

January 31, 2014

Sam Hodder: President and CEO, Save the Redwoods League

Mission: To protect and restore the redwood forests so these wonders of the natural world flourish.

Milestones: Established in 1918. In the past 12 years, we purchased the Dillonwood giant sequoias grove. In 2011, we protected a unique piece of California facing imminent harvest: the ancient Noyo River Redwoods along the 126-year-old Skunk Train route.

Annual budget: \$14.4 million.

Corporate support: Less than 5 percent.

Corporate supporters: Wells Fargo, Oracle, Apple, Bank of America.

Employees: 34.

Volunteers: More than 70.

Telephone: (415) 362-2352.

Website: www.savetheredwoods.org

Office issues

Recent challenge: Helping to support the California state park system. The challenge is making sure that people are visiting these remarkable places and that it's sustained for the long term. The financial and budgetary challenges of state parks has led to some parks being closed in recent years, so that was a wake-up call.



Meeting the challenge: We are working in many ways to be a strong, value-added partner for the state park system, including helping fund infrastructure, rebuilding trails, replacing bridges and improving campsites. We're also helping tell the story of what the state park system is all about with brochures and that kind of thing.

Measures of success: Historically, we've measured it by the acres of old growth of forest that we've helped to protect. In the future we will have broader measures, like the number of people in the woods and how much of the landscape we can restore.

Missed opportunity: To some degree, we can look to the threat of park closures as a missed opportunity. As a community, we have not stepped up to fund the stewardship of these places.

Misconception: We are doing all the saving when in fact the redwoods are saving us. What I mean by that is that I believe that the redwoods are the cure for whatever ails you. Whether it's poor physical or emotional health, an increasing detachment from the natural world or a rapidly changing climate, the redwoods are the gateway to a stronger land ethic and a healthier community.

Professional insights

Personal path to nonprofit work: I've worked in conservation for my entire career, most recently the Trust for Public Land, where I was for 20 years.

Like most about job: It's pretty amazing to work with an organization that has this legacy. It's inspiring.

Like least: That I have to leave the redwoods to get back to the office.

Best recent moment: We recently took a hike on the Peter's Creek property, one that we acquired in Portola Redwood State Park, with the tallest tree in the Santa Monica mountains.

Bucket list: We have funded a program about climate change to study the impact of climate change on redwood forests, and I would like to climb up on one the canopies of the forest with the researchers. They can be as high as 379 feet above the ground.

Greatest inspiration: The three founders of the organization.

Causes: America Scores and Acadia National Park.

Most like to meet: My great grandparents.

<http://www.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/print-edition/2014/01/31/sam-hodder-ceo-save-the-redwoods.html?page=all>

