

The Benefits



Benefits of the GSRT to Communities

The recreational opportunities provided by the GSRT are boundless. Hiking, walking, skiing or cycling along historic routes that lead from the flanks of Mount Shasta through National Forests and State Parks, past creeks and waterfalls, and stretch all the way into Burney is a journey that will now be available to people from all over the region, the state, the nation, and the world.

Yet that is not all that the trail will provide.

The loss of the railway brought economic hardship to communities that had thrived during the boom of the timber industry. The Great Shasta Rail Trail brings the rail corridor to life again, draws visitors, providing new economic opportunities for the towns and region. There will be new paths for alternate transportation, new ways to stay active and healthy. These communities will draw visitors and young families to the area with the lure of a healthy life in a land of opportunity.

Increased Recreation

The GSRT will provide a significant increase in access and opportunity for recreation on and through public lands. From any of the communities along the trail, locals and visitors will be able to walk or ride their bikes to Burney Falls or to one of the McCloud River access points for a day of fishing, picnicking, or just enjoying the scenery. Cyclists, cross country skiers, snowshoers, and backpackers will have new ways to access the numerous parks, campgrounds, vistas, and communities along the trail and the GSRT will provide a key link to other established trail systems like the Pacific Crest Trail and the trails of the McCloud River area.



Improved Physical and Mental Health

The GSRT will provide outdoor exercise opportunities to the surrounding communities by providing in town access at all levels of training and ability.

With a gentle grade the trail provides access for easy walking for people of all ages and abilities. At the same time, stretching 80 miles through the woods, the GSRT will provide elite and endurance athletes with a beautiful and challenging training ground. It will also provide a new physical fitness training area for schools and emergency service organizations.

Beyond the obvious physical benefits, outdoor exercise of any duration provides a positive experience that is both restorative and beneficial to mood and self-esteem. Because the GSRT will be easily accessible from many different locations, residents and visitors will be able to quickly avail themselves of the trail for a refreshing and rejuvenating period of exercise. The positive benefits gained from this experience will hopefully lead to a stronger commitment to continued exercise and the potential for a longer, healthier, happier life.

Alternative Transportation

Currently, cyclists who wish to travel between the town of McCloud and local attractions such as the McCloud River Falls, Cattle Camp, and Lakin Dam must ride along State Route 89, sharing the narrow road with fast moving cars and trucks. Similarly, hikers coming off the Pacific Crest Trail must either walk or hitch hike along State Route 299 to reach Burney for supplies and a rest. With the opening of the GSRT, cyclists and backpackers will now be able to reach their destinations safely by avoiding the risks inherent to traveling along a busy highway. Some of the new routes could include:

- ◆ A commuter route between communities such as Burney and Johnson Park for employment, shopping and recreation activities.
- ◆ Trail based bike access into Burney for the 250,000 annual visitors to McArthur–Burney Falls Memorial State Park connecting these visitors with the shops and restaurants in town.
- ◆ Links between the town of McCloud to the McCloud Falls and the Upper McCloud River Trail.
- ◆ Safe access to Burney and other communities for Pacific Crest Trail users.
- ◆ Safe and enjoyable long distance bike travel through the region by providing an alternative to State Route 89.



Socioeconomic

Communities along the trail will realize increased visibility and opportunities as tourist destinations. Marketing and promotional channels will be available through existing GSRT partnerships with the Volcanic Legacy Scenic Byway–All American Road and McArthur–Burney Falls Memorial State Park. Trail use will likely attract new businesses such as one way shuttles and bike rentals. The GSRT will also increase the customer base for existing businesses that serve food or provide lodging and other visitor services.

Additionally, the trail offers new opportunities for event-based tourism. Long distance cycling events; half, full, and ultra marathons and snowshoe and Nordic ski events are all very exciting ways in which communities can entice visitors.





Stewardship

An asset like the GSRT requires long term maintenance and care. The trail winds through forests and riparian environments at many different elevations and thus will require habitat specific maintenance and management. Additionally, the trail structures, crossings, trailheads, access points, interpretive signs, benches, and fencing will all require ongoing maintenance. These efforts will require the work of the whole trail community through collaborative partnerships and volunteerism. This provides an opportunity to bring community service organizations, youth organizations and seniors together with businesses, agencies, and professionals to maintain and enhance the trail and the corridor.

Education

Opportunities for educational experiences abound along the trail corridor. The history of the McCloud Railway is well documented and the stories from that time already draw many a rail buff. Railroad history is embedded within the early years of the timber industry and the westward expansion of the United States. The McCloud Railway rolled through areas rich in the history of tribal culture and the settlers who followed.

Additionally, the GSRT winds through a diverse and beautiful natural environment with vast acreage of tall trees, high mountains, and beautiful rivers. Trail access will allow greater opportunities for study and education at all levels, from access for public and private scientific work to public education regarding habitat, ecosystems, and the importance of forest management practices and resource protections.



And so much more...

In a broader sense, the trail can provide an environment for a stronger social fabric and a broader perspective on the world. Active, healthy locals will interact with active healthy visitors and both groups will have a chance to understand and appreciate their differences through their shared love of the outdoors. The need to achieve common economic goals will bring diverse interests together both within communities and around the region. Finally, the GSRT can provide the nexus for visitors, citizens, businesses and community groups to work together for the health of the communities and the natural environment.

A hundred years ago, settlers came to this region for adventure and a chance to work hard and provide a better life for their families. Today, their descendants are once again pursuing that opportunity through the Great Shasta Rail Trail.



VISIONS



Legend

	Great Shasta Rail Trail		Public Land
	Primary Trailhead (Proposed)		Private Land
	Secondary Trailhead (Proposed)		State Park
	Mile post		Pacific Crest Trail
	Public Campground		Mc Cloud River Trail

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Miles

