The Great Redwood Trail
Master Plan
Workshop Summary
Willits

In-Person Workshop
with 69 Attendees
at Willits Community Center
on March 23, 2023
Willits Community Workshop Agenda

Station 0. Welcome
Objective: Welcome station to orient people to the layout of the workshop and other stations.

Materials:
- Sign-in sheets
- Workshop Flyer that includes a map of the Great Redwood Trail (GRT) on one side and a description of the workshop activities by station on the other side. (pages 5 and 6)

Activity: Participants sign-in, learn about layout of workshop stations, and receive nametags and directions.

Station 1. The Great Redwood Trail Vision
Objective: Share information with participants about the Great Redwood Trail background, extents, and timeline; the GRT Master Plan purpose, vision, process, and schedule; and rail trails/railbanking.

Materials:
- **Board 1**: Vision and GRT Master Plan Overview. Shows a map of the entire GRT and provides information on the GRT and a timeline showing how we got to present day. (page 7)
- **Board 2**: GRT Master Plan Process. Includes a project schedule and information on what a master plan is, the community outreach process, and stakeholder groups being consulted during the process. (page 8)
- **Board 3**: Rail trails and Railbanking. Defines rail trails and railbanking, including photos of examples of each. (page 9)

Activity: Staff to help direct people to different workshop stations and answer questions participants have about the project and timeline.

Station 2. Trail Best Practices
Objective: Share trail best practices related to key topics surrounding the Great Redwood Trail. Illustrate possible solutions to these key challenges and learn more about specific concerns of workshop participants.

Materials:
- **Board 1**: Provides information and case studies for “Protect and Restore the Environment” and “Support Firefighting Access and Emergency Response.” (page 10)
- **Board 2**: Provides information and case studies for “Be Good Neighbors” and “Proactive Approach to Homelessness.” (page 11)
- **Board 3**: Provides information and case studies for “Create and Inviting and Comfortable Trail Experience.” (page 12)
- Flip charts for notetaking
- Post-it notes

Activity: Staff take notes regarding participants’ key concerns and additional ideas related to trail best practices. See images of notes on pages 13 to 14.
Station 3. Opportunity Mapping

Objective: Collect local knowledge on the corridor from the public to help guide planning of recreation opportunities, connector trails, access points, and destinations.

Materials:
- Board 1: South Mendocino County map with alignment. (page 15)
- Board 2: North Mendocino County map with alignment. (page 16)
- Board 3: Humboldt and Trinity Counties map with alignment. (page 17)
- Board 4: North Humboldt County map with alignment. (page 18)
- Board 5: Willits zoomed-in map with alignment. (page 19)

Activity: Participants use three colored stickers to mark key trail access points (red sticker); recreation opportunities such as water access, other trails, and parks (blue sticker); and destinations such as local landmarks, businesses, and scenic views (green sticker). Participants can also write additional details on the boards or on post it notes. See images of notes on pages 20 to 31.

Station 4. Trail Experience

Objective: Collect feedback from the public on what amenities they want the trail to offer and the “look and feel” of the trail that they prefer.

Materials:
- Board 1: Look and Feel. Shows different aesthetic styles for the trail through example images and inspiration images. (page 32)
- Board 2: Amenities. Shows eight types of amenities with example images. (page 33)

Activities: On Board 1, participants are asked to vote for their preferred aesthetic using stickers (one sticker per person). On Board 2, participants are asked to vote for their preferred amenities; three stickers each, which can be distributed all on one item or spread out on different amenities. On each board, participants can also write additional details on the boards or on post it notes. See images of notes on pages 34 to 37.

Station 5. Trail Towns

Objective: Collect feedback from the public on what types of businesses they want near the trail and what types of businesses already exist in their community.

