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Land Trust of Santa Cruz County and Partners to Open First Phase of New Public Trails at San Vicente Redwoods

7.3 miles of multi-use trails open Saturday, December 3, with free registration pass required. Pre-registration period begins October 3.

DAVENPORT, Calif. (September 22, 2022) – The [Land Trust of Santa Cruz County](https://www.landtrustsantacruz.org) (LTSCC) and the three conservation partners who own and manage the nearly 9,000-acre San Vicente Redwoods property will open the first phase of an envisioned 38-mile multi-use trail system **Saturday, December 3, 2022**. The other partners are [Peninsula Open Space Trust \(POST\)](https://www.postlandtrust.org), [Sempervirens Fund](https://www.sempervirensfund.org) and [Save the Redwoods League](https://www.savetheredwoods.org).

The first phase, 7.3 miles of new trails, will be open during limited daytime hours (9 a.m. – 5 p.m.) for use by hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians. Visitors will be required to register for a pass and carry it while on the property.

Online **pre-registration for passes begins October 3** at the Land Trust’s website: <https://www.landtrustsantacruz.org/svr>

Passes are valid beginning December 3 and will not expire. Visitors who do not pre-register will be able to obtain a single-day-use pass from on-site kiosks, starting December 3. Parking at the site will be limited to 72 vehicles.

A free Community Preview Event to provide more information to the public about the new trails will take place **Saturday, September 24, 5-7 p.m.**, at the Westside Farmers’ Market Lot in Santa Cruz. The public is invited to attend and learn more. Sign up for that event [here](#).



San Vicente Redwoods with location of first trails, opening December 3, 2022

“We are excited to welcome *everyone* – walkers, hikers, bikers and equestrians – to explore these new trails starting December third,” said **Sarah Newkirk**, Land Trust of Santa Cruz County executive director. “When you’re out on the trails, you’ll be able to witness firsthand how nature is rebounding from the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire. Looking to the future, our trails will be doing double duty—serving as part of a new fuel break to protect the community in the event of future wildfires.”

“It is a rare treat for the public to gain new access to the redwood forests of our region, especially in such close proximity to a city,” added **Sam Hodder**, president and CEO of Save the Redwoods League,

which holds the conservation easement over all of San Vicente Redwoods. “In envisioning the trail system, the partners have worked to balance public access with our conservation objectives of restoring the forest and protecting the astonishing biodiversity on the property. Careful placement of the trails and limited hours of operation will ensure that both humans and wildlife can enjoy responsible, healthy access to this remarkable landscape.”

Commitment to Responsible Public Access in an Actively Managed Forest

The 8,852-acre San Vicente Redwoods property is a model of environmental conservation and collaboration. Most of the area was permanently protected by the conservation partners in 2011, after decades of intensive commercial logging in the last century left much of the forest unhealthy. Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and Sempervirens Fund jointly own and actively manage the property. Save the Redwoods League holds a permanent conservation easement that ensures ecologically sensitive land management practices, as well as sustainable harvesting in the working forest areas of the property. LTSCC is developing and will manage the property’s public access trail system.

“These trails offer a rare opportunity for the public to witness a forest in active recovery from recent wildfire and decades of commercial logging,” said **Walter T. Moore**, president of POST. “While they are dramatic and exposed right now, the trails offer ocean views from a few places. To ensure visitor safety in a working forest, everyone should note and respect any temporary trail closures as we continue to actively manage its recovery.”

Public access was part of the original vision for San Vicente Redwoods. Wildlife behavior studies helped trail planners to balance recreation and conservation objectives. The partners employ motion-activated wildlife cameras and audio sensors – both near human activity and far from it – to track numerous animal species and to see how they respond to human presence. This ongoing research will inform trail management and future development to ensure that needs are met for all – humans and wildlife – who inhabit and use the lands.

In recognition of the people who inhabited and stewarded these lands for millennia, the new trails are named in the [Awaswas language](#). The [Amah Mutsun Tribal Band](#), who respect and wish to honor these people, collaborates with the partners at the property to ensure that indigenous methods are included in its management.

Plans for what is ultimately envisioned to be a 38-mile trail system at San Vicente Redwoods were created in 2019 and have been revised in response to impacts of the CZU wildfire. The next phase of trail construction may begin within three to five years, depending on monitoring results from visitor usage, wildlife behavior and available funding.

"Opening San Vicente Redwoods to the public is an honor and is a testament to the partnership working carefully over the last eleven years to orchestrate an ambitious conservation and public lands project," said **Sara Barth**, executive director of Sempervirens Fund. "Come explore, discover, and appreciate this remarkable park—new to many, and very special to Sempervirens Fund and our great partners."

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About Land Trust of Santa Cruz County

The mission of the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County is to protect, care for, and connect people to the extraordinary lands that make this area special. Information is available at LandTrustSantaCruz.org

About Peninsula Open Space Trust

POST protects open space on the Peninsula and in the South Bay for the benefit of all. As a private nonprofit land trust, POST has been responsible for conserving more than 84,000 acres since its founding in 1977. POST works with private landowners and public agencies to connect people and nature. Visit openspacetrust.org for more information.

About Sempervirens Fund

California's first land trust, Sempervirens Fund protects and permanently preserves redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) forests, wildlife habitat, watersheds, and other important natural and scenic features of the Santa Cruz Mountains and encourages public appreciation and enjoyment of this environment. sempervirens.org

About Save the Redwoods League

One of the nation's longest-running conservation organizations, Save the Redwoods League has been protecting and restoring redwood forests since 1918. The League has connected generations of visitors with the beauty and serenity of the redwood forest. The nonprofit's 29,000 supporters have enabled the organization to protect more than 216,000 acres of irreplaceable forest in 66 state, national and local parks and reserves. For information, please visit SaveTheRedwoods.org.

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