

# News Release



**For Immediate Release**

Contact: Vince Sereno,  
Calaveras Sector  
Superintendent  
Or  
Park Superintendent  
Gary Olson

Date: 12/19/11

Phone No.: (209) 536-2916 or  
(209) 795-8904

Email Address: [vsere@parks.ca.gov](mailto:vsere@parks.ca.gov)  
[golson@parks.ca.gov](mailto:golson@parks.ca.gov)

## Calaveras Big Trees State Park Re-opens

### Many Crews Tackle Tough Job after Extensive Wind Damage

Calaveras Big Trees State Park will be open to the public starting today, December 19, thanks to the hard work of a number of work crews. The park was closed December 1 because of unsafe conditions due to damage from heavy winds.

Damage from the windstorm was extensive throughout the park, although it appears that no Giant Sequoias have fallen. 70 trees fell in the North Grove campground alone, smashing picnic tables, food storage boxes, small bridges, fires rings, and creating huge holes where the roots were pulled out of the ground. Only one tree fell across the North Grove Trail, crushing a boardwalk. Numerous trees fell across all other park roads and trails.

There are still miles of fire roads that need to be cleared, and literally tons of debris everywhere. Uprooted trees created multiple holes in the asphalt roads. Two buildings – the entrance station and a park residence – were hit hard by falling trees, but are being repaired. Amazingly, nobody was hurt.

Although many people have expressed their concerns about the park, according to Environmental Scientist Patty Raggio: “The mid-Sierra forest here has evolved for thousands of years surviving disturbances such as wild fires and wind events. Although images of the

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fallen trees may look shocking, this extreme, yet natural event did not harm the overall ecological resources of the park.”

Although the North Grove area of the park will now be open to the public, the rest of the park will be closed until spring as it usually is during winter. The remainder of the work will be completed as the weather permits.

The following crews from around the region have been in the park the entire time, working hard to make it safe for visitors: CA State Parks Sierra District Trail Crew, CA State Parks Facilities Staff, Vallecito Conservation Camp Crews, California Conservation Corps, Calaveras Big Trees State Park Volunteers, and our own Central Valley District employees. Work progressed very quickly due to the dedication, cooperation and hard work of these skilled people. We send a big thank you to all!

It was necessary to close the park during this time because of the safety risks to visitors. The actual damage presented safety issues, as did the large pieces of machinery and equipment needed to complete the work. Park staff would like to thank the public for their cooperation and understanding during the period of closure.

For more information about park programs and conditions, please contact the Visitor Center: (209) 795-7980, the Ranger Station: (209) 795-2334, or visit our webpage at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov).

News editors and reporters wishing to have photos for use with their stories can find such photos at: Link: [http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=26930](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=26930). We ask that photo credit be given to California State Parks.

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