Materials:
- Board 1: Economic Benefit Assessment Overview. Explains how the GRT can economically benefit communities and provides a QR code for participants to access the full assessment. (page 38)
- Board 2: Economic Opportunities and Trail Oriented Development. Provides information on different economic opportunities along trails and trail-oriented development, with example images. (page 39)
- Boards 3 & 4: Asks participants four questions about makes their community unique, as well as how the GRT could support their community and visa-versa. (pages 40 and 41)
Activity: Participants write down responses to the question prompts on boards 3 & 4. Participants are also asked to look at what other people have written and add stickers to other responses to show support for any they agree with. See images of notes on pages 42 to 45.

Station 6: Willits Rail Trail
Objective: Share information about the design of the Willits Rail Trail.

Materials:
• Boards – to be developed by Willits Rail Trail design team.

Station 7: Kids Station
Objective: Provide space for kids to provide creative feedback.

Materials:
• Blank paper and coloring-books
• Markers and crayons

Activity: Children are asked to draw what they want to see on the Great Redwood Trail.
Welcome to the Great Redwood Trail Master Plan Community Workshop!

We want to hear from you! Visit each station to learn more about the Master Plan and share your ideas. Each station is numbered and has different content and activities.

1. **TRAIL VISION**
   - Learn all about the vision for the Great Redwood Trail and the Master Plan. **Start at this station!**

2. **TRAIL BEST PRACTICES**
   - Learn about key challenges to be addressed and provide feedback on the topics important to you.

3. **OPPORTUNITY MAPPING**
   - Share your local knowledge of destinations and opportunities along the trail corridor.

4. **TRAIL EXPERIENCE**
   - Help inform the look and feel of the trail and the amenities along it.

5. **TRAIL TOWNS**
   - Learn about the economic benefits of the trail and tell us what makes your trail town unique.

6. **WILLITS RAIL TRAIL**
   - Learn about the Willits Rail Trail design from City Staff and design team.

Welcome to the Great Redwood Trail Master Plan Community Workshop!

We want to hear from you! Visit each station to learn more about the Master Plan and share your ideas. Each station is numbered and has different content and activities.
Learn more and stay involved at: GreatRedwoodTrailPlan.org
WHAT IS THE GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL?

The Great Redwood Trail is envisioned as a 316-mile rail-trail project connecting California’s San Francisco and Humboldt Bays. Once completed, it will be the longest rail-trail in the United States and will traverse scenic landscapes including old-growth redwood forests, oak woodlands and vineyards, and the dramatic Eel River Canyon.

The Great Redwood Trail will connect the many unique communities of Marin, Sonoma, Mendocino, Trinity, and Humboldt Counties, creating a transformational economic engine and boosting healthy recreation for all in the North Coast region.

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**1998**
Operation of the NWP railroad ceased

**2018**
SB 1029 - Feasibility Reports

**2021**
SB 69 - Great Redwood Trail Act Passed
Transferred Sonoma & Marin to SMART
Created the Great Redwood Trail Agency (GRTA)
Requires the rail corridor be preserved via railbanking

**2022 - Present**
Railbanked from Willits north (October)
Kicked Off the Master Plan (October)
WHAT IS A MASTER PLAN?

The master plan is a high-level roadmap for Mendocino, Trinity, and Humboldt Counties that will provide guidance on:

- Operations & maintenance
- Trail design
- Cultural & natural resource protection
- Habitat restoration
- Project prioritization
- Funding sources

The master plan will be informed by:

- In-person and virtual community meetings
- Small group problem solving meetings
- Tabling at events in your community

The project team is consulting a wide range of people including:

- Tribes
- First Responders
- Business Owners
- Farming & Ranching Community
- Local Leaders

MASTER PLAN SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2022</th>
<th>2023</th>
<th>2024</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FALL</td>
<td>WINTER</td>
<td>SPRING</td>
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<tr>
<td>LISTEN &amp; LEARN</td>
<td>BUILD CONSENSUS</td>
<td>REFINING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Gathering + Outreach</td>
<td>Develop Recommendations</td>
<td>Develop Conceptual Designs</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Website &amp; Survey Open</td>
<td>- Trail Guidelines</td>
<td>- Priority Trail Segments</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Focus Group Meetings</td>
<td>- Evaluation Criteria - Trail Prioritization</td>
<td>- Trail Design Criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting</td>
<td>- Conceptual Designs for Priority Segments</td>
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</table>
WHAT IS A RAIL TRAIL?

