

Goodbye NCRA, Hello Great Redwood Trail Agency

March 21, 2022



Last Monday, the North Coast Railroad Authority held its final meeting.

After nearly 30 years of controversy, massive policy setbacks and straddling bankruptcy for years - the agency that was charged with trying to bring rail back to the North Coast officially ceased operations, per state law passed by Senate Majority Leader Mike McGuire.

The same day, the Great Redwood Trail Agency sprung to life. This new agency, created by SB 69, will take over the rail corridor and is charged with advancing the master plan later this fall and building the Great Redwood Trail on top of the current rail bed. When fully built, the Great Redwood Trail will run from the San Francisco Bay to Humboldt Bay, becoming the longest rail trail in America.

“The Great Redwood Trail will be a game changer for the North Coast. Over 25,000 miles of former freight rail line have been transitioned to trails over the past 30 years throughout America and we couldn’t be more excited to move the Great Redwood Trail forward here in Northern California,” said McGuire, the author of

the legislative and budget items that created the new agency. “The Great Redwood Trail will be a world class destination for hikers, cyclists and nature lovers here at home and from across the globe. Stretching from San Francisco Bay to Humboldt Bay, the Trail will encompass 300 miles of the most beautiful landscapes on the planet. Monday will be a historic day for our region and we can’t wait to say goodbye to the dysfunctional North Coast Rail Authority and say hello to the Great Redwood Trail.”

The trail will serve not only as a recreational, social and exercise path, but will quickly become an economic driver for the North Coast communities it runs through. Outdoor recreation was a \$93 billion dollar industry in this state before COVID, and the revenue has been steadily climbing to return to that level.