

News Release



For Immediate Release
March 11, 2014

Contact:
Vicky Waters,
Vicky.Waters@parks.ca.gov
(916) 653-5115

Settlement Agreement Protects Endangered Murrelets, Keeps Big Basin State Park Campgrounds, Facilities Open

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The California Department of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) has settled a lawsuit brought by the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) that will strengthen protection of the marbled murrelet in Big Basin Redwoods State Park. The settlement agreement calls for State Parks to continue with many existing programs and implement additional ones in the areas of garbage management, public education, signage, corvid (raven, crow, jays, etc.) management, and active monitoring and research. State Parks will also monitor the scarce birds and the management of corvid impacts, which will allow park managers to implement management practices based on findings.

The settlement agreement was reached last month after CBD filed a lawsuit over the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the adoption of the [Big Basin Redwoods State Park General Plan](#). The CBD in San Francisco challenged the certification of the EIR alleging that the endangered marbled murrelet, a small sea bird that has been found to nest high in the branches of old growth redwoods, would be adversely affected by existing and proposed development in the park. The agreement will allow for campgrounds and facilities to remain open without disruption.

State Parks has actively worked to protect the marbled murrelet for decades – since the first marbled murrelet nest was discovered by a state park employee in 1974 in an old-growth redwood tree at Big Basin State Park. Through grants, budget allocations, and oil spill mitigation funds, more than \$1.73 million has been directed toward implementation of conservation measures for the marbled murrelet within state parks and Memorial County Park in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

State Parks also has participated in significant regional discussion regarding marbled murrelet and is involved in the development of regional goals and plans for murrelet recover in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Big Basin Redwoods State Park consists of more than 18,000 acres in the Santa Cruz Mountains, located within 60 miles of major metropolitan centers in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Santa Clara Valley. It was established in 1902 and is the oldest state park in California. It is a popular visitor destination and has the largest remaining stand of old-growth trees in the region. Big Basin Redwoods State Park is situated at the very southern-most end of the marbled murrelet's range and supports a small and fairly isolated population.

California State Parks Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

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