

McGuire: Board rejects Skunk Train's bid to take tracks from Great Redwood Trail

By [UKIAH DAILY JOURNAL](#)

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In a press release this week, State Sen. Mike McGuire (D-Healdsburg) reported that the Great Redwood Trail has cleared another hurdle.

According to McGuire, “the Federal Surface Transportation Board soundly rejected the Mendocino Railway (also known as The Skunk Train) Company’s bid to take over 13 miles of the Great Redwood Trail, (paving) the way for one of the most important steps yet for the Great Redwood Trail – protecting and preserving 175 miles of rail line forever through the rail banking process. This will allow the Great Redwood Trail to begin breaking ground on these miles of line and ensure the former rail right of way remains in public ownership in perpetuity.”

“This is a momentous day for the future of the North Coast and the Great Redwood Trail,” McGuire is quoted as saying in the release. “With this proposal soundly rejected by the federal government, I’m thrilled that we’ll once and for all start moving dirt and getting large swaths of the Great Redwood Trail built.”

McGuire also notes that the timing of the board’s decision “could not be better,” as he is hosting a Town Hall Monday to “review the process for the Great Redwood Trail Master Plan. The public is encouraged to join and be a part of the online event. Some of the nation’s top trail designers and experts will be participating in this much-anticipated kickoff.”

The completed trail would span 320 miles on the former rail line from the San Francisco Bay to Humboldt Bay, “through and near some of the most spectacular landscapes on earth including ancient Redwoods, State and National Parks, golden oak-studded hills, lush vineyards and along the shores of the Eel and Russian Rivers,” McGuire said.

On Monday, McGuire said “we’ll discuss all aspects of the master planning process which is anticipated to take 24-36 months to complete. We’ll get into all of the details including trail construction and alignment, timeline, budget, wildfire prevention and security, community and

neighbor engagement, along with all of the other extensive steps that will be advanced in the months to come.”

The Town Hall will begin at 6:30 p.m. Oct. 24, and you can attend by clicking this link to RSVP: <https://sd02.senate.ca.gov/october-24-great-redwood-trail-master-plan-kick-town-hall>