



Preserving redwood forests since 1900



For More Information:

Reed Holderman
Sempervirens Fund
rholderman@sempervirens.org
(650) 949-1453

Roy Stearns
California State Parks
rstea@parks.ca.gov
(916) 654-7538

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 13, 2012

News Release

Sempervirens Fund Commits \$250,000 to Keep Castle Rock State Park Open

Agreement with State Parks signed on June 11, 2012

One-third of park will be open to hikers for the first time

LOS ALTOS, CA – Sempervirens Fund, a nonprofit conservation group, and California State Parks, announced this week that they have finalized an agreement wherein Sempervirens will provide \$250,000 to keep Castle Rock State Park open for one year, starting July 1, 2012. Castle Rock was one of the 70 parks slated to close this summer, but will now remain open to the public. Sempervirens Fund is leading a collaborative fundraising effort with the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation, Adventure Out, and REI, with additional support from Planet Granite and Pacific Edge Climbing Gym.

As part of the agreement, an area of Castle Rock previously closed to public access, the San Lorenzo River Redwoods, will be open on July 1, 2012. The addition of this 1,340-acre area, which contains the headwaters of the San Lorenzo Rivers and stunning redwood forests, will increase the accessible area of Castle Rock by 35% and add to the park's trail system.

The agreement also stipulates that the entire \$250,000 and any user fees collected at the park will be restricted to Castle Rock and cannot be reallocated for other purposes.

“The Sempervirens Fund helped create our park system in the year 1902,” said State Parks’ Director Ruth Coleman. “Today, they have re-affirmed their position as one of the preeminent conservation organizations in California.”

Castle Rock State Park encompasses 5,229 acres in Santa Cruz County. Though much of it is covered in redwood, Douglas-fir, and madrone forests, the park is best known for its unusual rock formations and stunning views. The park is a destination for rock climbers from around the world and contains over 32 miles of hiking and equestrian trails, as well as a campground and connections to other parks in the area.

“Castle Rock holds a special place in our hearts,” says Reed Holderman, Executive Director of Sempervirens Fund. “Over the past 40 years, we have put a lot of work into making it the amazing park that it is today. And being so close to the millions of people in Silicon Valley and the Peninsula, closing the park doesn’t make sense. Something had to be done.”

Sempervirens Fund has played a large role in creating and expanding Castle Rock. Since the park’s establishment in 1968, Sempervirens has completed 36 land transactions which have added over 4,000 acres to the park’s planning area, including the 1,340-acre San Lorenzo River Redwoods. The organization is currently working, with support from the Kirkwood family, to create a new entrance to the park which will provide more parking, flush toilets, and other amenities to park visitors. They have completed the plans for the entrance and, once they have permits needed from the county, will begin construction. Once completed, this new entrance will provide a reliable stream of income to the park through user fees.

Andrew Vought, Program Director for the Portola and Castle Rock Foundation, said “It’s been heartwarming to see the community come out and show their support for Castle Rock and I am confident that the state will find a way to maintain and enhance this park which Bay Area citizens care so much about.”

“Castle Rock Park is a unique resource for Bay Area rock climbers,” says Cliff Hodges, CEO of Adventure Out. “Most of us learned to climb there and if Castle Rock closes we will have lost our only really good, and certainly our most important local climbing site.”

“I am very thankful and proud to work with the Sempervirens Fund and our other coalition partners devoted to continuing Castle Rock’s legacy,” says Philip Watkins, Outreach Specialist for REI. “There is still more work to be done to keep the park sustainable. However I am confident we can accomplish our goals with the steadfast leadership of the Sempervirens Fund.”

If you would like to help fund the effort to keep Castle Rock open, visit www.sempervirens.org or call (650) 949-1453.

#####

Sempervirens Fund is a nonprofit land conservation organization dedicated to preserving redwood forests in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Sempervirens is the oldest land trust in California and has saved over 34,000 acres of redwoods since 1900. Visit www.sempervirens.org to learn more.

The Portola and Castle Rock Foundation has supported Castle Rock State Park and Portola Redwoods State Park since 1991 and is the official cooperating association for these parks. It is also a 501(c)3 charitable organization. To learn more, visit www.portolaandcastlerockfound.org.

Adventure Out is Northern California's largest outdoor school and guide service specializing in rock climbing, surfing, mountain biking, wilderness survival, backpacking, and adventure tours. With the mission statement "to instill environmental stewardship through experience and adventure", Adventure Out works with over 4000 people each year and donates a portion of gross revenues to environmental conservation through the 1% For The Planet Alliance. To learn more, visit www.adventureout.com.

REI is a national outdoor retail co-op dedicated to inspiring, educating and outfitting its members and the community for a lifetime of outdoor adventure and stewardship. www.REI.com