

richardson **GROVE** OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT

- US Route 101 through Richardson Grove was constructed in 1915 and is a narrow, two-lane road with large old growth redwood trees adjacent to the traveled way.
- Posted Speed is **35 MPH** and would not change due to this project.
- Industry standard-sized trucks conforming to the Federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) are currently prohibited from traveling on Route 101 north of Leggett and south of Benbow due to the restriction at Richardson Grove.
- The currently allowed CA-Legal truck has a length limit of 65 feet or up to 75 feet if pulling a double trailer.
- The typical STAA vehicle is a 25-foot truck towing a 53-foot trailer for a total length of 78 feet.
- STAA trucks have the same weight restrictions as CA-Legal trucks, 80,000 pounds.
- This project proposes minor realignment and minor widening to remove the restrictions on STAA trucks. The scale of the project is small. Along more than a mile in length, only 0.67 acre of soil would be disturbed, including 0.23 of new impervious surface. Other project features:
 - A below-the-road retaining wall would be installed north of Richardson Grove State Park.
 - Guardrail would be upgraded to current safety standards at the Durphy Creek Undercrossing.
 - Minor improvements to drainage would also be constructed, benefiting water quality.



US Route 101 in southern Humboldt County from post mile 1.1 to post mile 2.2

NO OLD GROWTH REDWOOD TREES WOULD BE REMOVED OR IMPAIRED BY THIS PROJECT

- Over the 1.1-mile length of the project, 38 trees are proposed for removal, 21 of which are in the park. In Richardson Grove State Park, two small redwoods would be removed (4-8 inches in diameter at breast height).
- Nearly all of the trees to be removed are on existing cut slopes. This means they have grown since the original road construction in 1915 – no old growth specimens of any species would be removed.
- A certified arborist has determined, “The limited root disturbance would be inconsequential to the appearance, stability, and continued health of the old-growth redwoods in Richardson Grove.”
- Caltrans has included many protective measures into the project, such as using a handheld pneumatic excavator and other hand tools instead of heavy machinery to excavate around tree roots and keep roots intact where feasible. An independent arborist will monitor all ground disturbing activity during Project construction.
- In addition, based on public comment, Caltrans reduced the original project footprint. Project design changes include a reduction in the depth of excavation for new road sections from 18 to 24 inches throughout the project limits to a maximum depth of 12 inches within Richardson Grove State Park. For context, the existing pavement in the park is up to 30 inches deep.
- Amounts of disturbed soil and fill required for the realignment were reduced by eliminating proposed 2-foot shoulders where not essential for the project’s purpose and need.
- After construction, the highway would look much the same. The road would not be straightened but would become slightly curvier.
- No old growth redwood trees would be removed or impaired by this project.

Project website:

dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-1/d1-projects/d1-richardson-grove-improvement-project

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