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3:07 pm, Mar 25, 2011

# 2

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Date 3:07 pm, Mar 25, 2011



**Fw: Removal of rails to Shingle Springs**  
The BOSFOUR to: Cynthia C Johnson  
Sent by: Brenda J Bailey

03/25/2011 03:02 PM

----- Forwarded by Brenda J Bailey/PV/EDC on 03/25/2011 03:02 PM -----

**Removal of rails to Shingle Springs**

dickrein@juno.com to: bosone, bostwo, bosthree, bosfour, bosfive

03/25/2011 07:32 AM

Cc: dickrein, e\_old, president, retallack1596

From: "dickrein@juno.com" <dickrein@juno.com>

To: bosone@edcgov.us, bostwo@edcgov.us, bosthree@edcgov.us, bosfour@edcgov.us,  
bosfive@edcgov.us

Cc: dickrein@juno.com, e\_old@hotmail.com, president@psvrr.org, retallack1596@comcast.net

DEAR SUPERVISOR,

PLEASE OPEN THE ATTACHMENT TO PRESENT SOME IMPORTANT  
INFORMATION IN REGARD TO REMOVING THE RAILS ON THE RAIL CORRIDOR  
DOWN TO SHINGLE SPRINGS, AS PROPOSED BY THE TRAILS GROUP.



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10-1169.3H.1

Supervisors,

First, I want to apologize for this rather lengthy e-mail, but I believe there are some serious issues which must be analyzed prior to the authorization of the rails to be pulled up down to Shingle Springs and eventually to the county line.

As often stated, the Folsom, El Dorado, Sacramento Historical Railroad Assoc. (FEDS) in conjunction with the Placerville, Sacramento Valley Railroad Assoc. (PSVRR) are not against trails at all, as many members are bicycle riders or walkers, but we do not support all trails, no rails.

While the Trails Group has excellent slides, publications and presentations promoting their agenda, most are what are called "sound bites" and do not look deeply into all the ramifications and repercussions of such actions they are promoting.

Let's look at their proposal. They say they want to create a hiking, biking and equestrian trail that links the American River Parkway (it used to be Davis) all the way to Lake Tahoe and also will be used to link communities and schools.

#### Hiking trail:

All of the hikers I know, or know about, are back packers and like to hike in the mountains or the wilderness. They like to "get next" to nature and not hike on paved surfaces with a lot of other activities going on. It is true that there are walkers who walk on trails and streets, but the average walker walks 3 miles/hr and takes a 1 or 2 hour walk for cardio/vascular exercise. This means a 3 mile trail takes 2 hours going from and returning to the original starting point and a long, long trail is not necessary for this purpose. Also, most walkers start at, or relatively close, to home and don't drive for miles to get to a trail to take a 2 hour walk. Also, many communities have existing trails. El Dorado Hills has the Serrano trail, the trail next to EDH Blvd., the New York Creek trail and various trails around Lake Folsom. Cameron Park has a trail around the lake and other trails. Folsom has well developed trails. When you provide a public trail, it requires you to follow the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). As I am sure you are familiar with such act, you know that for both public and private uses, ramps of a maximum slope have to be provided to allow disabled access. That is why sidewalks have to have ramps at the corners and buildings can't have a steps only access. Also, powered wheelchairs and scooters have a limited range. Is the trail to provide 110 VAC charging stations? And then there are the restroom requirements. Although "Andy Gump" stations would have to be provided periodically for the non disabled people, they are not wheel chair accessible and special restrooms would have to be constructed. Who pays for the cost of the original installations and the cost of ongoing maintenance? Unless restrooms are provided, you will have people urinating and defecating along the trail if it is long. You probably have seen the article in the Mountain Democrat where two women were interviewed whose houses backed up to the existing trail and they were very unhappy in seeing people doing that, where they could easily see them from their houses.

#### Bikers:

This proposal is primarily a biking trail and for long distance bikers in particular. It is not a direct long distance route from point to point for commuting bikers. The trail would be a lot longer from Placerville to Folsom than the street mileage route. Most roads now have, or are going to have, bike lanes to aid the commuting bikers to be able to use the existing roads. Also, you see very few bicycles at schools. Because of distances, almost all the children go to and from schools in school busses, their own cars (high schoolers) or are driven to school by their parents or neighbors. The trail is also very far from any schools in El Dorado Hills or Cameron Park.

Because the trail proposal primarily benefits distance bikers, if you examine who is the major promoter of this project, you will find it is the bikers who live in Placerville or the surrounding communities.

