

UpState RailConnect Committee

Dedicated to Completion of the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study

Meeting Announcement

October 30, 2013

10:00 AM

**Trinity County Public Utilities District Conference Room
26 Ponderosa Street, Weaverville CA**

AGENDA

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Public Comment**
- 3. Review of Agenda**
- 4. Approval of minutes from September 11, 2013 meeting (action anticipated)**
- 5. Discussion on Feasibility Study funding progress (action anticipated)**
- 6. Discussion on Draft RFQ (action anticipated)**
- 7. Future meeting schedule discussion (action anticipated)**
- 8. Reports**
 - a. Staff**
 - b. Humboldt/Eureka representatives**
 - c. Trinity representatives**
 - d. Tehama Representatives**
 - e. UpState California Economic Development Council representatives**
 - f. Northern California Tribal Chairmen's Association representatives**
- 9. Task Assignments/Items for Next Agenda**
- 10. Next Meeting/Adjourn**

For information regarding this meeting, please contact the *Upstate RailConnect Committee* at landbridgealliance@gmail.com

Or see

www.ci.eureka.ca.gov/depts/council/rail_study.asp

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Dedicated to Completion of the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study

September 11, 2013 Minutes (Subject to Approval)

**Trinity County Public Utilities District Conference Room
26 Ponderosa Street, Weaverville CA**

1. Introductions

Vice-Chair Bohn called the meeting to order at 10:18 AM. The following Committee Members were present: City of Eureka Councilmember Marian Brady; Tehama County CAO Bill Goodwin; Trinity County Supervisor John Fenley and CAO Wendy Tyler; Upstate California Economic Development Council General Manager Alison O’Sullivan; and Humboldt County Supervisor Rex Bohn and Representative David Tyson.

Committee Members Absent: City of Eureka Councilmember Lance Madsen; County of Trinity Supervisor Debra Chapman; Upstate California Economic Development Council Board President Brynda Stranix; Tehama County Supervisor Steve Chamblin and Northern California Tribal Chairmen’s Association representative Nick Angeloff.

Staff: David Hull

Guests: John Troughton; Carter Troughton.

- 2. Public Comment** – Bill Goodwin introduced John and Carter Troughton. John is a Senior Director with Cushman & Wakefield, a commercial real estate brokerage firm. John noted that he thinks the alternative rail route project could be a great opportunity and that he is interested in helping the Upstate RailConnect Committee. The Committee engaged John in a broad discussion on the potential of Humboldt Bay’s harbor, potential shipping and status of highway connections to the harbor.

3. Review of Agenda

Motion by Fenley, Seconded by Tyson to approve the September 11, 2013 agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of minutes from July 31, 2013 meeting

Tyson moved for approval of the July 31, 2013 minutes; Seconded by Fenley. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Feasibility Study Funding Progress

Grants: David Hull reported that the award notification of the CalTrans Community Based Transportation Planning Grant was delayed until the end of September.

Private Sources: David Hull reported that Land Bridge Alliance east and west continue to pursue funding and funding pledges. LBA is now centered on producing educational materials as well as the potential CalTrans grant match. They are also making private funding contacts in the event the CalTrans grant is not awarded to the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study.

Foundations: David Hull reported that work is just beginning to engage several private foundations in the funding of the feasibility study and that work continues.

Bill Goodwin followed up on RailConnect Committee discussion at their June 26, 2013 meeting where the Upstate RailConnect Committee's approach to coordinating funding of all or part of the feasibility study by the private sector was discussed. The RailConnect Committee discussed the findings from the June meeting noting that the goal of the RailConnect Committee was to keep on with the Feasibility Study while supporting private efforts.