- Multi-use public paths created from former railroad corridors
- Model used across the country
- Over 25,000 miles in the US with over 1,000 miles in CA
- Rail trails support recreation, economic development, tourism, and environmental restoration in towns and rural areas

Railbanking is a method, established in the National Trails System Act, to preserve an out-of-service rail corridor through interim use as a trail until a railroad might need the corridor again for rail service. The Great Redwood Trail Agency is mandated to railbank the former North Coast Railroad Authority rail corridor with the Surface Transportation Board. This use of railbanked corridors as trails has preserved thousands of miles of rail corridors that would otherwise have been abandoned.
Protect and Restore the Environment

The trail design will address negative impacts from rail use. Trail projects will include:

- Restoring natural ecosystems and fish and wildlife habitats
- Restoring creeks and fish passage
- Protecting Native American cultural heritage
- Protecting waterways and improve water quality
- Removing abandoned rail equipment
- Restoring bridge and tunnel structures

Case Study: Elk River Restoration & Trail Project

The City of Eureka restored 114 acres of the Elk River estuary while constructing 1-mile of the Great Redwood and Eureka Waterfront Trail. The project restored critical estuarine habitat for fish and wildlife. This new section of Great Redwood Trail serves as an elevated berm that helps protect the coast from sea level rise.

Support Firefighting Access and Emergency Access

The Great Redwood Trail will support regional fire safety and emergency response by:

- Serving as a firebreak
- Providing emergency vehicle access to remote areas
- Building partnerships with local agencies to address fire and safety issues
- Restricting and managing campfires

Case Study: Sonoma County Trails as Fire Breaks

In Sonoma County, trails have been used as fire breaks to protect neighboring communities from major fires. Examples include Trione-Annadel State Park, Foothill Regional Park, Hood Mountain and others. Trails in these parks served as access points for fire fighting, fire breaks during fire incidents, and control lines for prescribed fires.
Be Good Neighbors

Research has shown that trail users stay on designated trails. The master plan process and future design phases will work with adjacent landowners to explore:

- Trail management solutions to maintain a clean and safe trail
- Rules and regulations to manage trail use and restrict undesirable activities
- Enforcement, patrols, and emergency response plans
- Design strategies to address concerns of adjacent neighbors and businesses, such as signage, fencing, landforms, and landscape buffers to encourage respectful trail use and increase privacy

Case Study: AG RESPECT Program

The Napa Vine Trail, a rail-trail traveling through vineyards and communities in Napa Valley, developed the AG RESPECT program to address agricultural community concerns. The guidelines were collaboratively developed by active agricultural operations and trail advocates. Signage, education, and trail management policies now help address top concerns from the agricultural community and reduce conflicts with trail users.

Proactive Approach to Homelessness

Much of the trail will be in rural and isolated areas that typically do not experience homeless encampments. However, sections in cities and developed communities with resources will require thoughtful and proactive responses to address encampments. Solutions could include:

- Working closely with homelessness outreach programs, county agencies, and continuums-of-care
- Designing standards for the trail that minimize the potential for unauthorized camping
- Coordinating with local agencies to provide active programming and events - research has shown that “public eyes” on trails and parks discourage camping
- Regular patrols and trail managers to contact when necessary
- Routine trail maintenance and management strategies

Case Study: Downtown Streets Team

City of San Jose worked with several local non-profits to address encampments along the Guadalupe River Trail. The non-profit, Downtown Streets Team, connects unhoused residents along the trail with services and provides opportunities for employment through trail cleanups. Peace Officers and young adults from the local Conservation Corps patrol the trail to keep ‘eyes on the street’ and clean up nuisances.
Create an Inviting Trail Experience

MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE
Well-maintained trails have been proven to deter crime and create a safe experience for recreation. The Great Redwood Trail maintenance and management plan will include:

- Routine maintenance plan for trailheads and restrooms
- Trail rules and regulations
- Nuisance abatement procedures
- Anti-graffiti coating on trail amenities
- Incorporate design elements, such as benches, interpretive panels, and public art into the trail

CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH TRAIL DESIGN
The greatest deterrent to crime is creating a trail that is actively used and loved by the local community. Strategies include:

- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Well-lit and highly visible trailheads and access points
- Public art and murals
- Regular programming, including community events and races
- Overlapping uses, including visitor-serving businesses that face the trail

PATROLS & ENFORCEMENT
The master plan will include enforcement strategies such as:

- Coordinating with law enforcement
- Exploring options for routine volunteer patrols
- Creating a standard mile marker system to allow for quick emergency response

Case Study: LA River Rangers Program
This program employs trained staff and youth to patrol trails to provide safety monitoring and cleanup along the LA River Greenway.

Case Study: CV Link
Highly visible access points with lighting and wayfinding. Amenities feature anti-graffiti coating that facilitates easy maintenance.

Case Study: Appalachian Trail Conservancy “Ridgerunners”
The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has a trail patrol program called “Ridgerunners”. Teams of volunteers and paid staff patrol the trail, providing assistance to hikers, monitoring trail conditions, and reporting any issues.
Looking forward to having a B&B in Dos Rios!
Love the idea of going from one end to the other without dealing with traffic.

Concession Trips
Trios & Tours

Kiosks to advertise local events & way finding signs to local need by businesses
CONCERNS & ISSUES

Sanitation/Trash
Privacy
Cost

Let's talk to geologists, scientists at UC Davis about their environmental concerns!

The bike trails through Europe have road signs and services designed especially for pedestrians & bikes.

Will there be campgrounds along the way?
How will medical services get to people on trail if needed?

Concerned about resident dogs and traveling dogs?

Planning:
- Fix responsibility/FINAL lead?
- Camp fire spread

What about Trash?

Recycling: Downtown Street Team example,
- My recent experience at the Guadalupe River Trail was filled with trash and nothing
- Managed & unmanaged campgrounds is perhaps this is not the most successful example

Strategic locations of restroom facilities for cost effectiveness
Instructions:

**STEP 1**
You are the local expert. Think about the destinations and opportunities you can envision for the Great Redwood Trail.

**STEP 2**
Mark a pin on the map for a destination or opportunity. There are three colors of pins:

- **Access (red)** - These are where you would prefer to get on the trail.
- **Destination (blue)** - These are great existing destinations along the trail, such as businesses, parks, or amazing views.
- **Opportunity (green)** - These are opportunities for new parks, new businesses or development, or future water access.

**STEP 3**
Mark as many destinations or opportunities as you would like. Add a sticky note next to your pin with any additional details! (i.e. Great view of Eel River Canyon)
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Help us identify trail destinations and opportunities in South Humboldt and Trinity Counties!
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Help us identify trail destinations and opportunities in Willits!
Help us identify trail destinations and opportunities in North Humboldt County!

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Map of Humboldt County with various destinations marked with pins.
Help us identify trail destinations and opportunities in South Humboldt and Trinity Counties!
Removal invasives

Restoration with a small footprint

Appreciating this corridor for what it is - native plants using the bridges

Wilderness trail on the Keel Seasonal access

Coho Fish
"The Slab" rope swing
Thought that's on private property

Wilderness trail in the Reel
C seasonal accessibility
C don't fish
Appreciating the corridor for what it is - native plants using the bridges.
Help us identify trail destinations and opportunities in Willits!
HOW DO YOU WANT THE GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL TO LOOK AND FEEL?

