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King Sequoia: The Tree That Inspired a Nation, Created Our National Park System, and Changed the Way We Think about Nature

William C. Tweed

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The history of California's Big Trees

From a towering tree, one of California's preeminent naturalists unspools a history that echoes across generations and continents. Former park ranger William C. Tweed takes readers on a tour of the Big Trees in a narrative that travels deep into the Sierras, around the West, and all the way to New Zealand; and in doing so he explores the American public's evolving relationship with sequoias. It comes as no surprise that the groves in Yosemite and Calaveras were early tourist destinations, as this species that predated Christ and loomed over all the world's other trees was the embodiment of California's superlative, almost unbelievable appeal. When sequoias were threatened by logging interests, the feelings of horror that this desecration evoked in people catalyzed protection efforts; in a very direct way, this species inspired the Park Idea. And sequoias' influence doesn't end there: as science evolved to consider landscapes more holistically, sequoias were once again at the heart of this attitudinal shift. Featuring an entrancing cast of adventurers, researchers, politicians, and environmentalists, *King Sequoia* reveals how one tree species has transformed Americans' connection to the natural world.

Published in collaboration with Sierra College Press

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