

Mitigation for Loss of Late Successional Forest: Coast Redwoods and Other Conifers

There is no feasible alternative that fully avoids impacts to late successional (mature to old growth) conifers including redwoods, Sitka spruce, and Douglas-fir. These trees and their associated habitats cannot be recreated in the near term.

Caltrans anticipates that the mitigation strategy for late successional forest communities would include one or both of the following options:

- **Option One:** Fund forest restoration projects that accelerate the development of late successional characteristics in younger-aged stands. Funding thinning projects in dense, early successional stands would:
 - accelerate tree growth
 - increase tree vigor
 - increase biodiversity for botanical and wildlife species
 - accelerate the development of habitat that support species such as marbled murrelet
- **Option Two:** Preservation of existing late successional forest habitat. Preservation would be accomplished through the purchase of existing late successional conifer forests in Del Norte or Humboldt counties that are threatened by logging or development, with the intent of conveying such acreage to an agency or organization that would manage it in perpetuity.



Organizations working in Del Norte and Humboldt counties seek to speed up the long-term conversion of second growth redwood forests (top image) toward a future more like conditions of a mature late successional forest (bottom image). Replanted second growth forests typically feature densely planted trees lacking mature canopies and forest floors lacking in quality habitat.

Photo credit: Redwood Rising