**STEP 1**
Take a sticker from the bag below!

**STEP 2**
Vote for the look and feel option you like the most!

**STEP 3**
Add a sticky note to the board and tell us why you like or dislike an option!

---

**Vibrant Culture**
Embrace the contemporary culture with “stations” in each town, with bold public art and space for local events.

---

**Green & Blue Ribbon**
Connect the corridor by celebrating local ecology and hydrology, with natural materials and native landscapes.

---

**Passage Through Time**
Tell the history of the corridor, through historic artifacts and materials that celebrate past peoples and industries of the corridor.
WHAT TRAIL FEATURES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

**STEP 1**
Take three stickers from the bag below!

**STEP 2**
Vote for the trail features that you care most about!
You can spend all three of your “votes” however you like - spread amongst three choices or all on one!

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campgrounds</th>
<th>Restrooms</th>
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<td><img src="image1" alt="Campground Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Restroom Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<th>River Access &amp; Boat Launches</th>
<th>Interpretive or Educational Elements</th>
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<td><img src="image3" alt="River Access Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Interpretive Image" /></td>
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<th>Shade</th>
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<td><img src="image6" alt="Shade Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<th>Rest Areas &amp; Overlooks</th>
<th>Landscape &amp; Ecology</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Rest Area Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Landscape Image" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
TRAIL EXPERIENCE

WHAT TRAIL FEATURES ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

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CAMPGROUNDS

RESTROOMS

RIVER ACCESS & BOAT LAUNCHES

INTERPRETIVE OR EDUCATIONAL ELEMENTS

PUBLIC ART

SHADE

REST AREAS & OVERLOOKS

LANDSCAPE & ECOLOGY
HOW DO YOU WANT THE GREAT REDWOOD TRAIL TO LOOK AND FEEL?

**STEP 1**
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**Vibrant Culture**
Embrace the contemporary culture with "stations" in each town, with bold public art and space for local events.

**Green & Blue Ribbon**
Connect the corridor by celebrating local ecology and hydrology, with natural materials and native landscapes.

**Passage Through Time**
Tell the history of the corridor, through historic artifacts and materials that celebrate past peoples and industries of the corridor.
Maybe more

Low to camping

Shelter vs. campground

Horse camping - corrals

Free or

$10/night
I did not vote for this one, but near higher traffic areas (town's) parking lots, etc.
It may be necessary...
...people who don't know how to poop properly in the country can make a mess

IN CITY LIMITS

Well maintained
How Will the Great Redwood Trail create Economic Benefits for my Community?

The Great Redwood Trail will be a transformational economic engine in Northern California. The immense scale and scenic beauty of the completed trail will create new recreational experiences that will become destinations for the entire state and beyond, with 6.1 to 9.2 million trips expected annually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recreation, Tourism, and Retail Benefits</th>
<th>Food/Meals</th>
<th>Retail Establishments</th>
<th>Bicycle Rentals</th>
<th>Lodging</th>
<th>Entertainment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Great Redwood Trail is expected to have 2 to 3.1 million trips annually by visitors from outside the region. New tourism from the Great Redwood Trail will be able to support increased economic development near and along the trail, such as expanded or new lodging, restaurants, rentals, and retail.</td>
<td>$23,519,000</td>
<td>$5,972,000</td>
<td>$398,000</td>
<td>$29,905,000</td>
<td>$1,899,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>$62,693,000 annual revenue</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Benefits</th>
<th>Transportation Benefits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural communities in Northern California experience significantly higher rates of stroke, heart disease, vehicular collisions, and death than the rest of the state. Benefits from the trail will include:</td>
<td>The Great Redwood Trail will create new opportunities for local residents and visitors to walk and bike more frequently as a means of transportation for short trips, such as going to the park, running errands, or getting to and from work and school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Increased physical activity levels</td>
<td>▶ Reduced vehicle crash costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Increased cardiovascular health</td>
<td>▶ Reduced road maintenance costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▶ Fewer vehicular collisions</td>
<td>▶ Reduced household vehicle operation cost savings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$38,455,000 annual cost savings</td>
<td>$2,420,000 annual cost savings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Total Benefits: $102,568,000 |

Learn More:
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

The Great Redwood Trail will draw visitors to communities along the trail. Visitors will spend on meals, lodging, entertainment and retail shops. Economic development strategies can help maximize the positive impact on the trail.

