

This message regards item #18-0997 on the agenda for El Dorado County Parks & Recreation Commission

Hello,

I support the Placerville & Sacramento Valley Railroad and their efforts to operate full-sized trains on the Placerville Branch in El Dorado County. This railroad is a unique part of California's past that needs to be preserved and that can also generate profit.

A functional tourist railroad alongside a paved trail can attract thousands of people to the area. This has potential to stimulate the local economy. Having a paved trail next to the railroad will allow more people to enjoy the area. People can come for the trail, the railroad, or both. El Dorado County does not need to exclude any groups of people.

I live near El Dorado Hills and enjoy hiking or biking along the area's trails. I have heard about plans to remove the railroad in order to build a new paved trail along this route. The claim I have heard is that this proposed trail and the railroad cannot exist simultaneously. I think this notion is ridiculous, as it is currently in direct conflict with infrastructure in local areas, such as Sacramento. There, the California State Railroad Museum operates an excursion train along the river, and along this route there is a parallel trail for bicyclists and foot traffic.

As a bicyclist myself, I've ridden along the side of a many roads with cars and trucks driving past at unnervingly high speeds. It's logical to make the assumption that, while riding nearby a railroad, you would be subjected to the same upsetting factors. This is not true. Firstly, cars and trucks are instructed to drive upon the road, there is no mechanical force preventing them from leaving the roadway, with the exception of guard rails or curbs, however I have ridden along plenty of roads without these. Railroad equipment is forced to travel a specific path, defined by the track. Pedestrians and cyclists on a nearby path can be reassured that the train will not suddenly veer off its path and strike them. Secondly, the trains on the P&SVRR travel at a much slower speed than typical road traffic, considerably reducing any anxiety. Finally, there is much less traffic on this railroad than typical roads. A majority of the time a person is nearby this railroad, there is no traffic at all.

El Dorado County and the surrounding areas will benefit from the construction and restoration of this railroad. Bicyclists, hikers, pedestrians and railroad enthusiasts can all enjoy the area without the need to exclude any group. I support the efforts of the P&SVRR to operate full-sized trains on this route for the enjoyment of the local population, and the benefit of El Dorado County.

- Glen G.



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