

C O P Y

SIERRA CLUB
1050 Mills Tower
San Francisco

August 24, 1935.

Hon. Russ Avery,
315 S. Broadway,
Los Angeles, California.

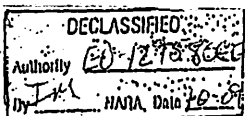
My dear Judge Avery:

Your plan is a splendid one if it can be carried out. It would be far better to preserve and dedicate a grove not now preserved. That would really mean something. There is a grove admirably adapted to this purpose, which John Muir was most anxious to see preserved and which is the largest fine grove still in private ownership. That is the grove in the vicinity of Redwood Mountain, halfway between Giant Forest and General Grant National Park, on the new Generals Highway. It should be preserved at all costs. Phil Bernays can tell you all about this since he knows the owners. I am sending copy of your letter to Newton Drury of the Save-the-Redwood League and also to Dr. John C. Merriam, and of course if such a movement can be started the Sierra Club will unquestionably get behind it.

With personal regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) WM. E. COLBY



C C P Y

RUSS AVERY
Attorney at Law
604 Homer Laughlin Building
315 South Broadway
Los Angeles
Vandike 6137

August
Twenty-eight
1 9 3 5

His Excellency, Franklin D. Roosevelt,
President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.

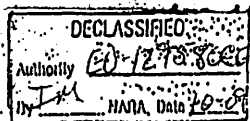
Dear Mr. President:

I wrote you on August 21 with reference to acquiring and dedicating a grove of Sequoia Gigantea as a living memorial to Will Rogers. I sent a copy of the letter to Mr. Colby, who is, and has been for many years, the very efficient and able Secretary of the Sierra Club. I am enclosing his letter to me in reply to the same.

About thirty years ago, I camped overnight in this grove of Sequoia Gigantea on the side of Redwood Mountain to which Mr. Colby refers. The grove impressed me very favorably at the time, and particularly, with reference to its situation on the side of a mountain with a fine outlook. The location is a good one. I shall follow up the suggestion made by Mr. Colby and endeavor to learn who is the owner of the grove and what price he is asking for the same. Should I receive further definite information, I shall take the liberty of forwarding it to you.

My information is that the Redwood grove referred to comprises about four thousand acres of Redwood and of Conifers, and that there is one Redwood in that forest which is larger than the General Sherman of the Sequoia National Park. The General Sherman has, at different times, been estimated to be, at least, six thousand years old.

My understanding is that the owners of the grove at Redwood mountain had possession of it for approximately forty years, and that they have recently been offered a substantial price from some lumber companies with a view of cutting the timber for lumber. The recent depression caused them very great financial embarrassment, I am told, and they may soon be compelled to accept an offer, which will result in the destruction of the grove. I am confident, if they have owned the property all these years and paid taxes thereon, that they would do everything within their power to make a satisfactory price on the same so that the Government might and turn it in a national park. I am expecting detailed information as to this matter within the next day or two.



Mr. President

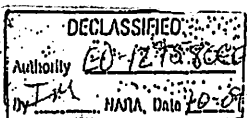
My interest in this matter grows out of my deep love for the Redwood trees. They always appealed to me in a peculiar manner. I feel confident that the public generally share the same love and veneration for these ancient living memorials that I have. Consequently, if that grove can be preserved and made a national park or national monument for the benefit of all posterity, it is a desirable thing to do. It seems to me that nothing could be more fitting as a memorial to Will Rogers than to dedicate to him just such a grove.

I sincerely hope that such a plan will appeal to you and that you may consider the matter of sufficient importance to embody a reference to it in a future message to the Congress of the United States.

Very respectfully yours,

(sgd) Russ Avery

RA-n



C O P Y

STANDARD FORM NO. 14A
APPROVED BY THE PRESIDENT
MARCH 10, 1926

TELEGRAM

OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 6-7134

DAY

FROM INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

BUREAU National Park Service

CHG. APPROPRIATION General Expense

Washington, D. C. September 12, 1935.

