



# REDWOOD COAST LAND CONSERVANCY

*Dedicated to protection of open spaces and natural resources from the Navarro to the Russian rivers*

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December 11, 2009

Regarding: Comments to the administrative record for 1-08NTMP-009MEN (Bower NTMP Plan)

Department of Forestry and Fire Protection  
135 Ridgeway Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

I am writing regarding the 18 acres of old-growth habitat located in the Doty Creek Watershed, included as part of the Bower NTMP Plan (1-08NTMP-009MEN) currently under consideration.

The Department of Fish and Game has identified this 18-acre area as the last known grove of old growth redwoods in the Doty Creek Watershed, which drains into the Little North Fork of the Gualala River. This late-seral forest habitat contains several large redwood trees ranging in age from 120 to 450 years old and provides the type of special habitat essential to the survival of the marbled murrelet and spotted owl. The DFG has strongly recommended that the Doty Creek Watershed grove be protected because of the rare and irreplaceable wildlife habitat it provides.

Only remnants remain of the magnificent redwood forests that once covered this region. The Redwood Coast Land Conservancy (RCLC), located in Gualala, is interested in preserving wherever possible the rare pockets of mature redwood forest still standing and protecting the habitat they provide for endangered species.

The Bower NTMP proposes logging a significant amount of the old growth redwood and other mature trees in this area as well as harvesting many other large redwoods in the Gualala River Watershed. In making the determination regarding this NTMP, RCLC urges CAL FIRE to balance the landowner's interests with the protection of one of the Gualala Watershed's last remaining mature redwood groves.

It is RCLC's understanding that the landowner is willing to consider a conservation easement on this rare stand of redwoods as an option in the NTMP being developed. Should a conservation easement be a part of the final plan, the Redwood Coast Land Conservancy, as the area's local land trust, would be interested in and willing to manage and monitor such an easement as part of its mission to preserve and protect wildlife habitat. Please contact me at 785-9533 if you would like further information.

Sincerely,

Laurie Mueller  
President, Redwood Coast Land Conservancy