

"No Better Heritage Than Living Trees": Women's Clubs and Early Conservation in Humboldt County

Cameron Binkley

This article examines the role of organized women's civic groups that fought to protect redwoods in Humboldt County, California, during the first decades of the twentieth century. By articulating a gendered view of nature, women's club leaders mobilized women's efforts, broadened women's public influence, and greatly expanded both the reach and the impact of the early conservation movement.

In a grove of giant trees in California's Humboldt Redwoods State Park stands a curious four-sided fireplace built of native stone and redwood timber. The fireplace, the Federation Hearthstone, is a monument designed by famed architect Julia Morgan to commemorate the preservation of the surrounding forest, which was purchased in 1931 with funds raised by various women's civic associations participating in the California Federation of Women's Clubs (CFWC).¹ Women's clubs in Humboldt County convinced the CFWC to purchase the grove in 1923 after women from around the state had campaigned for more than two decades to save redwoods threatened by logging. 1

Like the trees towering above it, the hearthstone dwarfs human figures. Yet, it does not compete with the redwoods for the eye's attention. Indeed, the Arts-and-Crafts style landmark barely detracts from its surroundings. As Morgan's biographer wrote, the design symbolized "the untouched nature of the forest and the federation's scrupulous protection of this heritage."² Of course, a hearthstone is also an emblem of domesticity and represents those who keep the home fires burning. Women who joined early civic clubs actively promoted this ideal of "female" behavior even as they used the same notion to expand feminine influence beyond the home. The hearthstone is thus a gendered artifact, an object that symbolized how women's approach to nature and civic life was different from the approach of men. The hearthstone evocatively expressed the belief that saving trees was a major part of club activity, or, what a wide spectrum of middle-class American women once proudly called "woman's work." 2

In the early twentieth century, when women were largely excluded from business and politics, their civic clubs fostered influence through an indirect strategy that downplayed women's role in areas that threatened masculine prerogative. Abiding by one of the era's major social conventions, club ideology paired women with the private sphere of home, while associating men with the public sphere of commerce and government. This disposition may have helped middle-class men retain a sense of masculinity as industrialization forced them from farms and small shops and into massive factories and offices where they were no longer independent entrepreneurs and where a distinct separation between home and work resulted. Deferential rhetoric also encouraged male sympathy for women's concerns and their growing presence in public affairs long after women were no longer strictly homebound. Reforms relating to women and children, civic improvement, and moral propriety fit well with women's club ethics, and members took to such reforms with gusto. Moreover, domesticity prompted women to cultivate skills in art, music, literature, and even amateur botany (to better appreciate song birds and to cultivate 3

home gardens), so, club women were ideologically predisposed to promote municipal beautification, wildlife protection, and nature preservation.³ Especially in the West, club women capitalized upon concern for the environment to advance broader public agendas, including both "municipal housekeeping" and progressive political reform.

This article examines the case of male and female conservationists who fought to save redwoods in Humboldt County, California, during the first decades of the twentieth century. By articulating a gendered view of conservation, women's club leaders encouraged women's interest in nature, helped organize followers for collective action, and eased male anxiety over women's movement into political and economic areas formerly the exclusive domain of men. Simply put, women's clubs used conservation to expand the public and political influence of women. In turn, women's interest in nature became a mainstay of early environmentalism that greatly expanded both the reach and the impact of the conservation movement. 4

One women's club to become involved in conservation was the Monday Club located in Eureka, a town on Humboldt Bay in Northern California. Early in 1902, a delegation from this club boarded a steamship bound for San Francisco. The women were embarking upon a 300-mile-long trip to attend the first convention of the CFWC as organized by its founder and first president, Los Angeles club leader Clara Bradley Burdette. The Monday Club was an association of twenty-four housewives formally organized in February 1901 and federated with the CFWC that same year. It was the first of several progressive women's clubs to emerge in Humboldt County at the turn of the century.⁴ 5

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Clara Bradley Burdette (ca. 1900). Founder of the California Federation of Women's Clubs. Courtesy Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

The CFWC summoned ninety-five clubs from all over California to the conference. Monday Club women had to travel by sea because no convenient land-based route then existed. Indeed, poor communication, geographic scope, and the lingering of frontier conditions in remote areas had forestalled efforts to federate women's clubs statewide. One of Clara Burdette's main insights was "to promote measures which all can endorse." After gaining the presidency of the prestigious Ebell Club of Los Angeles, Burdette toured the state, sounding out issues that would appeal to women from San Diego to Eureka. She learned that the California Club, one of the most influential clubs in San Francisco, had a nascent interest in forestry, as conservation was then known. She made note of major conservation efforts by club women in Colorado and New Jersey.⁵ She understood that a call to preserve the redwoods was likely to strike a sharp chord with women in California, might help to galvanize support for the new federation among those just beginning to think about the issue, and was unlikely to offend most women or their husbands who remained disinterested. 6

Almost every Monday Club member was a housewife married to a man successful in Eureka business, politics, 7
or the professions. Like club women elsewhere, Monday Club women easily identified with Burdette, a matronly
forty-one-year-old mother of one. Burdette firmly upheld the principle that a woman's greatest reward was "to be
known as the wife of a tender, loyal and devoted husband," and that there was no "higher duty . . . than to rear her
sons and daughters in the ideal of good citizenship." By traveling to San Francisco to attend the CFWC conference,
Monday Club members also confirmed their acceptance of Burdette's other key dictate—that "home must always
be the center, but not the limit, of woman's life." Finally, they subscribed to the values that defined Burdette's
presidency. The first of these values was enthusiasm for federation, which multiplied women's influence and
stimulated their development by "contact with clubs of higher purpose and broader work." Second was the belief in
public education. Burdette called for active programs to improve children's lives, especially in public schools.
Finally, Burdette believed in conservation. Specifically, she made a special and particularly eloquent appeal for
women to preserve California's redwoods.⁶

Before the convention and in other addresses, Burdette condemned "men whose souls are gang-saws" for 8
turning "our world-famous Sequoias into planks and fencing worth so many dollars." She reasoned that the
redwoods were useful not only for "their matchless grandeur," but because "under their shadows live the springs of
water that give vitality to the time and glory to the harvest—life to ourselves and little ones—wealth to the State."
Forests mattered to Burdette because they were "the great natural reservoirs of the water supply that have made
possible our homes, our health and our prosperity."⁷ Burdette and her officers urged individual clubs to engage
forestry "under wise central direction" by learning and teaching about trees, inspiring forest legislation, and
facilitating or initiating efforts to plant and care for trees in parks, along roads, and in other places. Indeed, the first
page of the first issue of the *CFWC Yearbook* solicited each club to report on its forestry work to the CFWC's
forestry committee. For decades thereafter conservation was a staple of CFWC literature.⁸

In the wake of Burdette's crusade, several major CFWC-affiliated women's clubs included forestry on their 9
agendas. The San Jose Women's Club, for example, joined with a group of men to stop "criminally extravagant"
logging in what was to become Big Basin State Park in the Santa Cruz mountains.⁹ Another example of women's
involvement in conservation is provided by the California Club of San Francisco, whose efforts brought the
redwoods issue to Congress when a lumberman endangered the state's famed Calaveras Big Trees. The California
Club also started a drive to protect a stand of threatened redwoods in Marin County "in which sentiment and love
of nature should have a practical battle with rough commercialism."¹⁰ The Marin effort concluded when the
maverick politician William Kent interceded, purchased the trees, and donated them to the federal government as
Muir Woods National Monument. The club championed such behavior with self-deprecating remarks, such as
those that its founder Laura White once made: "The great problems of the world are so bewildering, the theories of
great men are so puzzling. . . . I'd much rather confine myself to making the world more beautiful. The creation of
a park or playground does as much good to the world as the study of a difficult problem."¹¹

Through the efforts of influential CFWC leaders, several major women's clubs in California expressed 10
opposition to unrestricted logging that despoiled natural beauty, community life, and a broader economic well-
being. Club leaders deployed the rhetoric and forms of domesticity to finesse these efforts, which were
nevertheless intended to obstruct a legal commercial enterprise. Despite compelling justification, such activity was
fraught with potential controversy and social hazard. Did Monday Club women endorse these initial efforts by the
state federation to promote forest preservation? The question is difficult to answer because the earliest Monday
Club records have perished. Available accounts give no indication of club interest in saving redwoods until later in
the Progressive Era.