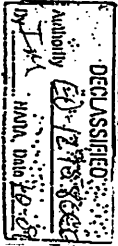
Secretary Ickes Care President Roosevelt Hyde Park New York

Proponents Will Rogers Memorail apparently very active Stop Los Angeles attorney in letter to President referred to you proposes purchase of four thousand acre tract of sequoias on Redwood Mountain California as addition Sequoia National Park for this purpose Stop This finest remaining stand of sequoias not now included in any park and is equal of any Stop Approximate cost one million dollars Stop Will Rogers like sequoias is associated with native ruggedness and individualism distinctly American and there is also happy coincidence in the naming of this tree for Sequoyah Chief of the Cherokees which blood also flowed in Will Rogers veins Stop Recommend President be asked to endorse this project comma That committee of Rogers friends sponsor campaign for solicitation of contributions from people of nation and that funds thus secured be deposited in new National Parks Trust Fund Stop Before plan is publicized option on tract must be secured.

A. E. Denaray
Acting Director.



September Twenty-seventh,
1935.



Mr. A. E. Demaray,
Acting Director,
National Park Service,
U. S. Department of the Interior,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:-

This is to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of
Sept. 21st, in the matter of the creation of a living memorial
to Will Rogers.

I very greatly appreciate the kindly and sincere interest
you are taking in this matter and your thorough comprehension of
the purpose I had in mind, also your valuable suggestions as to
methods of accomplishing the desired objective. I have already
contacted some of the members of the General Committee, and have
had very pleasing expressions from them.

If your Service has any recent photographs of trees in
the Redwood Mountains Grove, or any detailed information concerning
the grove, I would like to lay such information before some of the
members of the Committee.

Again thanking you, and hoping that this beautiful grove
of trees may be preserved as a part of the National Park System,
with due tribute to Will Rogers in the matter, I remain,

Very sincerely yours,

(Sgd) Russ Avery

RA/W

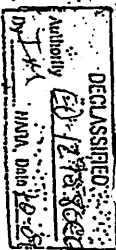
September 16, 1935.

Memorandum for Acting Director Demaray:

Before asking the President to endorse this suggestion we ought to know just what he would be committing himself to. As I have told you, I would not favor naming the national park after Will Rogers. I think you had better feel out these people first.

(SIGNED) H. L. I.
Secretary.

Enc.) Telegram from Acting Director Demaray, re purchase of
) 4,000 acre tract of Sequoias on Redwood Mountain, Cali-
) fornia as addition to Sequoia National Park, etc.



Mr. Russ Avery,
604 Homer Laughlin Building,
Los Angeles, California.

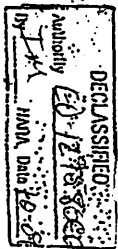
My dear Mr. Avery:

We have for consideration by reference from the President to the Secretary of the Interior your letter of August 28, in which you propose the acquisition of the Redwood Mountain Sequoia grove in California as a memorial to Will Rogers.

A memorial of this character for Will Rogers might be exactly appropriate, since he, like the Sequoia, typifies the individualism and native ruggedness which are so distinctive of America. Also the big tree was named for Sequoyah, chief of the Cherokee, and the blood of this tribe flowed in the veins of Will Rogers as well. Moreover, for Will Rogers' memorial to take the form of a constructive act of conservation would seem far more fitting and appropriate to his character and ideals than the erection of some monument which in itself would be functionless.

However, the ~~primary~~ reason for the inclusion of any area in the national parks system must be found in its own inherent superlative quality. Only in this way can the standards of our national parks be preserved, and this is the foundation upon which the national parks system is built. If a park were to bear the name of an individual, its fitness for national park status would by inference be a secondary and not a primary consideration. As it is, Congress is flooded with demands for the establishment of additional parks, by far the majority of these proposals involving areas unsuitable for the purpose. Many of these proposals are based upon the proposition that someone's name be given a memorial.

