

Garcia River Forest North Coast, California

Project Type:

Forest management



Project Description:

Some of America's favorite forests are the redwoods along California's north coast. The redwood region is known for its raw beauty and rich wildlife but decades of aggressive harvesting, changing timber owners and encroaching development have left this landscape bruised and battered. The health of native species and the viability of the local economy suffered. To help protect and restore these lands, the Fund acquired the 23,780 acre Garcia River Forest, the centerpiece of one of the largest river systems on California's north coast. Today, we own and manage the land as a sustainable working forest to restore wildlife habitat, improve water quality and preserve the traditional economic base of the local community. The Nature Conservancy holds a conservation easement on the property and works in partnership with the Fund to restore the most ecologically sensitive portions of the forest and the river.

Carbon Impact:

These towering stands of trees are not just housing wildlife—they are also trapping CO₂ a greenhouse gas linked to climate change. Old growth Redwood forests store more carbon per acre than any other forest type. Sustainable forest management here can store up to 200,000 tons of CO₂ annually.

We were an early participant in the development of forest carbon projects and the Garcia River Forest was the one of the first two forest carbon offset projects verified and registered under the Climate Action Reserve. To date, our forests have produced more than 90% of the forest-based offsets verified and registered with the Reserve. Carbon finance has provided significant additional support for the forests, enabling us to repay the loans we took out to protect the properties, defer harvests when log prices are low and accelerate restoration activities for fish and wildlife.

Benefits:

Wildlife: Endangered coho salmon and steelhead trout, northern spotted owl, coastal tailed frog, and numerous other rare plants and animals

Water: This forest comprises one-third of the watershed of Garcia River

Economy: North Coast projects contributed \$4.5 million to the local economy in 2012

Community: Cleaner air and water for downstream residents

Specifications:

Standard: Climate Action Reserve, Forest Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative certified

Auditor: Scientific Certification Systems

Conservation Partners: The Nature Conservancy, California State Coastal Conservancy, and Wildlife Conservation Board

Project Design Documents: View the project design documents

Forest Carbon: Permanently retired on buyer's behalf

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