

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 23, 2011
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Free Entrance on National Public Lands Day

In celebration of National Public Lands Day (NPLD), all national parks across America will waive entrance fees Saturday, September 24, 2011. As part of the larger national effort, Redwood National and State Parks will also waive the day use entry fee into Jedediah Smith Redwoods and Prairie Creek Redwoods State Parks. Other fees, such as campground use fees, will still apply.

National Public Lands Day is not only a nationwide celebration of the vast natural wonders that we the people of the United States own and protect in common, but also the nation's largest, single-day volunteer event for public lands in the United States. NPLD began in 1994 with three sites and 700 volunteers. It proved to be a huge success and NPLD became a yearly tradition. Since the first NPLD, the event has grown by leaps and bounds. Thousands of Americans of all ages set aside one day—the last Saturday in September—to “lend a hand to public lands” that millions of people use to hike, bike, climb, swim, explore, picnic or simply relax. One-third of America's land is owned by the public, and NPLD, a program of the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF), is a reminder of everyone's duty to help maintain those lands.

To find nearby opportunities to volunteer at NPLD celebrations, click on “find a site” on the NPLD website: www.npld.org.

Take advantage of the free entry at your parks to enjoy some of the many outstanding recreational opportunities that abound here. There's something fun for all levels of abilities and interests. Here are some suggestions:

Go Fish! Freshwater Lagoon, Redwood Creek and sections of the Smith River within Redwood National and State Parks all provide a chance to catch (and immediately release!) that big one of your dreams. All sport fishing must be in accordance with California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) regulations and requires a California fishing license for anglers 16 years old and older. Go to the RNSP website (www.nps.gov/redw) and click on the fishing brochures section for important information on fishing seasons, limits, and regulations.

Take a Hike! Gather some friends and the kids and explore the easy, 1-mile **Yurok Loop Trail** in Redwood National Park, which starts on the north side of the Lagoon Creek picnic area parking lot, just west of Trees of Mystery. Explore the coastal environment along this easy trail and take in views of False Klamath Cove and Lagoon Creek. An excellent route for children, the Yurok Loop encompasses stellar examples of coastal scrub forest plants, which include Sitka spruce, Douglas-fir, cow parsnip, wild cucumber, coltsfoot, yarrow, and many varieties of berries. Take binoculars to view seabirds (cormorants, pigeon guillemots, brown pelicans, and common murre) on the seastacks (big rocks left behind by erosion).

Spin Your Wheels! Both Walker Road and Coastal Drive of Redwood National and State Parks are dirt roads perfect for exploring safely by bicycle. Walker Road, located just off Hwy. 199 in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park, meanders through old-growth redwood forest to the banks of the Smith River. Coastal Drive, which can be reached from the south off Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway or from the north off of Hwy. 101 and Klamath Beach Road, offers wide panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and Klamath River estuary. Whales, sea lions, and pelicans may be seen from overlooks high above the crashing surf.

For more information, maps, and suggestions for exploring your parks, stop by the Thomas H. Kuchel Visitor Center located on Highway 101 just south of Orick, California, Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park's Visitor Center along the Newton B. Drury

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Parkway, the Hiouchi Visitor Center off of Hwy. 199, or Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center at 1111 Second Street in Crescent City, California. All four visitor centers are open seven days a week during this time of year. Information can also be obtained by calling (707) 465-7335 (M-F) or visiting the RNSP website at: www.nps.gov/redw.

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