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### Environmental Impact Report Redwood Creek Logging

Susie Van Kirk

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
REDWOOD CREEK LOGGING

Historic Survey

The native inhabitants of lower Redwood Creek were people of Athabascan stock, closely related to the Hupa but apparently traditional enemies of the coastal Yurok. Known as the Bald Hills Indians by the early settlers, these people were called Tsulu-la in the Yurok language. Americanization of the word resulted in the present designation of Chilula (Krober, 1925).

Prior to 1850 their population is estimated to have been between 500 and 600, but early white intrusion and hostilities with other Indian peoples saw the eventual elimination of the Chilula people. Their villages lay on or near Redwood Creek, some being as much as a mile or more from the creek, but the majority were close to the stream. In the summer months, the Chilula left these permanent homes to live on the prairies of the Bald Hills where they hunted and gathered seeds, bulbs, and acorns (Krober, 1925).

According to Goddard (1914) there are 18 known village sites, all but one on the eastern side of the creek, stretching from a few miles above Minor Creek on the south to near Tall Trees on the north. Of this number only Xowunnakut (Section 6, T.9N R.2E) and Noledin (Section 9, T.9N R.2E) are within the Redwood National Park boundary. Xowunnakut is described by Goddard as being "about a mile east of Redwood Creek on a small flat south of a ridge along which the Trinidad Trail used to run."

Although the project area was certainly familiar territory to the Chilula people, it appears from the literature that all known village sites are south of the proposed logging.

The Trinidad Trail to which Goddard refers was opened up in the summer of 1850 as a route for pack trains carrying supplies to the gold mines on the Klamath and Salmon Rivers (Coy, 1929). Following an existing Indian trail, it led from Trinidad to Big Lagoon where it turned east and crossed Redwood Creek at Tall Trees (Section 1, T.9N, R.1E). From there it passed up the ridge to the northeast through Section 36, T.10N, R.1E and Sections 31 and 30 in T.10N, R.2E, intersecting the trail along the Bald Hills ridge in Section 29, T.10N, R.2E. Passing along the ridge to the southeast, it led to French Camp where the trail forked--one branch going to Martin's Ferry, the

other into the Hoopa Valley. Other trails connected the Bald Hills with villages near Pecwan and Natchko Creek on the Klamath River (Township Map, 1882; Forbes Map, 1886; Belcher Map, 1922; and Bearss, 1969).

There was much Indian-white conflict during the 1850's and early 1860's as packers and miners invaded Chilula territory. Troops, under the command of the Humboldt Military District, were stationed at Elk Camp for the protection of neighboring ranches and to guard travelers on the Trinidad Trail (War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865; and Bearss, 1969); in time, the Chilula people were removed to the reservations at Fort Bragg and Hoopa (Krober, 1925). According to Bearss, the Trail was abandoned in the late 1890's after construction of the Bald Hills Road was completed.

Because most of the area through which the Trail passes has already been logged, it would appear that the only remaining sections are within the National Park and the unlogged buffer strip. That portion of the Trail within the Park boundary has been identified by Ned Simmons and the crossing on Redwood Creek at Tall Trees nominated for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (personal communication with Ned Simmons, former Redwood National Park employee; and Linda Finn, Interpretive Specialist, Redwood National Park). Important as the Trinidad Trail was in early Humboldt County history, its historical significance today as a physically-identifiable route is purely academic in view of the fact that virtually none of it remains.



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#### OTHER RESOURCES

- Lentell, J.N. Map of Humboldt County, California. 1898, 1901, 1909, 1914.
- Metsker's Humboldt County Map, no date.
- Six Rivers National Forest, California Map. 1972. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service.