What is certain, however, is that the women's club movement developed its environmental attitude within a 11
cultural setting where views emphasizing nature protection were gaining increased legitimacy. With the passing of
frontier life, more Americans resided in urban areas, and arguments touting the benefits of the vanishing
wilderness became more common. Frederick Jackson Turner made the case in 1893 when he linked pioneer values
to the vibrancy of American democracy. The loss of wild areas also spurred the thinking of those concerned with
resource issues, especially in the field of forestry, where the benefits of watershed management were understood.

Indeed, the term "conservation" was first applied at the end of the nineteenth century by scientists and bureaucrats who had abandoned traditional convictions about the nation's "boundless" natural resources. Many reformers now argued that ubiquitous settlement intensified competition for resources, slowed growth, and allowed those with concentrations of wealth to gain unfair use of public lands. Management was essential if the needs of the many were to take precedence over the special interests of the few. Proponents of conservation hoped to further modernization through planning for efficiency in the disposition of the country's natural resources. The idea gained wider currency through the activism of prominent men, notably Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot. Pinchot rose to fame under President Theodore Roosevelt, an avid backer of his views.¹² 12

In practice, conservation was about water. This was especially true in the semi-arid West where the only water came from mountain watersheds as snow or along the coast as winter rain. The water tended to run off quickly in the spring, often causing floods, and then dried up completely in summer. One way to conserve water was to protect forests from logging practices that denuded the landscape of flora whose root systems hold soil in place and moisture in the ground. If too many trees were cut, farmers downstream faced silted irrigation ditches and lower flows of water. The feared results were thirst and hunger. Club women, especially those in heavily logged areas, could easily grasp the message of how homes and communities were jeopardized by careless logging. Burdette herself reached this understanding while living beneath the shadow of the San Gabriel Mountains. By 1904, poor treatment of this watershed by loggers and sheep ranchers had reduced the area's water flows by over fifty percent.¹³ 13 As a growth-promotion philosophy, conservation was economically driven and highly utilitarian; it was intended to promote the masculine domain of commerce, but its elements resonated well with domesticity.

Besides their concerns about water, club women's affinity for literature also may account for the Monday Club's interest in redwoods. Many women's clubs began as literary associations, and at least two such societies existed in Eureka in the 1890s.¹⁴ 14 Moreover, several club members had attended college where the curriculum for women usually concentrated on literature. Thus, even a passing interest in American letters would have exposed these members to the likes of Henry David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John Muir, all of whom emphasized the aesthetic and spiritual appreciation of nature. Muir had special appeal as a home-grown enthusiast of wild California. When he wrote about "[t]housands of tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people" discovering "that going to the mountains is going home; that wildness is a necessity; and that mountain parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life," his views appealed as much to club women as did those of the Pinchot-style conservationists.¹⁵ 15 Other influences on women's groups' conservationist leanings likely included John James Audubon, the nineteenth-century popularizer of song birds. His Audubon Society was dedicated to protecting these creatures largely for aesthetic reasons and attracted many women admirers. Finally, several early female nature writers, such as Susan Fenimore Cooper, who often read domestic themes into their work, may also have influenced club women's interest in nature.

With the conclusion of the 1902 CFWC convention, the delegates of the Monday Club reboarded their steamer for the trip back to Eureka where they briefed their club mates on the proceedings of the gathering's complex, occasionally controversial, social issues. These issues included education, civil service reform, property rights for women (to protect wives against abusive husbands), ending the "evil of child labor," and, of course, forestry. Ultimately, the forestry issue proved troublesome, and the club set it aside while members focused their concerns elsewhere. 15

Why did the Monday Club fail to support the cause of forestry even as bay area women's clubs championed redwoods preservation? CFWC literature waxed tirelessly upon conservation themes, and major national figures extolled the virtues of nature and the better management of natural resources. In fact, an oral tradition within the Monday Club suggests that some members were indeed interested in saving redwoods, but could not overcome the wider group's reluctance during the first years.¹⁶ 16

There are several reasons for the group's hesitation. The first of these was simply that about one-third of Monday Club members belonged to families involved in the lumber industry. The mills of Eureka and nearby Arcata furnished a tremendous volume of timber cut from Humboldt County's rich stands of redwood and Douglas fir. Since the frenetic Gold-Rush years, logging had been the county's major economic activity, as it remains today. 17

Club women from families involved in logging included Mary Bell Carson, whose father-in-law was William Carson, co-owner of Dolbeer & Carson, one of the most prominent Pacific Coast lumber companies. Lumbermen were likely to fear public discussion of their trade as inimical to the industry's interests. If so, the Monday Club gave that fear due regard.

In addition, women's clubs generally avoided unnecessary controversy. They followed closely the advice of journalist "Jennie June" Croly, who founded the pioneering Sorosis Woman's Club of New York City in 1867 and the national General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) in 1890. Croly encouraged free debate except on questions related to suffrage and religion, which she felt caused discord and distracted from the work of civic reform. In this spirit, Monday Club leader Annie Zane Murray, a participant in the 1896 California equal suffrage campaign, never used club work to promote equal rights. Following Croly's edict, the Monday Club "tabooed" discussion of suffrage and summarily dismissed all inquiries regarding its formal position on the issue.¹⁷ Likewise, although the CFWC supported suffrage in 1911, it did so only after the issue was forced upon members by the wider public debate.¹⁸ The impulse to avoid the taint of "unwomanliness" was imperative in a still isolated rural area where men were less familiar with a female presence in civic affairs. Like women's groups elsewhere, those in Humboldt County chose innocuous names for their clubs, as, for example, the Monday Club, the Mother's Club, or simply the Woman's Club. Hence, while some Monday Club women were personally interested in forestry, club etiquette conspired to dissuade members from offering an early response to Burdette's call to save redwoods.

Still, if any members had profound misgivings about Burdette's priorities, they would have had no enthusiasm for joining the state federation, which was not the case. Burdette promoted other issues beyond forestry to encourage women's participation in club life. Whatever a woman's interest, she promised, women affiliated with the CFWC would learn much about "how to teach the men to be housekeepers of the state, even as she is the homekeeper."¹⁹

The earliest organized effort to save redwoods in Humboldt County is first recorded in 1905. In that year, the Humboldt Chamber of Commerce, managed by George A. Kellogg of the Pacific Redwood Shingle Company, sent a resolution to state legislators soliciting their aid to create a public redwood park "to be forever maintained in its primeval state."²⁰ The chamber was interested in promoting tourism. Although members also hoped the measure would help leverage desired transportation improvements, there is no evidence that further action was taken. Curiously, Kellogg's wife, De Ette, was a leader of the Eureka women's Wednesday Club and later campaigned enthusiastically for saving redwoods.