Economic Development strategies may include:

▶ Expansion of existing businesses near the trail
▶ New businesses to cater to trail users including:
  ♦ Restaurants, cafes and coffee shops
  ♦ Retail shops and outfitters
  ♦ Hotels, B&Bs
  ♦ Equipment
▶ Relocation of existing businesses - companies often choose to locate in communities that offer a high level of amenities as a means of attracting and retaining employees
▶ Development and revitalization of depressed areas, such as converting vacant building or lots into businesses
▶ Agritourism such as:
  ♦ Cannibis or vineyard farm tours
  ♦ Farm stays
  ♦ Private campgrounds from adjacent landowners

Case Study:
The Great Allegheny Passage

The Great Allegheny Passage is a 150-mile multi-use rail-trail between Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Cumberland, Maryland. An economic development trail program included the following:

▶ Economic impact studies and trail counts
▶ Consistent trail-wide marketing
▶ A business network
▶ Coaching and capital for business owners

As a result, trail visitors have increased tenfold, and 65 new businesses and 270 new jobs have been created. The overall economic impact of the GAP now reaches $50 million each year.
What makes your community a special place to visit?

How could the trail tell your community’s history or honor leaders in your community?
What type of new businesses would benefit from the trail?

What existing businesses can visitors go to support the local economy?
What makes your community a special place to visit?

- BIRD WATCHING
- Frontier Days
- Redwood Industry
- Clam Farm Tourism
- Wetlands
- Flora & Fauna
- Bypass Mitigation Area
- Ditto
- Begins a Rail Trail
- Beauty
- Nature
- River
- A river runs through it....
- The Arch
- Many
- Sea bass cut
- Welcome to Webb
- Howwood
- Wrecker
- Emerald
- Triangle
- Less
- People
- Wetland
- Restoration
- How could the trail tell you
How could the trail tell your community’s history or honor leaders in your community?

- We had a mini-Trail of Tears up to Cove Jo.
- Railroad History in Dos Rios
- We can honor indigenous sites.
- Tell about the Russian fur traders; the Spanish conquistadors & the Mexicans who settled California
- Does it need to?
- Native History
  - Train History
  - Logging History
  - Natural History
- Caves with cave paintings along Elk River
What existing businesses can visitors go to support the local economy?

- Bicycle rental/repair
- Any business that can expand their offerings for trail goers—water, snacks, rest areas, etc.
- Spor Time from Center is on the trail
- Bike shop
- OUTDOOR STORE
- CROSBY STORE
- ARBING CAMPERS
- MTA
- Marah
- Ridgewood Ranch 7398
- Commercial St: Art Center, Brick House, Curry Ramen, Museum, Library, Roots of Motion, Park
- Cat's Meow
- Flying Dog Pizza
- Brickhouse Cafe
What type of new businesses would benefit from the trail?

- Coffee shop
- Biking / Wildlife Shuttle service
- Bike rentals
- Campgrounds
- Hut to Hut

- Deli & outdoor gear
- Response for campers
- Huts, backcountry

- Electric mountain bike rentals set up like time stations in S.F.

- White water rafting, kayaking
- Stand up paddle
- Boating, rowing
- Fishing (fishing许可)

- Renting boots / skis / equipment
- Renting huts / for trail

- Hostels
- hut rentals along trail

- Bed & Breakfast in Dos Rios
- Local music events should be advertiseable.
- Fish as the street fair Pete has been proposing.