#### Equestrian:

Although a woman testified at your Supervisors meeting last year that she would ride on a paved surface, I have talked to other horse owners who would definitely disagree with her. First, they say a horse can only walk on a paved surface. If you try to gallop, or even trot, on a hard surface the horse can slip and the horse can stumble or fall because of it's metal shoes. I understand that the horses used by the police on city streets have special shoes. Secondly, bicycles and horses don't mix well when too close together. Horse owners say that when a bicycle is approaching the horse from the front, it is OK because the horse sees it moving towards him, but when a bicycle approaches from behind, where the horse can't see it, it suddenly appears in his vision and the horse is startled and can buck, or drop in the front, and throw the rider. There was a recent article in the Village

Life newspaper (8/16/2011) on horse accidents due to horses being startled by bicyclists in the Pilot Hill area. There have also been numerous bad encounters between bicycles and horses on the trails around Lake Folsom. It would appear that an equestrian trail would have to be provided in the dirt along side of the proposed asphalt trail. This would require some grading and additional clearing. The Trails Group like to talk about the American River Parkway and I agree it is a beautiful trail. However, the trail is highly used because it is close to a major population center and horses don't ride on the main trail with the bikes and pedestrians, they have a parallel trail in the dirt.

#### Route:

Now let us examine the proposed route. The cost of putting in a graded, paved trail from the east end of the trail and following the Emigrant Trail to Lake Tahoe would cost millions of dollars. In fact, one of your own Supervisors gave an estimate of 30 million dollars. The county doesn't have that kind of funds available and probably won't in our lifetime.

The trail completely bypasses El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park where the majority of the west slope population lives. I have previously given you the mileage from the population centers of these communities to the trail and they are not small numbers. And, as I mentioned before, these communities have many trails already. The trail would not connect any schools in these areas or connect the communities themselves.

End of trail at the county line. To my knowledge, the Sacramento county supervisors have never agreed to pull up the rails, in fact, the Folsom Rail Fest in 2010 was very popular and pointed out the value of having the tracks available for use. If the rails are not pulled up in Sacramento county, that leaves the trail ending up at Carson Creek (the county line), which is in the middle of nowhere and of no use to the Trails Group overall plan.

Continuity: To make the trail continuous from the east side of Missouri Flat Road to the west side of the road, a one million dollar plus bridge over the road would be required (similar to the Folsom East Bidwell over crossing). Otherwise, people would have to go up or down from the west trail to road level, traverse to the nearest crossing where there is a stoplight, cross over, and then traverse back to the trail. This includes horses also.

Routing conclusion: The trail mainly benefits long distance bikers and even then it would end on the east going nowhere and on the west in the middle of nowhere.

#### Safety:

If you have actually ridden on the rails, you will realize that most of it passes through some very remote areas. Are women, or mothers with small children, or children, going to feel safe in these areas? Sexual predators would soon find that there are ideal spots on the trail for committing sexual crimes and in locations where they probably would not get caught.

There are steep banks in many locations where the railhead is elevated. A bicycle going too fast or hitting a small fallen object could easily lose control and go over the edge. Are guard rails in these areas going to be provided?

#### Liability:

Is the county going to be liable for anyone injured on the trail? Branches, cones, etc. constantly fall from the trees and can cause safety hazards for bicyclists and equestrians. If you think the county can't be sued, think of the high settlements given when Sacramento county sheriffs use excessive force, etc. Also, I have a friend who is a lawyer for Caltrans and all he does is settle suites with injured parties who claim Caltrans was at fault when it was actually their fault. Lawyers call it "going for the deep pockets".

#### Legal action:

When the county put two plus million dollars towards the purchase of the Southern Pacific right of way it spent the peoples' money. Part of the value of the property was the rails themselves. This is evident as the Trails Group have a contractor who agrees to pull up the rails at no cost. He can obviously pay the labor to remove the rails and make a profit by selling the steel rails for scrap. That of course means the rails have value. Now you want to give away some of what the people paid for without the peoples input. Some lawyer may well file an injunction to stop this action and you might have a hard time defending it based on the original purpose of intent. (There was nothing in the original documents that require removal of the rails).

#### Ongoing maintenance:

Over a long period of time, the rails folks have been donating their labor to keep the railhead open. Brush, tree limbs and entire trees have to be constantly cleared by using chain saws, loppers, axes, etc. The Trails group would have to provide this maintenance over the long distances and for an indefinite period and on a permanent basis. Several articles have appeared on the internet where after a period of time, the required maintenance on a trail slows down, or stops, and the trails revert back to nature.(the pictures look terrible).

**Rails progress:**

Although the Trails Group say the rail folks can never raise sufficient funds to even repair the washout, we have recently received a much lower bid and have enough pledged funds to repair the washout to El Dorado county requirements and can start right away. Also, the supervisors should pay a visit to our Folsom "Y" yard and see the rail equipment we have attained in order to proceed and see the progress made on our prime diesel/electric switch engine and our converted flat car to carry people on, which are both nearing completion.

**Final Conclusion:**

The Supervisors are responsible to represent the entire county. One group in one area should not have preeminence over all the other areas represented. Most people in El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park (the population majority) are not even aware of what is going on and certainly must be informed prior to the Supervisors taking any action on this matter.

Sincerely,      Richard Rein, 512 Santa Cruz Ct., El Dorado Hills, CA 95762  
e-mail: dickrein@juno.com