Meanwhile, the Humboldt County women's movement continued to gain strength. The Fortuna Monday Club was organized in 1906, followed by the Arcata Woman's Club in 1907 and the Whanika Club of Blue Lake in 1908. The Eureka Civic Club began around 1910. Eventually, each small town or hamlet in Humboldt County could boast at least one association formed by middle-class housewives with the specific intent to further women's interests or influence on a range of civic issues. Members of the first clubs gained admittance through high social standing, while clubs founded later were more broadly based. Often, the Eureka Monday Club had a hand in helping to organize women in outlying areas. Annie Murray, for example, organized the Sequoia Club of Scotia in October 1910. Located in the Pacific Lumber Company's lusterless mill town, its seven founding members chose for their club's motto: "It matters not where we live, but how."²¹

After 1900, new technologies greatly increased the tempo of logging in Humboldt County, which accelerated the general blight caused by industrialization. This situation heightened concern among reformers, some of whom noted the achievements of influential women's civic groups in places like Chicago, Denver, and San Francisco. In February 1907, editors of the *Humboldt Times* called for the creation of "a big, active, thoroughly organized women's club" that could "undertake agitation looking to the beautification of streets, the improvement of sidewalks and crossings, the boulevarding of certain thoroughfares, the adornment of school grounds so bleak and uninviting, the preservation of those natural beauty spots in and around the city that have been spared by the woodsman." The editorial argued that "the uncouth hand of man scars and gashes the beautiful face of nature in Humboldt" while "the smooth and gentle hand of woman can touch the wound and heal them."²² Without promoting female involvement in business or politics, such comments clearly expressed male approval of women's

civic action to advance the causes of beauty and nature.

Clubs took such appreciation seriously. A few of their activities during this period include the creation of children's playgrounds, support for city parks, and the beautification of towns and cemeteries by planting trees and flowers, cleaning up refuse, and regulating the use of billboards. Moreover, club women frequently organized social outings for themselves and their families amid the redwoods. On these occasions, women could combine their interests in promoting children's welfare, family life and health, and aesthetic appreciation. 23

In 1907, women in Humboldt County were unable to create a big-city style club with multiple departments and hundreds of members, as the *Humboldt Times* had suggested. However, on 18 January 1908, they were able to do the next best thing—they federated. The Monday Club of Eureka called for delegates from several women's clubs to meet at the house of Annie Murray to organize the Humboldt County Federation of Women's Clubs (HCFWC). A local federation was possible because a sufficient number of clubs had sprouted up around the county.²³ It was desirable because individual clubs found it difficult to coordinate efforts, especially with the state federation. 24

From the start, HCFWC members expressed an interest in nature by hearing a paper titled, "The Flora of California." They also asserted their civic pride by electing to draft a county history for a CFWC-sponsored book. Given male encouragement and the state federation's constant appeals on forestry, it is not surprising that the HCFWC finally combined members' interest in nature and posterity with the project of saving trees.²⁴ An opportunity to do so soon arose. 25

Early in 1908, a petition to save redwoods was signed by over two thousand children after they had studied forestry in Eureka's public schools. The origins of this movement are vague, but a committee of club women and members of the chamber of commerce lost little time in conveying the petition to the U. S. Forest Service. The petition marks the first recorded instance of Humboldt County women's involvement in saving redwoods. It also shows how gender cooperation was characteristic of even the earliest conservation efforts in the county. Appropriately, the children asked "that representative groves of these trees should be preserved for ourselves and future generations of children." Prompted to reply to the unusual document, President Theodore Roosevelt stated how "exceedingly anxious" he was "to assist in preserving representative bodies" of the sequoias.²⁵ 26

The chamber's motive for endorsing the petition in 1908 was that it had renewed its effort to promote a public redwood park. The chamber hoped that such a park would increase the number of stakeholders having an interest in backing the construction of a proposed railroad linking Eureka to San Francisco. A major park would generate tourist dollars and significantly increase the potential for passenger ticket sales. The HCFWC formally joined this drive at a meeting on 8 November 1909. Present were George Burchard and George B. Albee, son and husband, respectively, of club members. Burchard edited the *Humboldt Standard* and was involved in the chamber's work. Albee was a local teacher. Both were members of the Sons of the Golden West, which only two days earlier had hosted a visit to Eureka by Mr. W. S. Palmer, General Manager of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad. Heading the Sons of the Golden West was the Oakland-area Congressman Joseph Knowland. In the wake of Palmer's visit, Albee got Knowland to appoint him to direct the Sons of the Golden West's forestry committee.²⁶ 27

Burchard and Albee spoke to the women about creating a redwood park in Humboldt County. The Sons of the Golden West and other prominent men supported that effort, they said. Although their enthusiasm seems linked to obtaining a local rail connection, Burchard and Albee asked the women for a resolution supporting their effort "to preserve a representative forest of these trees for future generations to see in all their pristine beauty." The club adopted the resolution unanimously.²⁷ Sufficiently well-organized, with prominent local men, family members, and even Eureka's school children backing a park campaign, Humboldt County's club women officially took up redwood conservation. 28

The Sons were glad to have the women's support. The notion of attracting tourists and railroads increased the persuasiveness for creating a redwood park, but in an economy still largely based on resource extraction, it was hardly a popular idea. In 1920, F. W. Georgeson, another editor of the *Humboldt Standard*, noted that around 1910 he was involved in a "self-appointed committee" for "preserving a tract of virgin redwoods timber in the county for the benefit of future generations of men." At the time he wrote, such an opinion was rarely expressed and was even laughed at.²⁸ Nevertheless, by 1912 park backers convinced their congressman, John Raker, to sponsor a bill 29

calling for the appointment of a commission to investigate the possibility of establishing a national redwood park in Humboldt County. In support of this effort, two HCFWC members, Murray and Edith S. Albee, attended the CFWC's eleventh annual convention. Conveniently posted to its committee on resolutions, with Murray as state chair, they were instrumental in crafting many measures, including several related to conservation. As a result, the CFWC, a body of over 20,000 women in 1910, resolved to support Raker's bill.²⁹

By 1912, the HCFWC had increased its redwoods activism. Members often spoke "feelingly on the subject of the establishment of a National Redwood Forest Park." They circulated petitions throughout the county and at the 1912 state federation convention, which were forwarded to Congress.³⁰ Despite such efforts, however, Raker's redwoods legislation made no progress.³¹

On 27 September 1913, HCFWC members gathered in a threatened local tract of redwoods known as the Carson Woods to discuss "the way and means of securing a National Redwood park." Having learned that Raker's bill had been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, they quickly sent a resolution to the committee, stating, "Civilization demands that the natural wonders of the world be preserved for future generations to study and enjoy. The greatest of all natural wonders that make our country so interesting and attractive are the giant redwood trees of California, the greatest natural monuments of the Creator's handiwork." They implored Congress to protect "these wonderful natural monuments from the devastating hand of commercialism." Next, the HCFWC created a county-wide redwood park committee" that drew participants from every member club.³²

The redwood park committee had many tasks, but Laura Perott Mahan of the Eureka Civic Club had the most important one. An avid painter, Mahan was especially appreciative of the value of redwoods, but she had also recently succeeded in converting the grounds of an old convent into a children's playground. Noting her experience, the redwood park committee chose her to visit several sites to determine their acreage, price, and suitability as potential parks. Mahan later used this information in correspondence with political leaders and in essays for the local press.³³

In October 1913, park supporters in Humboldt County were encouraged when the progressive Congressman William Kent pledged \$25,000 to help establish a national redwood park.³⁴ Like Pinchot, Kent believed that forests should be scientifically managed to maximize yield. However, he also believed that limited stands should be preserved to serve the human need for outdoor recreation. His thinking on this subject was forged by political experience in Chicago where he cooperated with the women of Hull House from whom he learned the social merits of urban parks and playgrounds. Kent's efforts were not selfless, however. In 1914, due to the 1910 U. S. Census, his first congressional district was reapportioned to include Humboldt County. Thus, Kent was soon to represent the area. As with the Muir Woods donation, which he made prior to his first successful 1910 congressional bid, Kent used philanthropy to advance both his ideology and his political career.³⁵

Despite Kent's aid, however, the Humboldt County park campaign was stalling. On 18 October, Raker wrote Mahan urging a greater show of local enthusiasm. In response, she asked the CFWC for help in getting other state clubs to write and petition Congress. For its part, the chamber called a meeting together with the HCFWC park committee and the Eureka-based "Promotion Club," headed by local publicist, Leigh Irving. Mahan, having just gained the chair of the HCFWC redwood park committee, soon found herself working with a representative from each of these two other organizations on a special county-wide committee to help Raker and Kent solicit further congressional support for the bill. Park supporters even hired their own Washington lobbyist. Mahan wrote to Hester Hosford, a political expert on Woodrow Wilson, whom she had escorted on a tour of the redwoods in 1912. Hosford had been so disheartened by the logged-over lands that Mahan persuaded her to lobby Wilson on behalf of the park bill, if her expenses could be paid. Mahan and Murray took the issue to the chamber, which provided funds. Hosford saw Wilson and gained support from Pinchot's American Forestry Association, but another year of fruitless effort followed.³⁶

In November 1914, Mahan delivered her park site report. After some debate, the HCFWC backed Carson Woods as its preferred location for a national redwood park. In Congress, however, Raker and Kent were unable to move their bill out of committee. In May 1915, the clubs suspended their campaign "to wait for a more opportune

time." Funds raised for the park were set aside as the women's park committee was disbanded.³⁷ Eventually, Carson Woods were logged.

