

To whom it may concern at the Surface Transportation Board,

Seeing as a great majority of rail lines are being abandoned around the country simply as a result of unprofitability, it makes little sense to respond to the demands for abandonment by a Rails-to-Trails group like the Great Redwood Trails Agency. Railroad infrastructure through remote areas, along the Noyo River in this case, especially where there are no other roads present, offers an environmentally-friendly and low-impact corridor for freight and passenger rail traffic. Seeing as there is no roadway in the immediate vicinity to take on any future traffic, it makes little sense to cripple a potential network for the sake of its current disuse. Cars, and especially trucks, bring much greater amounts of pollution, traffic and noise pollution. In a deep and pristine forest, this is all the more necessary. Trains can string together large amounts of traffic for infrequent trips during the day or night, creating much less disturbance than road traffic. The process of conversion, as well as subsequent trail-maintenance vehicles, should the railroad be abandoned, will bring much more pollution and disruption to the valley than it being left in its idle/disused state. We don't know what the future may bring, but abandoning connector routes with great potential for low-impact transit and thru-traffic does not make much sense, especially when being forced by an advocacy group. Those same potential future bikers would undoubtedly utilize fossil-fuel transportation to get their bikes to the trail. Now, the forest is at rest. Can we keep it that way?

Sincerely,

Dante DiBiase