



March 25, 2021

Office of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
Washington, DC

Re: NCRA Filing- Environmental and Historic Report - STB Docket #AB 1305

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (hereafter, "RTC"), we are pleased to endorse and support the railbanking of the North Coast Railroad Authority ("NCRA") rail line from Willits north to the end of the line in Samoa, California.

We have reviewed the Environmental and Historic Reports which appear to be comprehensive and accurate. We agree with the assessment that railbanking this line for interim trail use will not result in any adverse effects on the environment or public health and safety. The line has been out of service since the FRA embargo in 1998, there are no shippers, NCRA plans no salvage activities or alteration of historic structures, and NCRA instead plans to "railbank" the entire line thus preserving it for use as the Great Redwood Trail and for possible future rail reactivation pursuant to 16 U.S.C. 1247(d).

Railbanking and conversion of this unused rail line to a trail would be the highest and best use of this scenic corridor. The proposed Great Redwood Trail along the NCRA right-of-way would support the growing regional trail network in Mendocino, Trinity and Humboldt counties, providing recreational and transportation opportunities as well as environmental and economic benefits to the adjacent communities. We at RTC believe that this proposed rail-trail has the potential to be one of the longest and most spectacular rail-trails in the country.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Laura Cohen

Laura Cohen
Western Region Director
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Cc: Charles H. Montange, counsel for NCRA