

Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation – Trail Update

For the past eight years, the Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation has been working in cooperation with community leaders, public officials, Trust for Public Land and Union Pacific – the primary owner of the Central California Traction Co. Rail Corridor – to lay the groundwork for the acquisition and conversion of a 27 mile portion of the CCTC corridor into a trail. The support we have received for the trail concept has been tremendous and the progress we have made has brought us very close to realizing our goal of creating a community trail that will link Sacramento with San Joaquin County.

With the help of the Trust for Public Land, we secured the funding needed to initiate an appraisal of the CCTC rail corridor as requested by the Real Estate Department at Union Pacific. Just prior to launching the appraisal process, we received notice from UP that they now intend to “consider the strategic operational potential for that line into the future.” The effect of this turn of events will preclude CVRTF from moving forward at this time with the acquisition.

Where Do We Go From Here? CVRTF will now change our focus from acquiring the corridor to encouraging UP and Burlington Northern/Santa Fe, the other owners of the CCTC corridor, to sell the land. We believe that their research will confirm what they had determined eight years ago – that it is in their best interest, and that of the adjacent communities, to sell the land for use as an alternative transportation corridor for non-motorized recreation and commuting. The proposed trail will remain in the master plans of the various agencies that were looking forward to its conversion.

What Are The Possible Uses by Union Pacific? If Union Pacific thinks that the corridor is now of some value to them, then they could be considering the following options:

- Storing unused rail cars along the corridor (already happening in the Vineyard community).
- Reserving the corridor in the event the High Speed Rail Authority renews their interest in the CCTC (a recent amendment to the high speed rail bond measure that will appear on the November ballot allows for the Sacramento line to be developed in the first phase of the project).
- Running freight cars between Sacramento and Stockton through the communities of Vineyard, Elk Grove, Wilton, Herald, Galt and Lodi (requiring millions of dollars in upgrades to the rails, ties and trestles).
- Delaying sale of the corridor until real estate prices escalate (most likely option).

The Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation will remain active and will keep the property owners in adjacent communities current on UP’s plans for the corridor.

We sincerely appreciate the support we have been given over the years and encourage all trail supporters to stay tuned – we’re not done yet.

Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation
Post Office Box 12, Wilton, CA 95693
trail@cvrtf.org – www.cvrtf.org