The Redwood Mountain grove has long been considered for addition to Sequoia National Park, and we feel that its early acquisition would be most desirable. Though the tract is not known to contain any living tree of greater size than the General Sherman, it does contain the finest grove not now included within a park and one that is equal of any that have been so preserved. The statement has been made that the Redwood Mountain grove is the largest pure, or nearly pure, stand of Sequoia gigantea in existence.



isting.

While the Service and the Department would be opposed to giving Will Rogers' name to the park, a plaque could be placed in the grove stating that its preservation for the benefit of the nation came about through the will of the American people to perpetuate the name of their loved fellow citizen.

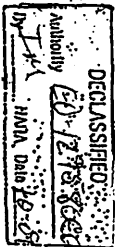
A plan of this nature would receive the support of the National Park Service and we would be glad to recommend it to the Secretary of the Interior. With his approval, it is even possible that the newly created National Parks Trust Fund could be used as the repository for the memorial subscription funds. This would set the seal of Government approval, though the campaign, of course, would have to be conducted by the committee of Mr. Rogers' friends. We have not communicated with that committee.

Your sincere interest in the conservation of the "big tree" is appreciated by this Service.

It is noted that Mr. William Colby stated that the Sierra Club is in accord with your proposal. We are sending copies of this letter to Mr. Colby, Mr. Newton Drury, Dr. John C. Merriam, and Mr. Charles Townsend.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) A. E. Demaray,
Acting Director.



COPY

September 28, 1914.

MEMORANDUM REGARDING THE CHARACTER OF
THE MURPHY-McRAE REDWOOD HOLDING

Ownership - Area - Location:

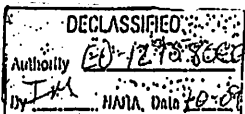
The acquisition of the property in question was commenced by John McRae, then a Michigan lumberman, in the year 1888. Later, Isaac B. Murphy, of 1342 St. Andrews Place, Los Angeles, purchased a one-half interest which he still holds. Upon the death of the elder McRae, his interest descended to his heirs, Donald C. McRae of 519 Foxcroft Building, San Francisco, and Hector M. J. McRae, a lumberman of Ewen, Michigan.

The holding is known locally as the Murphy-McRae tract, or the Redwood Canyon Forest. It is listed under the latter name in the "Table of Big Tree Groves and Forests", on Page 143 of W. L. Jepson's "Silva of California" and on Jepson's map on Page 458 of the same book. It consists of about 2,680 acres of land on Redwood Creek, containing Big Tree timber, described by legal subdivisions below and on the attached map, and about 1440 acres of pine land on Eshon and Pierce Creeks a few miles southwest of the Big Tree area.

Legal Subdivisions and Topography:

All in Township 14 South, Range 28 East, M. D. E. & M.:

In Section 10 -	SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$,	30 Acres
In Section 13 -	S $\frac{1}{2}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$,	30 Acres
In Section 14 -	W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$,	400 Acres



In Section 15 - SE $\frac{1}{4}$,
 SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$,
 E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$,
 W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$,
 SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$, 400 Acres

In Section 22 - NE $\frac{1}{4}$,
 E $\frac{1}{2}$ of NW $\frac{1}{4}$,
 N $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$,
 NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SE $\frac{1}{4}$, 360 Acres

In Section 23 - Entire Section 640 Acres

In Section 24 - W $\frac{1}{2}$,
 N $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$, 400 Acres

In Section 26 - NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$,
 W $\frac{1}{2}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$,
 NW $\frac{1}{4}$,
 NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$, 320 Acres

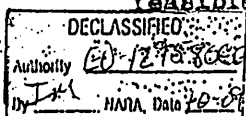
containing a total of 2680 Acres, situated in the Sequoia National Forest, in Tulare County, California.