Yet, the park committee campaign's failure was not a mortal blow to Humboldt County conservationists. Automobile enthusiasts used the occasion to build support for their own pet project—better roads. When Californians voted in 1916 on the construction of a new highway running from San Diego to Crescent City, the Humboldt County Good Roads Club placed prominent ads in local newspapers. With headlines like "A Vote for the Good Roads Bonds Is a Vote for a Redwood Park!," the ads argued that the county would get no redwood park until adequate roads existed to bring tourists to that park.³⁸

The bond campaign was successful. By 1917, road builders south of Eureka were cutting the Redwood Highway through the county's finest old-growth forest at Bull Creek and Dyerville Flat along the South Fork of the Eel River. Much of this forest was privately owned by lumber firms or timber speculators but was previously inaccessible. Consequently, the road that was expected to bring motorists to see the redwoods, also brought in loggers bent on destroying them. By 1917, the situation could be described as a logging frenzy. According to Madison Grant, well-known gentlemen scientist and friend of Theodore Roosevelt, in one area along the South Fork "the landscape presents a scene comparable only to the [war] devastated regions of France."³⁹

Grant began to investigate the situation in 1917. He joined John C. Merriam, a University of California paleontologist, and Henry Fairfield Osborne, curator of the American Museum of Natural History, on a trip through Humboldt's redwoods. The carnage created by the opening of the roadway through the redwoods shocked the men to act. After their tour, the three decided to found the Save the Redwoods League, a national organization based in San Francisco, whose mission was to raise funds to purchase privately held redwoods, thus saving them for posterity.

According to historian Susan R. Schrepfer, the Save the Redwoods League originated from the associations that Grant, Merriam, and Osborne had had with John Muir, Roosevelt, Rep. Kent, and the National Park Service Director Stephen Mather, all long-time supporters of preserving redwoods. The immediate effort, however, was apparently inspired by Merriam who first became concerned about the logging situation after club women in Humboldt County solicited his help. Later, Kent and Mather also toured the region and became enthusiastic Save the Redwoods League backers.⁴⁰

The group of men who founded the Save the Redwoods League chose Newton B. Drury, a bright, young entrepreneur and future National Park Service director, to manage the day-to-day effort of fund-raising. Although women's clubs were financially limited, Drury was aware of the publicity they could generate. Rep. Kent urged him to enlist the aid of club women.⁴¹ He hardly had to try.

The summer of 1919 brought national attention to Humboldt County. In July, U. S. Secretary of Agriculture David Houston and Chief Forester Henry Graves visited to promote the commercial benefits of parks. Humboldt County residents also began to hear about the Save the Redwoods League and the impending visit of Mather. With attention focusing on Humboldt's redwoods by prominent outsiders, the chamber of commerce rejuvenated its park committee. All of this interest came at a critical moment. A major holder of timber adjacent to the highway, the Sage Land and Timber Company, had just sold its stake to smaller operators who were soon to begin cutting.⁴²

In August, after attending the first board meeting of the Save the Redwoods League in San Francisco, Mather traveled to Humboldt County with Grant and others. They were met by a large group of county officials and numerous club women. The Save the Redwoods League encouraged local enthusiasm to support its plan to gain outside attention and aid. Grant emphasized the revenue potential from park tourism. Mather, surprised by the enthusiasm that already existed, urged the creation of a "local branch" of the Save the Redwoods League.⁴³

Under Drury's management, the Save the Redwoods League sought to halt the disastrous cutting along the highway. Working with the timber owners, he gained the cooperation of the larger firms. Except for Pacific Lumber Company, most firms seemed willing to support a limited park. To stop smaller operators, other measures were needed. Kent, planning a run for the U. S. Senate in 1920, and Mather, seeking to bolster his fledgling National Park Service, generously pledged \$15,000 apiece to match county funds to buy roadside land held by the

small timber firms. Their gifts encouraged several other donations, as well as land grants in the proposed park area by two Humboldt County women's club members.⁴⁴

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Members of the Eureka Monday Club who helped to organize the women's Save the Redwoods League club of Humboldt County are (left to right and omitting the unknown driver) Mrs. George W. (Kate) Harpst, Mrs. F. W. Georgeson, Mrs. Alonzo J. (Lucretia) Monroe, Mrs. T. G. Atkinson. This photo appeared in the *Humboldt Standard*, 6 September 1919, 2. Courtesy Save The Redwoods League, San Francisco.

These events persuaded the HCFWC to renew its park campaign. A flurry of activity followed Mather's visit. 44
Several members attended a presentation by the Good Roads Bureau of the California State Automobile Association, which was another group that promoted the links between parks, tourism, and roads. The Good Roads Bureau man offered suggestions that were eagerly discussed by the assembled club women, who then decided to hold a public meeting for all Humboldt County women interested in redwoods preservation. On 9 August 1919, the gathering was held, and those assembled quickly established a unique organization—a woman's club dedicated solely to saving redwoods. During the meeting, Laura Mahan was elected president, a campaign committee was organized to raise more support among local women, and a formal name was chosen. The new club was called the Save the Redwoods League as Organized by the Women of Humboldt County.⁴⁵

The women's campaign committee soon set out to canvas the region. Members of the committee rode from 45
town to town in a big tour car that gained notoriety because of the large Save the Redwoods banner draped across the vehicle's side. The women spent several days working to get vice presidents elected, advertising their activities, and enlisting new backers. In a few weeks, they reported 813 members, many drawn from other women's clubs, with fourteen vice presidents to represent each town in Humboldt County.⁴⁶

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Letterhead stationary of the women's Save the Redwoods League club of Humboldt County. Courtesy Save the Redwoods League, San Francisco.

The women's Save the Redwoods League was gender-based. Members adopted the same name as Drury's group, and a few men may have joined as subscribers, but at its core were about thirty-five women who met on a regular basis in a member's home. The size of the core group was typical of a traditional women's club. Its officer-heavy structure, however, allowed the club to mobilize a much larger membership.⁴⁶

The publicity campaign of the new women's redwood club was inventive. Members ran a competition in the local schools for an artistic design to grace the letterhead of their stationery. In addition to holding a letter-writing campaign, they convinced the post office to stamp outgoing mail with Save the Redwoods. They then contacted the producers of two popular silent films, *The Valley of the Giants* and *The Little Boss*, which were locally filmed. They sought to have a trailer added to the films to solicit support for the redwoods movement. With the chamber's advice and the film company's approval, the women hired a filmmaker to shoot a documentary detailing the beauty of the giant trees and the destruction caused by logging. The completed film was later shown by the Fox News Company. In 1920, the local Save the Redwoods League club even offered this film to the national Save the Redwoods League after learning from press accounts that Merriam and Drury had organized a "Save the Redwoods Day" at a major auto show in San Francisco.⁴⁷

