

UpState RailConnect Committee

Dedicated to Completion of the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release**

UpState RailConnect Committee Kicks off East-West Rail Feasibility Study Process

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Less than one-month after forming the *UpState RailConnect Committee*, the group met in Weaverville to kick off the process for the Alternative Rail Route Feasibility Study. During the three-hour meeting, the Committee members discussed various organizational tasks as well as study specifics.

Under organizational items, the Committee appointed Eureka Councilmember Lance Madsen as Chair and Humboldt County Supervisor Rex Bohn as Vice-Chair. The Committee also agreed that this process was to be as open and transparent as possible.

Under process-specific items, the Committee discussed potential public and private sources of funding for the feasibility study. The Committee also discussed a non-profit organization called the *Landbridge Alliance* and its role in accepting private donations dedicated to the feasibility study. The Committee agreed that the feasibility study process will be a "public" process regardless of whether the funds are from public, private or a combination of funding sources. In addition, the Committee discussed the components of a scope of work for the feasibility study. Committee members were tasked with developing a public input process tailored to each of the members' jurisdiction in order to receive the most complete set of comments and concerns to be addressed in the feasibility study.

The *UpState RailConnect Committee* evolved from a grass-roots citizen-led effort in December 2011 that brought into the spotlight the alternative rail route concept to connect Humboldt Bay's harbor to the national rail network. On January 17, 2012, the City of Eureka took action to lead an effort to inform other governmental agencies of the concept. In less than 10 months, the City of Eureka garnered support from 33 government agencies, labor, business, education, law enforcement and citizen groups representing a vast portion of Northern California. The *UpState RailConnect Committee* is comprised of members from the City of Eureka; County of Humboldt; County of Trinity; County of Tehama and the Upstate California Economic Development Council. The Committee's role is to:

- Conduct public outreach and develop the scope of work for the feasibility study
- Obtain funding for the feasibility study
- Retain a consultant to complete the feasibility study
- Oversee consultant activities
- And if found to be feasible, the Committee will use feasibility study results to identify capital and investors

Committee members in attendance at this meeting included City of Eureka Councilmember Lance Madsen, Councilmember Mike Newman, City Manager David Tyson; County of Humboldt Supervisor Rex Bohn, CAO Phillip Smith-Hanes; County of Trinity Supervisor-elect John Fenley, CAO Wendy Tyler; County of Tehama Supervisor-elect Steve Chamblin, CAO Bill Goodwin; and Upstate California Economic Development Council General Manager Alison O'Sullivan.

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