

Stop a Highway Project Through the Ancient Redwoods

Contributed by Center for Biological Diversity
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Sign the Center for Biological Diversity's Petition to save Richardson Grove!

Ask any visitor to California's North Coast who has driven the Redwood Highway north from San Francisco, and they'll be able to tell you exactly where they passed through the fabled "Redwood Curtain."

At Richardson Grove State Park, just north of Humboldt County, Highway 101 narrows to a two-lane road winding through a dim, lush grove of ancient redwoods. These huge trees provide crucial habitat for endangered birds like the marbled murrelet; threatened salmon and steelhead still return each year to spawn in the creeks running through the park.

This iconic gateway to the redwoods is now gravely threatened by an ill-advised and unnecessary highway project. Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administration are on the brink of approving a proposal to widen and realign the portion of Highway 101 passing through Richardson Grove. Construction of the new road would cut through the vital root systems of the ancient redwoods, threatening the integrity of the grove and further jeopardizing the imperiled species that rely on old-growth redwood forests for their survival.

The point of the project is to make it possible for larger trucks to access this portion of Highway 101. Powerful business interests itching to bring big-box stores and runaway urban development to Humboldt County desperately want those larger trucks on the highway. This just adds insult to injury: The project will not only blow an even bigger hole through Richardson Grove, but could also spur new development that will forever alter the character of the North Coast.

Behind the future Redwood Curtain, travelers might find just one more big subdivision and one more big-box strip mall.

Please take a moment to tell Caltrans [CalTRAN - ed.] and the Highway Administration not to approve the Richardson Grove Improvement Project. Thus far, these agencies have ignored the project's threats to endangered wildlife and ancient redwoods, failed to look at other alternatives, and downplayed the growth-inducing effects of opening Highway 101 to oversized-truck traffic. This cathedral grove is far too important to both vanishing forest species and human visitors to be sacrificed for the short-term gains of a few powerful commercial interests in Humboldt County.

Sign the petition to government officials: Visit salsa.democracyinaction.org -- take action now.

Editor's note: Use the handy form and the prepared letter, but you may alter it or add to it. I began it with this:

I am an oil-industry analyst most aware of peak oil. You have heard of peak oil but have not connected the dots to see the folly of expanding the present infrastructure that has no future. I concur with the effort to stop the Richardson Grove 101 project, but would like to hear back from you on the matter of oil price and supply outlooks, such as on the vulnerability to over-dependence on dwindling oil supplies. The economic growth envisioned may be based on trucks that will cease to come, if the huge trucks being rammed through in this sham of a process are allowed to invade further into Redwood Country.

It has been pointed out to Culture Change that "the EIS/EAW also doesn't mention California's need to reduce CO2 emissions (based on its own law ...not to mention impending Federal laws). ...And CALTRANS and California cannot reduce CO2 if they continue to widen and build new highways."

For more information see the Save Richardson Grove site: saverichardsongrove.org

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Further background:

Preserving and Enhancing Paradise in the Humboldt Redwoods

ACTION ALERT: Petition to Save Richardson Grove Ancient Redwoods

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