Disparities in the park campaigns of the national Save the Redwoods League, the Women's Save the Redwoods League, and the Humboldt Chamber of Commerce illustrate how these groups were cooperative but entirely separate and not necessarily coordinated organizations. Despite its name, the women's Save the Redwoods League club was not an adjunct of the San Francisco-based league. It was an independent body run by Humboldt County club women for their own purposes. For example, the Humboldt organization was occasionally at odds with the national league over preservation priorities. The national Save the Redwoods League, organized by professional naturalists, was interested most in the scientific and spiritual value of the redwoods at Bull Creek. Most club women in Humboldt County, however, were more interested in Dyerville Flat, a favorite campground and picnic area for locals. At other times, the women's Save the Redwoods League was at odds with the Humboldt County Chamber of Commerce. When faced with obstruction and political pressure from Pacific Lumber, the main owner of park-suitable land, the chamber proved willing to compromise. In one case, Pacific Lumber offered to exchange 300 acres of forest if the county supervisors renounced their power of eminent domain over other company lands. This deal would have precluded any park at Dyerville Flat. The chamber went along until forced to backpeddle after Mahan publicized how it had itself petitioned the county a year before to save that very area.⁴⁸

In summary, combined efforts by men and women to save redwoods in Humboldt County finally succeeded. For their part, Humboldt club women enthusiastically lobbied county officials to support creation of a redwoods park. They also blocked various efforts by Pacific Lumber to scheme its way out of surrendering the needed tracts. Indeed, on 10 November 1924, in frustration after its own failed maneuvers to block park supporters, Pacific Lumber began clandestine logging on Dyerville Flat. This activity was clearly designed to destroy the area for park purposes.⁴⁹ Accompanied by her husband, Laura Mahan visited the flat, discovered the subterfuge, and sounded the alarm by alerting county officials and the press. Public condemnation was swift and broadly based. Grudgingly, Pacific Lumber halted its logging operation and was soon forced to enter negotiations over the sale of its land.⁵⁰

After creation of the women's Save the Redwoods League, the HCFWC largely withdrew from park campaigning. HCFWC activity was unnecessary with a county-level women's club fully devoted to saving redwoods, since many of its members belonged to both groups. Ironically, as Drury realized, the local redwood club was so popular that relatively few Humboldt County women joined the national league. When faced with this predicament, league officials sought help in gaining new members from Bess Hayne Fisher, the president of the

HCFWC, but she courteously deferred to Mahan, who had come to represent her on all issues relating to trees.⁵² Indeed, by the mid-1920s, locals even referred to Mahan as the "Joan of Arc" of the redwoods preservation movement.⁵³

Whether or not Humboldt County club women joined the national Save the Redwoods League, Drury set out to secure their endorsements and material aid. In the beginning, he took some cues from the women's Save the Redwoods League itself. He contacted all fourteen vice presidents to distribute information and to solicit advice on how to start similar women's redwoods clubs elsewhere. Indeed, judging by an impressive volume of correspondence, the national Save the Redwoods League worked more closely with women from 1920 to 1925 than with any other entity. Despite Drury's hopes, however, no additional women's clubs devoted to saving redwoods sprang up in California, though clubs everywhere were still concerned with forestry. The trees along the highway through Humboldt were saved in 1921 only after Governor William Stephens reluctantly signed a \$300,000 appropriation because his wife, representing the GFWC, insisted.⁵⁴

The national Save the Redwoods League was well aware that women's clubs were important to its work. In 1921, its esteemed council of male professors, businessmen, and political figures, elected three women to sit among them. All were club leaders: Mrs. Aaron Schloss, president of the CFWC, Mrs. F. G. Law, president of the California Civic League, and Mrs. Charles H. Toll, president of Clara Burdette's old Ebell Club in Los Angeles. Industrialist, and league co-founder, Joseph D. Grant wrote in 1922 that "it is to the women that we owe very largely the success that has thus far attended our efforts to establish the Humboldt Redwood Park." In 1924, when Drury learned that Laura Mahan had invited GFWC President Mary Sherman to visit Humboldt County, he wrote to congratulate her for interesting one of America's most prominent women in their cause. He then proceeded to cover Sherman's expenses to tour the redwoods.⁵⁵ Gaining her endorsement was important because the GFWC was a potent legislative influence.

Drury's bid paid off. Three months after the discovery of clandestine logging on Dyerville Flat, the Humboldt County supervisors met to decide whether or not to condemn the land if Pacific Lumber continued to refuse to negotiate its sale. Three factors were critical in the decision to do so. First, the general public supported the creation of a park, and, as numerous editorials and press accounts indicated, people were outraged by the lumber company's shenanigans.⁵⁶ Driving this point home, a large crowd that included many club women gathered at the courthouse—even spilling onto the street—to witness the proceedings on the day of the hearing. Second, Drury provided convincing proof from prominent San Francisco bankers that the national Save the Redwoods League possessed sufficient funds to back its offer to buy the land. He thus quelled doubts about the county's ability to execute its condemnation authority. Third, Mahan arrived at the hearing bearing "sheaths of telegrams" from leading club women from across the nation who endorsed the creation of a redwood park. Of these telegrams, the most important was from Mary Sherman who pledged the support of the GFWC's three million members.⁵⁷

To promote parks, Sherman published an article in the May 1925 issue of *Better Homes & Gardens*. She briefly mentioned the economic rewards of parks before condemning their over-commercialization and poor treatment by campers. Her main point, however, was that "outdoor recreation amid scenes of natural beauty is a God-given antidote for many of the ills of our modern life." Sherman argued that nature taught "honesty, simplicity and contentment" as well as efficiency. Nature made "your boys manly and your girls gentle" and gave them "high ideals." It fit them "to be the fathers and mothers of noble men and women." She asked readers to treat nature as they would a neighbor's home. Indeed, she conceived of nature as a home. Her message shows how the rhetoric of club women on the virtues of park lands evolved but retained essential themes: home, motherhood, and community. Establishing domesticity as her authority to speak on conservation, Sherman's article advanced a progressive vision of social reform. Sherman envisioned parks as permanent natural reserves where visiting urbanites gained instruction in virtue and "where their children would be nurtured and made into upstanding adults." Making a special plea, she concluded her article by asserting that "redwoods are worth more as a beauty spot than as lumber." It was "unthinkable to the nature-lover" to transform them into "a desolation of stumps and tangled tops."⁵⁸

Humboldt County club women garnered such effusive support from important state and national women's club

leaders by first building a solid political base. In this respect, one of their great accomplishments was achieved in May 1922 when Laura Mahan represented the HCFWC at the twenty-first annual state federation convention in Los Angeles. She was accompanied by W. L. Miller, the chamber's current secretary. Together, they persuaded the CFWC to hold its next annual meeting in Humboldt County. This achievement was significant because no such convention had ever been held north of San Francisco. Humboldt County was still struggling to overcome the stigma of remoteness despite recently improved road and rail lines and new accommodations. Miller thus came to explain the practical advantages that Eureka offered over other cities, especially Santa Cruz, then competing to host some 1,500 club women for the week-long convention in 1923. Mahan mentioned some of these advantages herself, but the chief appeal of her address before the convention was a call for members to experience the natural beauty of the ancient redwoods, as well as thousands of trees planted by women of the northern counties. She argued that it was largely due to the efforts of women's clubs that the \$300,000 bond to protect the redwoods along Humboldt's new highway was passed. "You should come up to see that magic God-made spot," she told delegates, "to see the result of your own action."⁵⁹

When Mahan reported on the success of her mission to bring the CFWC convention to Humboldt County, editorials in the local press lavished effusive praise upon her, Murray, and other women involved. The newspapers were especially enthusiastic about the commerce the convention would bring. One editorial noted that it was Humboldt County's status "as an oasis for the tired city man and his family" that made coming to Eureka worthwhile.⁶⁰ The newspaper appealed to residents to forego the wanton destruction of the county's forests, fisheries, and game habitats, as this would dissuade the arrival of tourists who chiefly came to enjoy these resources. Mahan pasted this editorial into her scrapbook beneath the one praising her achievement. Apparently, she was pleased that local club women were successfully promoting both conservation and commerce in Humboldt County. Nevertheless, another editorial declared the commercial ramifications of the convention to be "the small part of the benefit of [the CFWC's] stay." It reminded readers that these women were "to a great extent the flower and intelligence of their respective communities." Predicting that CFWC delegates would uncover the county's shortcomings as well as advantages, the newspaper argued that their criticism would be "constructive and good for us."⁶¹ Clearly, club women were not seen as radicals whose views on contested issues, such as redwood preservation, could be ignored.