Topographically, this redwood holding is a perfect little isolated unit. It is bounded on the north by the divide between Ten Mile Creek, a tributary of Kings River, and Redwood Creek, a tributary of the North Fork of the Kaweah River, on the east by a high divide between Redwood Creek and Stony Creek, and on the west by the high divide between Redwood Creek and Pierce and Fshom Creeks.

For a half mile on either side of the Creek the slopes are gentle; higher up they become very steep and irregular with occasional benches and draws. In places the slopes are steep enough to make logging difficult. Areas covered with large granite boulders were frequently noted on the higher slopes and these taken together with the steep slopes, would result in a large amount of breakage in connection with the felling of the brittle redwood and more than average wear on cables.

Accessibility:

At present the tract is very inaccessible from an operating standpoint, Lemon Cove or Goodlake on the Visalia Electric Line about 25 miles southwest and Cutler on the A. T. & S. F. R.R., about 30 miles west, are the nearest railroad points. Probably the most feasible route for a railroad to follow would be up the Kaweah



River from Lemon Cove to Three Rivers and from there up the North Fork of the Kaweah and Redwood Creek. I don't know much about the feasibility of such a road for the last 12 miles from Cactus Creek north, but judge from what I hear and from looking at the U. S. G. S. sheet that a railroad could be put through, although it would be expensive in spots. Below Cactus Creek there should be less difficulty.

By vehicle the tract is now accessible from the San Joaquin Valley by roads up Dry Creek from Lemon Cove or up Rattlesnake Creek from Outler, Grosi and vicinity. These are average mountain roads as far as Badger. From there up the grade is heavy nearly all the way and only a few makes of motor cars negotiate it without trouble. These roads have been used a great deal in the past by campers going into Hume and the Kings River country. Ranger Redstone tells me that he thinks about 2000 campers pass his station in the Section 21, just west of the redwood tract, each year. Of this number he believes that not over 200 diverge down the old road through Redwood Canyon to see the Big Trees.

At the present time the State is constructing an excellent automobile road up Sand Creek from Dinuba on the A. T. & S. F. R.R. This road which will lead to the General Grant National Park, Hume and the Kings River country, will pass three miles northwest of Redwood Canyon and will divert a large amount of traffic from the old Hume road which passes through the north end of the tract.

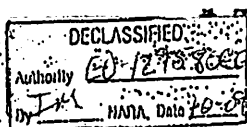
Character and Condition of Forest:

Leaving the Big Trees out of consideration, the forest on this tract resembles closely the type of mixed forest found throughout the western slope of the Sierras at similar elevations (5500 - 7000) except that the per cent of white fir in mixture is above normal and the yellow and sugar pine timber is hardly of average quality. From my casual inspection, I should judge that the stand (not considering the Big Trees) was made up of 55% white fir and incense cedar, 25% sugar pine and 20% yellow pine. A sample acre taken in the Fir type on the east side of the canyon in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sec. 21, T. 14 S., R. 28 E. showed the following result:

White fir	-	37,550	ft.	B.M.	
Sugar pine	-	1,310	ft.	B.M.	
Yellow pine	-	680	"	"	"
*Big Tree	-	250,000	"	"	" (approximately)
		289,540	ft.	B.M.	

The stand of Big Tree timber will probably average about 100 M feet per acre as against a stand of about 35 M feet per acre for all other species. On the basis of this very rough estimate

Big Trees were found on this acre with an average diameter of 10 feet and height of 200 feet.



the tract of 2630 acres contains about 300 million feet of Redwood and 100 million feet of other species. I estimate that there are about 7000 redwood trees on the area over 24 inches in diameter B.H.

The reproduction of fir on the area is particularly good. Very little redwood reproduction was noticed. A few openings contained small groups of young redwoods.

The forest is in fairly thrifty condition, except for the white fir which is suffering severely from the effect of top mistle-toe.

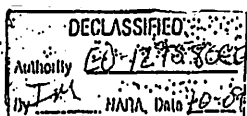
The results of serious fires are not as much in evidence on this area as on the average tract in the Sierras. Many of the giant Sequoias show bad burns, but even their condition is better in this respect than that of a number of other redwood forests I have inspected.

