

**Press Release**  
**March 30, 2012**  
*For Immediate Release*

Shasta Land Trust (SLT) and our partners proudly announce an agreement has been signed to purchase a railroad right-of-way between McCloud (in Siskiyou County) and Burney (in Shasta County), a property known as the McCloud Railway. The agreement, signed by SLT and the property's owner, 4 Rails, Inc, will ultimately lead to establishment of a public "rail-trail" on the property and is an important milestone following many years of efforts by several local non-profit organizations and 4 Rails. The negotiated purchase price is well below the appraised fair market value of the property, constituting a considerable donation of value by the seller.

Established in the late 1800's, McCloud River Railroad Company was purchased in 1992 by 4 Rails, which is owned by Siskiyou County resident Jeff Forbis. In 2005, the railroad (then operating as McCloud Railway Company) filed for abandonment of that portion of their property between McCloud and Burney. Save Burney Falls, a local non-profit organization, temporarily halted the abandonment process by formally requesting permission to convert the right-of-way into a public trail using a tool called "railbanking." Railbanking was created in the National Trails System Act by act of Congress and allows the right-of-way to be sold to an organization that will preserve the property and manage it for public use and public benefit, until it is again needed for railroad use.

Concerned citizens and local organizations formed a partnership in 2009 in order to acquire the right-of-way and convert it to a public recreation trail, called the Great Shasta Rail Trail (GSRT). This group, called the "Core Team," consists of SLT, Save Burney Falls, McCloud Local First Network, the Volcanic Legacy Community Partnership, and McCloud Trail Association.

The multi-use GSRT will benefit Siskiyou and Shasta counties and the rural communities of McCloud and Burney by stimulating tourism and recreation related commerce, increasing neighboring property values, and attracting new businesses. Increased opportunities for outdoor exercise and recreation provided by the GSRT will improve the quality of life and offer health benefits for residents and tourists. The GSRT will also connect with the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, recreational facilities on adjacent national forest land, and will link to the trails around the McCloud River Falls and McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park.

This railroad right-of-way spans over 80-miles through the forested mountains of northern California and is a significant property in the history of McCloud, Burney, and the surrounding area. The McCloud River Lumber Company owned the original railroad, as well as the original 'company town' of McCloud. When the rails reached Burney in the early 1950's, the town celebrated with a golden spike ceremony. The completed GSRT will be similarly embraced and enjoyed by the surrounding communities, and visitors to the area, for generations to come.

Community contributions and generous grant funding from the McConnell Fund of the Shasta Regional Community Foundation, Burney Chamber of Commerce Donor Fund of the Shasta Regional Community Foundation, and Shasta County Public Health Department have provided crucial support to reach this exciting milestone. Assistance provided by the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) will assist in promoting community outreach and developing trail management and uses. Fundraising efforts are underway to purchase the right-of-way.

For more information about the GSRT, please visit [www.saveburneyfalls.org](http://www.saveburneyfalls.org). To learn about the rails-to-trails process, please visit [www.railstotrails.org](http://www.railstotrails.org).

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