
Under existing law, the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is authorized to engage in the management, protection, and restoration of state forests in accordance with plans approved by the State Board of Forestry. This bill would declare it the policy of the state to establish the Soquel Demonstration State Forest in Santa Cruz County. The department would be responsible for the development and establishment of the state forest and for maintenance and operations. The bill would authorize the department to permit a limited amount of commercial timber operations within the forest in order to provide funds for its maintenance and operation. The bill would require the department, in conjunction with a specified advisory committee, to adopt a general plan for the park by January 1, 1989, and would require the general plan to be approved by the advisory committee prior to adoption by the department. The department's duties and authority under the bill would only arise if the state acquires the property comprising the demonstration forest.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Article 4 (commencing with Section 4660) is added to Chapter 9 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code, to read:

Article 4. Soquel Demonstration State Forest

4660. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to establish and preserve an intensively managed, multifaceted research forest which is representative of forest activities as a living forest in Santa Cruz County within northern California's coastal redwood belt. The coast redwoods, as the dominant tree species in this area, are a valuable natural resource and are unique in North America for their beauty, abundance, diversity, and public accessibility, and their extreme beauty and economic value requires special measures for their protection for the use, enjoyment, and education of the public.

It is the intent of the Legislature, in establishing the Soquel Demonstration State Forest, to provide an environment that will do all of the following:
(a) Provide watershed protection for local communities and base-line monitoring and studies of the hazards, risks, and benefits of forest operations and watersheds to urban areas.
(b) Provide public education and examples illustrating compatible rural land uses, including sustained yield timber production, as well as the historic development of timbering and forestry machinery, within the context of local community protection and nearby pressures.
(c) Provide a resource for the public, environmental groups, elected officials, environmental planners, the educational community, and the media as an open environment for the inspection and study of environmental education, forestry practices, and effects thereof.
(d) Protect old growth redwood trees.

4661. The department may permit a limited amount of commercial timber operations on the property within the Soquel Demonstration State Forest in order to provide funds for the maintenance and operation of the state forest and to allow fulfillment of the objectives of Section 4660. Income from the state forest property shall sustain all costs of operation and provide income for research and educational purposes.

4662. The department is responsible for the development and establishing of the Soquel Demonstration State Forest and for ongoing maintenance and operations. The director shall appoint an advisory committee to assist the department in planning future management of the forest. The advisory committee shall include representatives of the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Board of Forestry, the Forest of Nicene Marks Advisory Committee, and the Department of Fish and Game.

4663. The department, in coordination with the advisory committee, shall adopt by January 1, 1989, a general plan for the state forest which reflects the long-range development and management plans to provide for the optimum use and enjoyment of the living forest, as provided in Section 4660, as well as the protection of its quality and the watershed within the Santa Cruz area. The general plan shall be approved by the advisory committee prior to adoption by the department.

4664. The duties and authority of the department pursuant to this article shall only arise if the state acquires the property comprising the Soquel Demonstration State Forest.