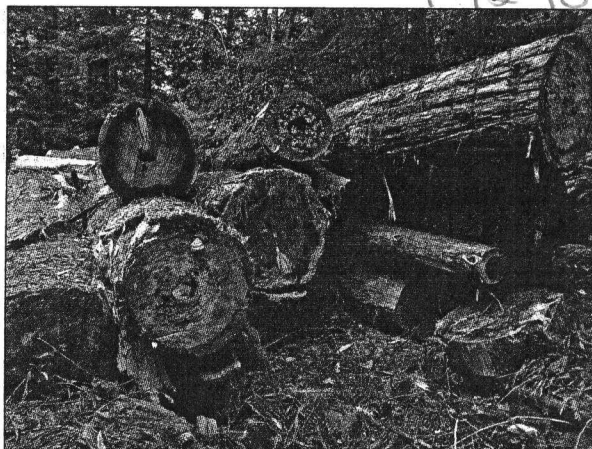
By Paul Rogers

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Two properties thick with redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains — including one nestled between Big Basin Redwoods and Castle Rock state parks that was scheduled to be logged this spring — have been preserved under a \$2.1 million deal between an environmental group and a timber company.

Under the terms, Redtree Properties, based in Santa Cruz, has agreed to sell the parcels to Sempervirens Fund, a nonprofit land trust based in Mountain View. The groups announced the sale Monday.

The first parcel, at 107 acres, is located at Waterman Gap, seven miles north of Boulder Creek near the intersection of Highway 9 and Highway 236. First logged a century



Part of the \$2.1 million deal preserved 107 acres nestled between Big Basin Redwoods and Castle Rock state parks that was scheduled to be logged this spring. For some trees, the deal came too late.

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## Lands

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ago, the property sits adjacent to the Skyline-to-the-Sea Trail, a popular 35-mile hiking route that links Castle Rock State Park to the Pacific Ocean.

Last year, Redtree obtained state permits to cut about 35 percent of the redwood and Douglas fir trees on the property larger than 18 inches in diameter.

"The trees are marked with blue x's. They have the logging permits. They have the landing sites. It was ready to go," said Reed Holderman, executive director of Sempervirens Fund. "There are some pretty sizable trees, second-growth redwoods there, about 100 years old."

Holderman said his group will work to sell the land back to the state for \$1.4 million, the same price it paid, to be added to Castle Rock park. That may take several years, however. Although the state still has money for land acqui-

sition from prior parks bond measures, the Schwarzenegger administration has been resistant to accept much new land into the state parks system because the state cannot afford to hire rangers amid its current budget crisis.

"We decided to sell the property to Sempervirens because it was a natural addition to Castle Rock State Park, which surrounds us on two sides," said Doug Ley, general managing partner of Redtree. "It will be a fabulous addition to the park, and the intersection above the parcel is the gateway into Big Basin."

With the struggling economy, demand for lumber has dropped nationwide, reducing prices. As a result, timber companies across the West have been selling more of their property to conservation groups. Even with the sale however, Redtree still owns 7,000 acres of forestland in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

The other property in the sale, at 160 acres, sold for \$760,000 and is located in



A redwood "marked" to be cut down near Boulder Creek will now be preserved under the \$2.1 million deal announced Monday.

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San Mateo County between Butano State Park and Pescadero Creek County Park in La Honda. Redtree had not proposed logging it. At least 30 acres contain old-growth redwoods suitable for marbled murrelets, a type of endangered seabird that nests in ancient trees nearby, Holderman said.

Sempervirens Fund, named for the Latin word for redwood, was founded in 1900 by San Jose photographer Andrew P. Hill and his colleagues. Its efforts saved the first trees at Big Basin

and began California's state park system.

Redtree Properties began in 1923 as the Santa Cruz Lumber Co. Today, the company develops property and harvests timber in San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties. It is one of three major logging companies operating in the Santa Cruz Mountains, along with Big Creek Lumber in Davenport and Redwood Empire, based in San Jose.

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