In making her plea to the CFWC convention, however, Mahan also had an ulterior motive. In the midst of the fight with Pacific Lumber to save Dyerville Flat, another landowner had offered to sell a grove of redwoods. The location was the site of previous social and civic gatherings held by Humboldt County women's clubs, and they wanted to save it. Bringing the CFWC to the county might serve that cause. Fortunately, Mahan's message was well-received. Not only did the CFWC agree to hold its twenty-second state federation convention in Eureka, but the group chose as its theme "Conservation—The Hope of Civilization." It was no accident, then, that the main event of the week-long meeting was a picnic luncheon at the Dyerville Flat grove that was up for sale.⁶²

Greatly impressed by their experience, CFWC delegates resolved to purchase the picnic grove by collecting a dollar from each of the federation's sixty thousand individual club members. To boost its own contributions, Mahan prodded the HCFWC to hold a fund-raising ball in 1925. With state matching funds, over \$90,000 was raised. The CFWC was able to purchase the 103-acre grove and to commission Julia Morgan to design a commemorative monument, which she appropriately stylized as a hearthstone. For its dedication in 1933, members inscribed on a nearby plaque their hopes that the trees would always "minister to the destiny of mankind."⁶³

One day in 1926, Laura Mahan spoke before the Eureka Woman's Club (formed when the Monday Club and other Eureka women's clubs merged in 1923). She was still president of the local Save the Redwoods League and had just succeeded in convincing the county to pass an ordinance to protect wild flowers and shrubs. She spoke on conservation, only this time, it was in her new capacity as state chair for the CFWC's Department of Conservation of Natural Resources. Echoing Burdette from a generation before, Mahan emphasized how "the wealth, beauty, fertility and healthfulness of the country" were tied to trees. The nation's progress, prosperity, and "the living conditions of every man, woman, and child," she said, depend upon how the forests are maintained. At the zenith of her influence, the simple message Mahan continued to deliver was that there is "no better heritage than living

trees."⁶⁴

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The 1933 dedication of Julia Morgan's Federation Hearthstone, which is located in the California Federation of Women's Clubs Grove in Humboldt Redwoods State Park. Courtesy California Federation of Women's Clubs, Fresno, California.

Clearly, Laura Mahan and other women's club leaders skillfully used conservation to promote their civic work and to advance their civic careers. Such expressed feminine interest in nature was not new, of course. Women had long used their credentials as homemakers to convey the propriety of their opinions on social issues. Moreover, as women's scholar Vera Norwood recounts, many nineteenth-century women first entered public life in professions related to birding, botanic illustration, nature writing, and gardening. However, as Norwood also found, male naturalists subordinated the accomplishments of even the most talented women colleagues and stifled their careers.⁶⁵ Success was elusive for early female naturalists because their attempts to compete professionally with men often provoked male suspicion or antagonism. Hence, while an interest in nature gave many women their first opportunity to express a public voice, that alone gained them few advantages. It was not until women united their domestic interest in nature with collective action, in the role of housewife-turned-club-woman, that they succeeded in using nature to muster political power. 60

The intensity of women's appeal to domesticity obscures the reality that civic clubs were middle-class political institutions. Club women organized their efforts along gender-accepted lines and appealed to women who were unwilling or felt it impractical to challenge mainstream norms, but they sought influence in civic areas nevertheless. Throughout the Progressive Era and long past the arrival of women's suffrage, various women's club leaders furthered their political influence by using women's interest in nature to build up their organizations and their personal power. As we have seen, Humboldt County club women organized numerous special committees, eventually created a dedicated redwood park club, and gained membership in powerful male-dominated institutions, including the national Save the Redwoods League. Club women used their organizations to publicize club positions, to lobby elected officials, and to network with other women's groups, male associates, local businessmen, and community leaders in concerted attempts to influence public opinion and public policy. By the early twenties, "lady conservationists" were an important force in Humboldt County politics. Their activity expanded both women's power and the impact of conservation ideas. Moreover, club women's involvement in the campaign to establish Humboldt Redwoods State Park significantly multiplied the work of male counterparts, both within the county and beyond it. Indeed, if domesticity had not made gender cooperation possible, it is all but certain that the park campaign would have failed. A study of women's contributions in many contemporary conservation efforts of other regions would produce a similar conclusion. 61

Domesticity also allowed women to deploy a strong anti-commercial rhetoric that most men avoided precisely because it suggested an unbusinesslike mentality. Such rhetoric belied the truth that club women, nevertheless, 62

shared their husbands' middle-class values and hoped that conservation would increase "the wealth of the state," as Burdette had said. Through their labors to create parks, some members also probably benefited indirectly through husbands who had businesses tied to tourism. Thus, in the fight to save the redwoods, club women attempted to both represent themselves as being civic-minded, which they were, and also nonpartisan and noncommercial, which they were not. If their motivations were less obviously self-interested or political than those expressed by men, they were no less certain. Women's role in the outcome was unprecedented, but women's motivations were not fundamentally different from men's.

In conclusion, domesticity and conservation blended well as social languages, to borrow from the historian Daniel T. Rogers.⁶⁶ Less a distinct ideology than a set of terms and ideas, a social language allows diverse speakers to share a common idiom. For example, male conservationists embraced a wide range of arguments to support redwood parks, including economic development, tourism, science, education, spiritual renewal, estheticism, wildlife protection, and posterity. As the classic debate over Hetch Hetchy illustrates, preservationists like Muir and utilitarians like Pinchot even expressed conflicting points while using conservation's established vernacular. Similarly, club women engaged conservation from a variety of perspectives, amplifying men's views and adding unique domestic interpretations. Such fluidity helps to explain the salience of early conservation, as progressive reformers used it to tap into women's political power. Indeed, the rise of conservation, with its particular prominence in arid lands, offers yet another explanation for why western women gained an early lead over their peers in the East and South in obtaining suffrage. Conservation, more than most areas of club work, had direct commercial and political implications. By using a rhetoric of feminine sensibility, club women made themselves heard above the din of male voices in an area of public policy-making that mattered greatly to men. By using their power responsibly, club women curried social approval that undoubtedly increased male regard for women's political and social equality.

Ironically, of course, as women entered society more broadly, despite continued discrimination, they began to abandon gender as an instrument of social organization. As they did, the influence of gender-segregated clubs and interlocking federations waned. After a flourishing period of public activism, the involvement of organized women in conservation declined, both in Humboldt County and elsewhere. Laura Mahan was the first and only president of the women's Save the Redwoods League. Women's charity for conservation continued, but women's influence was gradually supplanted by expanded government involvement and the creation of professional, well-funded conservation organizations. Nevertheless, of the clubs surveyed above that still exist, all continue programs in conservation, leaving a legacy of a time when female nature lovers first gained civic power by linking conservation to the values of nineteenth-century women.

Cameron Binkley is a National Park Service historian at the Southeast Regional Office in Atlanta. He thanks Martha Benioff, Jody Binkley, Bob Cherny, Phil Dreyfus, Ritsuko Hamagami, Barbara Loomis, Martha Martin, Dan Pollak, Ayako Tamura, and numerous club women.

Notes

¹ Morgan designed numerous clubhouses or other women's facilities during her career. Morgan's chief patron was Phoebe Apperson Hearst, whose son, the publisher William Randolph Hearst, eventually commissioned the architect to create his well-known castle at San Simeon.

