

# Redwood Nation Earth First!

Dear Supporters,

Here we are, drilled by Tillerson, pillaged by Price, and slapped by Sessions. On the up side, the Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians and Round Valley Indian Tribes' lawsuit against Caltrans has weathered preliminary legal challenges and will now proceed in Federal Court. The suit is about the lack of required government to government consultation, desecration of cultural sites, and confiscation of artifacts during construction of the Willits bypass. Affectionately dubbed "Little Standing Rock," the case represents many of the same core issues raised by the struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline. If successful, the litigation will strengthen Native American heritage protection and help restore tribes' control over cultural legacies nationwide.

Our work with members of the Coyote Valley and Pt. Arena Bands of Pomo Indians in Mendocino County, Yurok elders in Humboldt County, and non-indigenous environmental groups in both, has led to the formation of the Pacific Alliance for Indigenous and Environmental Action. This coalition unites Indigenous tribes, local watershed groups, and individuals working to protect coastal Northern California forests. Temperate rainforests of the Pacific Coast play a vital role in moderating extreme weather events, such as drought and floods associated with climate change. Pacific rainforests sequester more carbon per acre than any other forests on earth. We are working with First Nations people to reconnect the fragments and restore this once contiguous forest.

To raise awareness about cultural heritage, herbicide use, clearcutting, and threats to old growth trees, we are taking part in a "Walk to Heal the Forest." Walkers are carrying a log symbolizing the trees and the plight of the forests from Santa Cruz to Sitka. Some have likened the log to a talking stick passing from community to community, giving voice to the concerns and needs in each area it passes through.

Last fall, Pomo youth and elders from Pt. Arena carried the symbolic log to the Ukiah office of Mendocino Redwood Company (MRC), briefly occupying it. They asked the foresters to stop poisoning the tan oaks, described by the children as "very important to our culture." One child asked: "What would you do if you were us?" a question that clearly left the forester speechless. A Declaration demanding an immediate halt to the use of herbicides in the forests or the consequent loss of the lucrative Certified Sustainable label, was affixed to MRC's front gate.



In June, the log reached Richardson Grove State Park near Garberville right on time to highlight the renewed threat posed to the ancient redwoods there by Caltrans, yep, them again. Caltrans plans to widen highway 101 right

through the Park, cutting the roots of thousand year old trees to accommodate the longer, faster trucks favored by the national trucking industry.

Disturbing the shallow roots and drainage systems of the trees will damage the crowns as the injured toes cannot pump water clear up to the tall tops. The proposed road “realignment” runs through a publicly-owned 97-year old State Park, encompassing critical habitat for at-risk and sensitive species. Richardson Grove is an indispensable link in the coastal forest ecosystems we want to respect, protect and connect.

Back in 2014, Caltrans lost the “Richardson Grove Highway Expansion” federal case to plaintiffs EPIC, the Center for Biological Diversity, Californians for Alternatives to Toxics, and individuals. The judge sent Caltrans back to the drawing board, chastising them for using false data and sloppy analyses, including “missing” several gigantic old growth redwoods in their count. On May 22, 2017, Caltrans issued new documents with minor changes to reduce the project footprint but did not change their determination that the project would have no significant impact on the Grove.

Because Caltrans issued an “Addendum to the Final EIR” rather than developing a new one, there is no public comment period. Opponents point out the proposed “minimization” measures will still harm the shallow roots, clearly threatening the ancient trees’ stability, health, and longevity. The widening project actually increases danger to pedestrians and cyclists by reducing the already narrow shoulder widths. Bigger, faster trucks mean more fatal car crashes. Super-sized trucks would compete with local trucking companies who invested in smaller long haul trucks that are currently allowed through Richardson Grove without an exemption.

But don’t expect Caltrans to listen to reason. After losing three times in court already, they’re preparing for another expensive, tax-funded

court battle. Wearing our orange Eco-trans vests for safety, we’ll be prepared to meet them in the Grove with nonviolent direct action, if necessary.

In July, activists from Mendocino and Humboldt hiked, biked and floated the log into the Mattole, where a blockade is in place to protect the last remaining old growth forests from Humboldt Redwoods Company’s logging plans. The log traveled by canoe down the South Fork of the Eel River to Bull Creek and was then walked up and over the mountains and down to the coast. In Petrolia, the Log Walkers were welcomed by a throng of residents who accompanied it on a two mile walk to a large rock rising from the now-dry riverbed near the mouth of the Mattole.

A celebration and ceremony were held at the Big Rock with Native American prayers, songs, and dances led by Pomo children and their elders, and a community dinner. After a rest, the log will be moved further north up the coast towards the Klamath region to join efforts to stop the Jordan Cove Liquefied Natural Gas pipeline project. In each area, local tribes and communities will have the chance to house the log and plan the next leg around their issues.

Our direct action campaign just got bigger and we could sure use your support. Please use the enclosed envelope to donate. If you would like to participate in the Log Walk, or any of these campaigns, please include your email. If you do not use email, a note with your contact info will do.

Thank you for standing with us.

Solidarity,



Naomi Wagner  
(707) 459-0548