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12-10-19 BOS Meeting Item #31 (19-0998) - Latrobe Railroad Storm Damage Repairs.

1 message

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Mon, Dec 9, 2019 at 12:08 PM

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Cc: Jackie Neau <jackie.no@gmail.com>

To: the Honorable Members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors:

This letter is in regard to item #31 (19-0998) on the consent agenda for the 12-10-19 board meeting titled Henningson Lotus Park & Latrobe Railroad Storm Damage Repairs.

I'm very disappointed that the plan for Latrobe railroad repairs does not include a route for the El Dorado Trail, a dirt trail that follows the railroad corridor from the Sacramento county line to Placerville. The section where the track washed out has always been a major obstacle for the trail, which was exacerbated when the original washout repairs were completed several years ago. It's a shame that significant construction work will be done without providing a route for the trail, and that even more obstacles for the trail may be created by the project. The trail was also damaged by the flood – two truckloads of gravel had been hauled in and used to create a trail crossing over the track. The flood washed the gravel away, but the county apparently does not see any value in repairing the trail.

Also, the plans for the project state that the barbed wire fence will be rebuilt in its current location. Doing so may perpetuate an illegal encroachment on the SPTC corridor. The existing barbed wire fence runs up to the sides of the original six foot culvert, and at that location is well inside the boundaries of the corridor, which is 100 feet wide. The fence should be moved out to the boundaries of corridor. Doing so would provide enough clearance between the fence and the track to allow for the construction of a trail bridge over Latrobe Creek, which would help in providing a route for the trail through the area.

For nearly ten years, the El Dorado trail has passed through the construction area with regular use by mountain bikers, equestrians, hikers, and runners. I'm working with a group of other trail advocates to improve the trail. The CEQA study for that project was completed several years ago, permits were obtained, and we have received \$20,000 in grant funding. We are now in the process of upgrading the trail to appropriate environmental standards by installing bridges and culverts and rerouting the trail to correct drainage issues. It is troubling that this ongoing project is not even acknowledged in the railroad repair plans, let alone incorporated into the plans, especially given the many hours of manual labor performed by others and me to improve the trail.

Sincerely,

Don Rose

Live to Ride. Ride to Live.