² Sara Holmes Boutelle, *Julia Morgan: Architect* (New York, 1988), 126. The Arts-and-Crafts style emphasizes simplicity in design and in architecture harmony with the environment.

³ Theories pertaining to domesticity are numerous. Important examples include: Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," *American Quarterly* 18 (Summer 1966): 151–74; Daniel Scott Smith, "Family Limitation, Sexual Control and Domestic Feminism in Victorian America," in *A Heritage of Her Own*, ed. Nancy F. Cott and Elizabeth H. Peck (New York, 1979), 222–45; Estelle Freedmen, "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870–1930," *Feminist Studies* 5 (Fall 1979): 512–29; Karen Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868–1914* (New York, 1980); Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana, 1991); Kathryn Kish Sklar, *Florence Kelley and the Nation's Work* (New Haven, 1995).

- ⁴ "Monday Club," (1902–3), Eureka Monday Club handbook, Humboldt Room, Humboldt County Public Library, Eureka, CA. The names of Monday Club women who made the trip are unknown.
- ⁵ "Clubs of Women," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 January 1900, 12; Mary S. Gibson, comp., *A Record of Twenty-five Years of the California Federation of Women's Clubs, 1900–1925* (CFWC, 1927), 9–10.
- ⁶ Clara Burdette to General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), n.d., Box 43, Clara Bradley Burdette Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, (hereafter Burdette Papers); Clara Burdette, "The Home Life and the Woman: Sharp Criticisms and Noble Sentiment from Women of National Reputation," *Cairo Daily Bulletin*, 22 October 1903, 1, in Box 134, Burdette Papers; Mrs. Robert J. [Clara] Burdette, "Address of Welcome to the Women's Clubs of California Assembled for the State Federation," delivered at Los Angeles, 16 January 1900, 12–3, in possession of author. See also Gibson, *A Record of Twenty-five Years of the California Federation of Women's Clubs, 1900–1925*, 9–10. The tenets of Burdette's philosophy were distilled in her "Club Woman's Creed," a widely published GFWC flyer (ca. 1902).
- ⁷ Burdette, "Address of Welcome to the Women's Clubs of California Assembled for the State Federation."
- ⁸ Clara Burdette, speech presented to the first CFWC convention, Golden Gate Hall, San Francisco, 4 February 1902, CFWC Folder, Box 29, Burdette Papers; CFWC, *California Federation of Women's Clubs Yearbook, 1901–2* (Los Angeles, 1902), 1 (hereafter *CFWC Yearbook*); *CFWC Yearbook, 1902–3* (Los Angeles, 1903), 23; Gibson, *A Record of Twenty-five Years of the California Federation of Women's Clubs, 1900–1925*, 12; "Some Specialties of the Delegates," Biennial sec., *Los Angeles Times*, 9 May 1902, 3.
- ⁹ Carrie S. Walter, "The Preservation of Big Basin," *Overland Monthly* 40 (October 1902): 355.
- ¹⁰ "Women Plan to Buy Marin's Primeval Grove of Redwoods: Clubs are Stirred," press clipping in *California Club, 1904–1905* (November 1904), annual club journal located in the offices of the California Club, San Francisco.
- ¹¹ Edward F. O'Day, *Varied Types* (San Francisco, 1915), 320.
- ¹² The origin of conservation is definitively treated in Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890–1920* (Cambridge, MA, 1959).
- ¹³ T. P. Lukens, "Effect of Forests on Water Supply," *Forestry and Irrigation* 10, no. 10 (1904): 465–9.
- ¹⁴ Margaret A. Evans, "The Life and Times of a Eureka Matron in 1890," (1971), term paper, Special Collections, Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, CA, 12.
- ¹⁵ John Muir, "The Wild Parks and Forest Reservations of the West," *Atlantic Monthly* 81 (January 1898): 15.
- ¹⁶ Patricia R. Newell, historian of the Eureka Woman's Club (successor to the Eureka Monday Club), 1 May 1998, Eureka, CA, conversation with the author. Newell received the story about how the earliest Monday Club women were interested in forestry from Jessie Woodcock, a charter member of the Eureka Woman's Club and a Eureka Monday Club member from at least 1911. See also Patricia R. Newell, "Eureka Women United: The Monday Club," *Humboldt Historian* (July–August 1990): 8–9.
- ¹⁷ Patricia R. Newell, "Eureka Woman's Club" (unpublished manuscript, 1989), Special Collections, University of California, Santa Cruz McHenry Library, Santa Cruz, CA.
- ¹⁸ Donald W. Rodes, "The California Woman Suffrage Campaign of 1911" (master's thesis, California State University, Hayward, 1974), 145–6.
- ¹⁹ Mrs. Robert J. [Clara] Burdette, "California Women's Clubs and Their Work," *Sunset* 8, no. 4 (1902): 178; Burdette, presented speech to the first CFWC convention, Golden Gate Hall, San Francisco, 4 February 1902, Burdette Papers.

²⁰ Margaret Scott, "Save Redwoods Movement Wins Strength: Nation Awakened to Necessity; Women of State Helping," *Humboldt Standard* (Eureka, CA), 25 December 1923, sec. 5, 4, 6. The newspapers cited in this essay are available on microfilm at the Humboldt State University library.

²¹ "District News," *Club Woman*, May 1912, 14. The *Club Woman* was the official organ of the CFWC. Issues may be found at the California State Library, Sacramento, CA.

²² "Work for Eureka's Women," *Humboldt Times* (Eureka, CA), 26 February 1907, 4.

²³ Charter members were: the Arcata Woman's Club, the Eureka Monday Club, the Eureka Mother's Club, the Eureka Wednesday Club, the Ferndale Village Club, the Fortuna Monday Club, and the Whanika Club of Blue Lake. "Humboldt County Federation of Women's Clubs Minutes," vol. 1 (1908–16), 3, Humboldt County Public Library, Eureka, CA (hereafter HCFWC Minutes).

²⁴ HCFWC Minutes, 1, 4–5. Any period edition of the *CFWC Yearbook* will indicate that the CFWC gave conservation much attention, although clubs may not have acted upon its solicitations.

²⁵ George Burchard, "Save the Redwoods," *Outlook*, 10 March 1920, 428–9; "School Children Petition Preservation of California Redwoods," *Journal of Education* 67 (5 March 1908): 278; Susan Schrepfer, "A Conservative Reform: Saving the Redwoods, 1917 to 1940" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Irvine, 1971), 54.

²⁶ Schrepfer, "A Conservative Reform," 54; "Will Work to Secure Redwood Park: Movement Again Started to Get a Grove of Representative Trees," *Humboldt Standard*, 6 November 1909, 1, 4.

²⁷ "Federated Clubs in Session Here," *Humboldt Standard*, 8 November 1909, 8; and HCFWC Minutes, 43–6. A spur line linking Eureka to San Francisco through Trinidad was completed by 1911.

²⁸ F.W. Georgeson to Robert G. Sproul, 25 March 1920, in History of the SRL: 1911–66 folder in the history files of the Save The Redwoods League, San Francisco.

²⁹ *CFWC Yearbook, 1910–1* (Los Angeles, 1911), 25, 73; "Plan to Save Giant Trees," *Humboldt Times*, 17 February 1912, 1; "Raker has Prepared Bill on Redwood Park," *Humboldt Standard*, 19 March 1912, 1; "Redwood Park Resolutions Adopted by Women's Club," *Humboldt Standard*, 20 October 1913, 2; "Will Ask for a Committee to Look at Park," *Humboldt Times*, 7 February 1912, 6.

³⁰ HCFWC Minutes, 90–3, 101.

³¹ John Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925: Humboldt County Redwood Movement," (bachelor's thesis, Humboldt State University, 1980), 7, n. 31; and Schrepfer, "A Conservative Reform," 57.

