

TO: Surface Transportation Board

From: 350 Humboldt: Grassroots Climate Action

Regarding: AB 1305 X Railbanking

As a climate action group, we have been strongly supportive of bike and walking trails and other transportation that is very low in greenhouse gas emissions. The conversion of the abandoned rail line between Willits and Arcata is a wonderful example of how actions that mitigate climate change can have positive benefits for communities. This conversion also has extremely broad support in Humboldt County and in the whole North Coast. The communities along the rail line have been very clear in not wanting reconstruction of a railroad. The geology of the Eel River canyon is also unsuited to a railroad.

If a railroad were to be used to transport coal, North Coast communities would oppose it. Since Eureka is a charter city, it could prohibit it. The City of Eureka and the City of Arcata have both shown their commitment to making the changes needed to prevent the worst of climate change by responding to 350 Humboldt's appeal and committing to use 100% clean and renewable energy by 2025.

This conversion into a trail is dependent on the Surface Transportation Board completing the railbanking process. We urge you to do this as quickly as possible. We also feel it is unnecessary to pause railbanking to confirm the legal status of the ends of the rail line.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Denise Newman

9/14/21