The unique feature of this redwood holding is that the Big Trees occur all over it. Generally they are grouped in a few localities, but here I found them abundant everywhere throughout the tract, except in the N $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 14, which is very rocky and sparsely timbered. Even there an occasional tree is to be seen. Aside from this section, I doubt if a five-acre tract could be found in the whole area without a Big Tree on it. Along the bottom of the canyon, along the branch streams, and in moist spots, the occurrence is generally in groups of from 5 to 30 trees. On the steeper and drier slopes single trees are more frequently found.

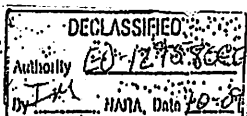
Although the entire area is high in scenic value, the East Fork of Redwood Creek is particularly beautiful because of the large, imposing groups of Big Trees of frequent occurrence along the stream and the beautiful little waterfalls found where the creek trickles over huge, polished granite outcroppings.

BIG TREE AREAS IN CALIFORNIA
(Includes General Grant and Sequoia National Parks
and Mariposa Grove)

	<u>Private</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Total</u>
	Acres	Acres	Acres
Tahoe -	0	160	160
Stanislaus -			
Calaveras North Grove	320	0	320
Calaveras South Grove	80	0	80



	<u>Private</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Total</u>
Sierra -			
Fresno Grove	120	580	700
Mariposa Grove	0	125	125
McKinley (Dirkey) Grove	0	20	20
Sequoia -			
Area #1	468	576	1,044
" #1A	68	106	174
" #2	698	0	698
" #3	0	69	69
" #4	0	139	139
" #5	1,163	23	1,186
" #6	0	69	69
" #7	0	54	54
" #8	35	0	35
" #9	70	110	180
" #10	53	16	69
" #11	36	149	185
" #12	55	0	55
" #13	0	326	326
" #14	0	185	185
" #15	2,451	1,224	3,675
" #16	0	55	55
" #17	0	65	65
" #18	0	1,017	1,017
" #19	0	145	145
" #20	0	325	325
" #21	820	2,550	3,370
" #22	40	250	290
" #23	133	30	163
" #24	0	95	95
" #25	303	359	662
" #26	0	87	87
" #27	0	815	815
" #28	0	93	93
" #29	201	0	201
" #30	0	100	100
" #31	610	42	652
" #32	116	0	116
" #33	30	273	303
" #34	0	240	240
" #35	0	65	65
" #36	1,258	233	1,491
" #37	512	24	536
" #38	46	24	70
" #39	0	326	326
" #40	82	0	82
" #41	0	45	45
" #42	0	13	13
Grand Totals	9,768	11,202	20,970



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

October 11, 1935.

Mr. Russ Avery,
604 Homer Laughlin Building,
315 South Broadway,
Los Angeles, California.

Dear Mr. Avery:

I am pleased to have your letter of September 27 reporting that some of the members of the General Committee have responded favorably to the projected purchase of the Redwood Mountain Grove for addition to Sequoia National Park as a memorial to Will Rogers.

Further consideration of such a plan has only served to increase our own enthusiasm.

I regret that this Service does not possess recent photographs of the Redwood Mountain Grove. I have asked Superintendent John R. White of Sequoia National Park to secure some if possible, and to forward them to you direct.

There is enclosed herewith copy of a memorandum prepared some years ago, which, although it is far from recent, does give some of the essential data on the Redwood Mountain area. It is suggested that by contacting Superintendent White directly it may be possible to secure additional and more up-to-date descriptive material on this area.

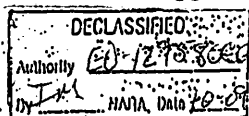
You may count upon this Service for the fullest cooperation within our powers toward the successful outcome of this project.

Sincerely yours,

A. E. Demaray,
Acting Director.

Enclosure 234344

cc - Wildlife Division, Washington
cc - Wildlife Division, San Francisco
Superintendent White, Sequoia
Mr. Wirth



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON

October 11, 1935.

