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# The InterTribal Sinkyone Wilderness Council Calls For A Halt To Richardson Grove Project

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To the Sinkyone People, Gááhs-tcho (Redwood Tree) is a special relative whom they were taught to never harm. “As Indigenous Peoples, our responsibility is to respect and care for places like the Grove because of their inherent sacredness and importance within the larger Gááhs-tcho temperate rainforest of this region and beyond. The Grove is an irreplaceable part of the cultural landscape and identity of the Sinkyone People,” asserts Mary Norris who is Chairwoman at the Cahto Tribe of Laytonville Rancheria, the Tribal community situated closest to the Grove today.



The Sinkyone Council’s commitment to defending nature and supporting revitalization of Tribal traditional lifeways and relationships with cultural landscapes and seascapes is guided by the long continuum of Tribal presence in places like the Grove. The Council has a long track record of demanding state and federal agency compliance with cultural protection laws. Agencies have legal requirements to protect Tribal cultural heritage and values, and to prevent harmful impacts to Tribes’ cultural properties and ways of life, including cultural places. This principle is underscored by Sinkyone Council Chairwoman Priscilla Hunter, who asserts “Caltrans has a duty to honor and uphold protection for cultural places such as the Grove.”

Richardson Grove is one of only a few remaining ancient redwood groves, a critical part of the surviving 2% old-growth redwood still standing. Tribal members maintain cultural relationship with the Grove as an important place for the continuation of traditional ways of life, as Sinkyone ancestors for millennia did. For these and other reasons, it is vitally important that the Grove be accorded sufficient protections that in turn will ensure Indigenous Sinkyone cultural heritage and lifeways are respected and protected.

EPIC has long opposed the project because of its negative impacts to old-growth redwoods and our belief that alternative solutions are available. We are proud to stand alongside the Sinkyone Council in continuing to call for this project to be abandoned.