

# HUMBOLDT REDWOODS AND RICHARDSON GROVE STATE PARKS

## Civilian Conservation Corps Heritage Adventure

### Richardson Grove State Park

#### Visitor Center

The south room of the Richardson Grove visitor center used to be a dining area. In 1938 the CCC built a connecting wing between the outdoor octagonal kitchen and the dining room, and an adjoining deck. The connector still exists; the deck has been replaced.

#### Tree Ring Exhibit

In March 1933, a huge redwood west of Highway 10, right across from the visitor center, leaned over after heavy rains. It had to be cut down before it toppled. Was this a tragedy? No, it was an opportunity. The CCC and local WPA workers made a redwood natural history exhibit out of the 2000-year-old tree's base and part of the trunk, right where it was felled. It is shown above in 1935. This exhibit still exists, with only minor changes and repairs since 1933.

**How to get there:** **From the entrance parking lot**, take the trail paralleling the highway and head south. When you reach the road that goes under the highway, cross it but do not go under the highway. The trail continues on the other side of the road. **From the visitor center**, walk north, then under the highway, and then turn left immediately after. Either way, it is only about a quarter-mile walk to the exhibit. Unfortunately, it is not visible from the road or a parking lot, and the trail surface is not suitable for wheelchairs. In 1933 visitors strolled across highway 101 from the visitor center to reach the exhibit. This is certainly not a safe option now!

### Humboldt Redwoods State Park

#### Park Headquarters

The current park headquarters area is located at the site of the Stephens Grove CCC camp. The one building still standing from the CCC time was adapted into a campground recreation hall, but is no longer used for this purpose. It stands next to the location marked "Garage" in the 1935 plat, so must have been moved from a different part of the camp, or constructed later than 1935. The rest of the camp was demolished by 1948, when new headquarters buildings were constructed.

#### Visitor Center

The Visitor Center at the Burlington Park Headquarters predates the CCC. They improved the existing building, which at that time was called the museum. Inside, there is now a display with many photos of the Humboldt Redwoods CCC camps and enrollees, and an exhibit on Eel River floods.

#### Burlington Campground

The CCC constructed the original Burlington campground. It has had to be rebuilt several times since. When CCC company 925 moved in to their new camp next door in 1935, the young men liked to visit this campground in the evening. Why? There were on the lookout for young women to visit with.

#### Dyerville Overlook

The Dyerville Overlook is built on the site of Camp Burlington-Humboldt. (As you drive north from park headquarters to the overlook, you will pass through what is left of Weott, where the boys at Camp Stephens Grove would go to the movies and flirt with the town girls. Much of Weott was destroyed in later floods.) Dyerville is gone (see right sidebar), but the river confluence and the flat above it are still recognizable from old photographs. You can see an impressive view of the confluence from the overlook. Among the panels and display boards here is another CCC display, focusing on the Dyerville camp.



### On the Trail of the CCC

#### Hike the Stephens Grove Loop Trail


**Start:** Ave. of the Giants mile marker 7.0. 9.5 miles south of park headquarters. Just north of the town of Miranda.

**Length:** 0.7 miles.

**Difficulty:** Easy

This loop trail goes through Stephens Grove, one of the first groves protected and one of the first campgrounds in the park. The CCC added 50 campsites plus primitive bathroom facilities to the few sites built in the 1920s. By the early 1950s there were 60 campsites, modern "comfort stations," and a campfire center, plus enough picnic sites to accommodate 15 to 20 small groups. The floods of 1955 and 1964 buried everything they didn't destroy under layers of silt. Look for traces of the old roadways and picnic tables.

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