Colonel John R. White,
Superintendent,
Sequoia National Park,
California.

Dear Colonel White:

I am enclosing herewith for your information copies of correspondence to date on the proposal which has been made by Mr. Russ Avery of Los Angeles, that the Redwood Mountain Grove should be added to Sequoia National Park as a memorial to Will Rogers. You will, of course, understand that this material and the plan itself is to be regarded as strictly confidential until such time as it may be feasible to give appropriate publicity to the project.

You will note that in a letter which I am addressing to Mr. Avery today, copy of which is being sent to you, I have suggested that he secure from you directly if possible the descriptive material and photographs of the Redwood Mountain area which he desires. It is of course in the interest of the Service to cooperate with Mr. Avery to the fullest extent possible, and I know that you will give him whatever help you can in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD.) A. E. DEMARAY

A. E. Demaray,
Acting Director.

Enclosure 234345

cc - Wildlife Division, Washington ✓
cc - Wildlife Division, San Francisco
cc - Mr. [unclear]
bn



*Please file
Jum*

~~Mr. Demaray~~

~~Mr. Thompson~~ *BKJ*

Return to Mr. Wright

Campaign Set For Memorial To Will Rogers

Rickenbacker Announces Drive for Funds Will Open Nov. 4.

A date was set yesterday for the campaign which will raise funds for memorials to Will Rogers, humorist and screen star killed in an airplane crash in Alaska last August.

The campaign, Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, World War flying ace and air-line executive, announced, will run from November 4 to 27. Rickenbacker heads a national committee named by Vice President Garner, merging the score of organizations formed locally for the same purpose at the time of Rogers' death.

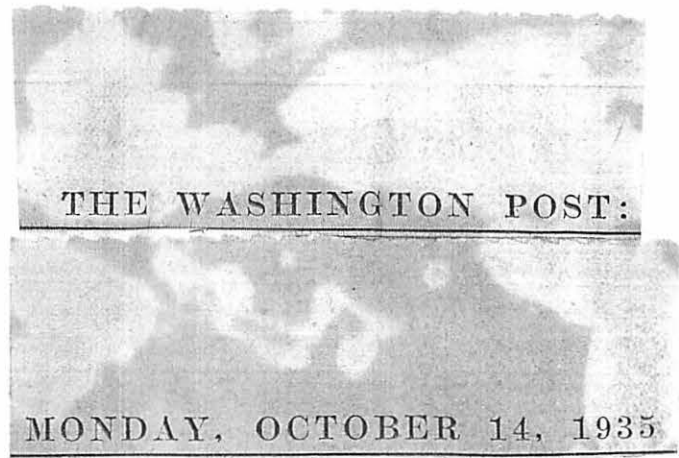
"The commission will sponsor no cold shaft of marble for this warm, friendly man," Rickenbacker said. "Rather there will be living, continuing memorials projected to honor the charitable, educational, and humanitarian traits which were so beloved in Will Rogers, the living man."

No actual money goal has been fixed. As much as comes in contributions will be collected by banks, trust companies, and newspapers, to be designated locally.

Then, when the totals are counted, the committee will decide the number and the forms of memorials, aided by public suggestions.

On the committee are Dr. J. C. Bushyhead, Amon G. Carter, Harry Chandler, James M. Cox, Charles Curtis, John W. Davis, Charles G. Dawes, Herbert Fleishacker, Henry Ford, John N. Garner, Will Hays, Herbert Hoover, Patrick J. Hurley, Jesse H. Jones, Mrs. Roberta Campbell Lawson, E. W. Marland, Frank F. Merriam, Alfred E. Smith, Fred Stone, George Young and Owen D. Young.

Jones, Reconstruction Finance Corporation chairman, is treasurer.



DECLASSIFIED
Authority: *EO 12812*
By: *JM* NAVA, Date: *10-01*