³² HCFWC Minutes, 82, 84.

³³ "[Eureka] Civic Club Record Book, 1913–1918," in possession of Patricia R. Newell, Eureka Woman's Club; HCFWC Minutes, 120; Susan Baker Fountain Papers, vol. 26, 165, Humboldt County Public Library, Eureka, CA.

³⁴ "Raker Helps Redwood Park in Congress" (1913), press clipping in the Laura P. Mahan scrapbook, in possession of the Save the Redwoods League, San Francisco (hereafter Mahan scrapbook).

³⁵ Kent thought constantly of conservation in political terms, which helps explain the irony of his backing both redwoods conservation and San Francisco's effort to dam Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy canyon. For more on Kent, see Anne F. Hyde, "William Kent: The Puzzle of Progressive Conservationists," in *California Progressivism Revisited*, ed. William Deverell and Tom Sitton (Berkeley, 1994), 34–56.

³⁶ HCFWC Minutes, 122, 133–4; John E. Raker to Laura Mahan, 10 October 1913, in the Mahan scrapbook; "Redwood Park Resolutions Adopted by Women's Club," *Humboldt Standard*, 2; Scott, "Save Redwoods Movement Wins Strength," *Humboldt Standard*, 25 December 1923, sec. 5, 4, 6.

³⁷ "Club Women Discuss Park in Redwoods," *Humboldt Times*, 25 September 1913, 6; HCFWC Minutes, 119, 122–5, 152; and Scott, "Save Redwoods Movement Wins Strength," *Humboldt Standard*, 25 December 1923, sec. 5, 4, 6.

³⁸ "A Vote for the Good Roads Bonds Is a Vote for a Redwood Park!," *Humboldt Times*, 18 July 1916, 3.

³⁹ Madison Grant, "Saving the Redwoods," *New York Zoological Society Bulletin* (September 1919), excerpted in *Literary Digest* (27 March 1920): 102–5.

⁴⁰ Susan R. Schrepfer, *The Fight To Save the Redwoods: A History of Environmental Reform, 1917–1978* (Madison, 1983), 12; Notes of Newton Drury in Aubrey Drury, "Memorandum for Mrs. Philip Van Horne Lansdale," 17 November 1942, in History of the SRL: 1911–66, folder in the history files of the Save the Redwoods League, San Francisco; Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 8.

⁴¹ Save the Redwoods League to William Kent, 30 April 1920, carton 1, William Kent folder (1920–24), Save the Redwoods League Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (hereafter League Papers).

⁴² Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 14–6.

⁴³ Joseph H. Engbeck, Jr., *State Parks of California, from 1864 to the Present* (Portland, 1980), 42; Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 16.

⁴⁴ Engbeck, *State Parks of California*, 43; "Humboldt County Aroused to Action," *Ferndale (California) Enterprise*, 27 February 1920, 1.

⁴⁵ "Ladies Back of Redwood Park Plan," *Humboldt Times*, 7 August 1919; Lillian Ross, "Women's Save the Redwoods League Organized in 1919; Aided in Numerous Projects," *Humboldt Standard*, 15 January 1932, 7. No records of the women's redwood club have survived.

⁴⁶ "Humboldt Women Aided Work for Redwood Park; Their Efforts Contributed to Success Thus Far," *Humboldt Standard*, 6 September 1919, 2; Ross, "Women's Save the Redwoods League Organized in 1919," *Humboldt Standard*, 15 January 1932, 7.

⁴⁷ "Humboldt Women Aided Work for Redwood Park: Their Efforts Contributed to Success Thus Far," *Humboldt Standard*, 6 September 1919, 2; Ross, "Women's Save the Redwoods League Organized in 1919," *Humboldt Standard*, 15 January 1932, 7.

⁴⁸ Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 20; "High School Students Asked to Design Letterhead for Women's League to Preserve Redwoods" and "Women Speed Work to Save Big Redwoods" (August 1919), press clippings in Mahan scrapbook; "Woman's Redwood Film Creates Big Interest in Trees," *Humboldt Times*, 6 March 1920, 2; Madison Grant to Famous Players-Lasky Corp., 15 January 1920, and Mrs. J. A. Putnam to John C. Merriam, 19 February 1920, both in correspondence folder: 1919–1920, League Papers.

⁴⁹ Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 12, 22, 28; Mrs. Robert Fisher to Newton B. Drury, 10 June 1924, carton 7, League Papers. For the values of League founders, see Schrepfer, *The Fight To Save the Redwoods*.

⁵⁰ Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 25–6.

⁵¹ "Humboldt County in Fight with Lumber Company for Trees," *Humboldt Times*, 25 November 1924, 1. A plaque on the Mahan Trail in Humboldt Redwoods State Park commemorates this event.

⁵² Newton B. Drury to Bess Hayne Fisher, 21 March 1923, and Bess Hayne Fisher to Robert Sproul (ca. 1923), carton 7, League Papers.

⁵³ Myra Nye, "Redwood Fight Success Told," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 February 1925, Part II, 1–2.

⁵⁴ Newton B. Drury to Mrs. J. A. Putnam, 22 October 1920, carton 7, League Papers. Both Schrepfer (*The Fight To Save the Redwoods*, 99, 128) and Stephen Fox (*John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* [Boston, 1981], 345) note the influence of Stephens's wife in getting the \$300,000 appropriation bill passed.

⁵⁵ "Newton B. Drury Memorandum," 11 February 1921, carton 1, William Kent folder (1920–4), League Papers; J. D. Grant to Mrs. R. Fisher, 21 November 1922; Newton B. Drury to Mrs. J. P. Mahan, 17 June 1924, 18 June 1924, and 2 July 1924; and Drury to Mrs. John G. Sherman, 16 June 1924, all in carton 7, League Papers.

⁵⁶ Amodio, "Save the Redwoods, 1919–1925," 25–6.

⁵⁷ Nye, "Redwood Fight Success Told," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 February 1925, Part II, 1–2.

⁵⁸ Mary Sherman, "Our Work for National Parks," *Better Homes & Gardens*, May 1925, 5–7, 33.

⁵⁹ Myra Nye, "Eureka to Get Next Meeting," *Los Angeles Times*, 7 May 1922, sec. V, 13; "California Federation of Women's Clubs Accepts Bid to Hold Meet Here," *Humboldt Standard*, 19 May 1922, 2.

⁶⁰ "That Tourist Traffic," (n.p., 1922), editorial in Mahan scrapbook.

⁶¹ "The Women's Club Convention," (n.p., 1922), editorial in Mahan scrapbook.

⁶² Claire Guiberson, "The Redwood Grove," *Federation News* (San Francisco), April 1933, 12–3; Patricia R. Newell to Delores Seguire, 12 October 1995, in possession of author.

⁶³ CFWC, *60 Year History* (CFWC, 1961), 24; "Conservation Ball in Eureka," *Arcata (California) Union*, 7 May 1925, 2, and "Women's Clubs Federation Meet in White City," *Humboldt Times*, 3 May 1925, 8, both in True Hoyle scrapbook, Special Collections, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA; "Town Forest Planting and Forest Conservation is Topic at Club Meet" (1926), press clipping in Mahan scrapbook.

⁶⁴ Susan Baker Fountain Papers, vol. 26, 165; "Town Forest Planting and Forest Conservation is Topic at Club Meet" (1926), press clipping in Mahan scrapbook. See also, Mrs. J. P. Mahan, "Conservation of Trees," *Federation News*, October 1925, 15.

⁶⁵ Vera Norwood, *Made from This Earth: American Women and Nature* (Chapel Hill, 1993), 1–142.

⁶⁶ According to Rogers, progressivism is better understood as a shared idiom than a distinct ideology. Progressivism is difficult to define as an ideology because proponents held divergent views and often sought conflicting goals, which is also true of conservation. See Daniel T. Rogers, "In Search of Progressivism," *Reviews in American History*, 10 (December 1982): 113–32.