In order to officially memorialize that goal, Goodwin made a motion that THE UPSTATE RAILCONNECT COMMITTEE WILL CONTINUE ACTIVITIES TO COMPLETE THE FEASIBILITY STUDY AND NOT HINDER PRIVATE ACTIVITIES WHILE CONTINUING THE UPSTATE RAILCONNECT COMMITTEE'S MORE GLOBAL PROCESS. Brady seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Discussion on Draft Scope of Work and RFQ

David Hull noted that the core of the RFQ for the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study will be the Scope of Work that the selected consultants will need to follow. Hull also noted that since November 2012, the UpState RailConnect Committee and its members have continually added to the original draft Scope of Work as community members provided suggestions. Since the Scope of Work has not changed since June 2013, Hull suggested it was time to add more detail to the Scope of Work. Therefore, Hull went through each of the Tasks to be potentially included in the Scope of Work. The RailConnect Committee discussed and edited each of the Tasks one by one. The resultant draft Scope of Work is as follows:

Task 1: Literature Review

Review pertinent information and studies from public and private sources relevant to examining the feasibility of an alternative rail route connecting Humboldt Bay's harbor to the national rail network in the Sacramento valley.

Task 2: Identify Potential Routes

Determine location of a minimum of three routes. For this study a "route" is defined as a geographic depiction of an area between a connection on the Northwestern Pacific rail line in the Humboldt Bay region and a connection to a mainline Class 1 railroad in the Sacramento Valley. The "area" is defined as a swath with dimensions ranging from 100' to 1,000' in width between the points on the Northwestern Pacific rail line and the connection in the Sacramento valley. The proposed "swaths" can vary in size within any given route provided they stay within the defined range.

- The three routes will be chosen based upon the following criteria:*
- Minimum number of tunnels and bridges*
- Minimum number of environmental impacts – environmental impacts shall be assessed at a minimum within an area 1/8 of a mile from either side of the route "swath"*
- Grade shall meet industry standards*
- Track geometry to be aligned for most efficient operations*
- Minimum disruption to communities along the route*

Task 3: Land Ownerships

List ownership of land within the proposed rail routes and within 1/8 of a mile on either side of the rail routes. Task 3 is to include Assessor's Parcel Number, acreage of parcel, legal owner of parcel, legal owner's contact information, date of last sale of the property, purchase price of last sale of the property, assessed valuation of the property, and zoning including any overlay designations.

The Consultant shall also endeavor to ascertain willingness of each landowner to sell the property for rail purposes or if property is currently for sale. Consultant shall also identify any existing uses or encumbrances on the property.

Task 4: Economic Benefit to the Entire Rail Corridor

Task 4.1 Assessment of Market Potential

Describe potential shipping trends over the next 25 years and 50 years by industry and commodity category (SIC code) that might benefit or be attracted to a connection to Humboldt Bay's deepwater harbor.

Task 4.2 Assessment of Direct, Indirect and Induced Beneficiaries

Examine the potential for job creation, property value increase, construction jobs, dollar multipliers and other beneficiaries throughout a region extending from Humboldt Bay to the Nevada border and extending from Medford, OR south to Oroville, CA.

Task 4.3 Assessment of Impacts to Ports

Consultant will examine the trade, economic and political impacts to the ports of Portland, OR; Astoria, OR; Coos Bay, OR; Sacramento, CA; Stockton, CA; Oakland, CA and Richmond, CA. Consultant shall also include the review of existing contracts and analysis of opportunities for each port.

Task 5: Governance

Develop a matrix of pros and cons for an alternative rail line to be owned by a public entity; owned by a private entity; and owned by a public/private entity. Also to be included is a similar analysis of railroad operation

Task 6: Conceptual Engineering

Identification of any proposed tunnels and bridges and their lengths and construction materials; identification of geologic conditions along proposed rail routes; cross-section of typical rail section; weights of rail; identification of any public and private road crossings; proposed speed of trains; description of any access and construction issues; location of any highway and port connectors including structural connections with NWPRR and Union Pacific; location of proposed sidings; description of track grades.

Task 7: U.S. Security Issues

Assess benefits of an alternative rail route for meeting or improving national and state security needs. In order to assess these benefits, the Consultant shall contact offices of California Emergency Management Services; US Department of Homeland Security; US Department of Customs and Border Security; US Maritime Administration; US Coast Guard and US Department of Defense. Include contact information for agency contacts.

Task 8: Additional Uses of the Rail Line

Identify additional potential uses of the proposed new routes including but not limited to, passenger service, water pipeline, redundant fiber optic line, other utilities and trail. Develop a ranking of potential additional uses by estimated cost; estimated income; contacts; and any special conditions including any potential restrictions on the rail corridor.

Task 9: Estimated Permitting Needs

Identify all local, State and Federal permits necessary to plan, acquire, construct and operate an alternative rail line over the proposed rail routes. Include permit contact information, blank permit forms and a flow chart of the order of permit applications. In addition, this task should also include all California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance measures including the need for any special studies based upon the proposed rail routes.

Task 10: Identify Environmental Issues and Mitigations

Identify all known environmental issues of concern along the proposed rail routes. The issues of concern may include, but are not limited to, sensitive habitat areas, endangered species, areas of special biological significance, geologic hazards, contaminated sites, Tribal, archaeological and residential areas. For any contemplated environmental impact along the proposed routes, propose acceptable mitigation measures with demonstrated agency concurrence.

Task 11: Estimated Development Costs and Timelines

Estimate the development cost and timelines for the proposed routes. Development costs in his context shall include planning, land acquisition/ROW; permitting, CEQA/NEPA compliance, construction management and construction costs broken out as individual components and costs. Similarly, a timeline should be proposed for each cost component.

Task 12: Public Outreach

Conduct three sets of public outreach meetings in Humboldt County, Trinity County and Tehama County. These meetings are to be coordinated with the multi-agency UpState RailConnect Committee. The non-profit organization, Land Bridge Alliance, will make meeting arrangements, provide refreshments and meeting supplies. The three meetings will include 1) pre-feasibility public input meeting; 2) Draft report presentation and public input session; and 3) presentation of the final report. Consultant will provide report after the first meeting identifying significant concerns and support.

Task 13: Final Report

The final report will be structured so as to include at a minimum an Executive Summary; Methods and Results for Tasks 1-11; Feasibility Study Conclusion; Recommendations on next steps; and References/contact information. The Final report will also include an appendix that makes a comparison of the proposed alternative routes using readily available existing information on the north-south rail line. The Executive Summary and Conclusions will include a matrix summarizing a comparison of proposed route alternatives across the results of Tasks 1-11.

7. Future Meeting Discussion

Chair Madsen had asked for this item to be put on the agenda for the Committee to discuss the any potential changes to the Committee's approximately monthly meeting schedule. It was noted that the Caltrans grant award announcement will be made the end of September. If funded, the Committee will need to work on the RFQ and Consultant selection prior to the February 2014 grant funding date. If the CalTrans and grant is not funded, it was discussed that a similar effort will be needed to follow up with private funding opportunities and consultant selection. After some discussion, it was agreed to have a meeting in October 2013 to talk about the grant results, review the draft RFQ and to keep this item on the agenda for discussion.

8. Potential and Scheduled Presentations and Events

David Tyson reported that thanks to Supervisor Fenley, Tyson and Hull made a presentation to a senior's group in Mad River on August 16. Supervisor Fenley suggested he would also work for additional presentation venues in hayfork and Weaverville. I was also discussed that there may be an opportunity for a presentation to the Ruth lake CSD at their annual meeting with the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District.

Bill Goodwin noted that there was no need for any additional presentations in Tehama County at this time.

David Tyson reported that he had been appointed as a member of the 2013 CA Economic Development Summit and that group has a meeting on November 7-8, 2013 in Los Angeles to discuss ideas and projects to improve California's economy.

9. Reports – No reports

10. Task Assignments/Items for the Next Agenda: The Committee agreed the following items should be discussed at the next meeting:

- a. CalTrans grant results
- b. Review the draft RFQ
- c. Future meeting discussion

11. Next Meeting: It was decided that the next meeting will be held in Trinity County on October 30, 2013 in Weaverville, CA.

12. Meeting adjourned: 12:40 PM

Approved:

Lance Madsen, Chair