

## FEATHER RIVER RAIL SOCIETY – AGENDA REPORT

DATE: September 9, 2014  
FROM: Eugene Vicknair - Director  
ITEM: Project Report  
SUBJECT: Fencing and Facility Work to date

After having obtained fencing material some 10 years ago at the request of the then sitting Board and having received no volunteers to assist in its placement in the years since, the Board decided to engage a California Conservation Corp crew to perform the fencing work.

A crew out of Chico was engaged for an 8 day "spike". This was delayed due to cost reasons and finally set for July 30 - August 6, 2014.

In the intervening years, some materials for the fence had disappeared. During two weeks before the work week and during the two days prior, I was in Portola and Reno lining up people, materials and missing supplies. I also worked from my office in Fremont arranging inspection with Underground Services and negotiating emergency services access requirements and overall design with the City of Portola, the senior apartments up the hill and other parties abutting the property. I also worked with Kirk Baer to double check the surveying of the property and ensure markers were in place. This included walking the fenceline twice in the weeks ahead of the work. One item that came up at this time was a state code requirement that called for turnaround space for EMS vehicles (required to be completely on our property) if the gate was locked. Eventually, after several consultations with the city and President McClure, an idea was approved that will see the building if a 280' long gravel road adjacent to the eastern fence between the museum entrance road and Colorado Street. This will be one way and EMS / Authorized User access only. This will add about \$4,000 to the final project cost, but is required by state law.

I worked with the CCC supervisor and we coordinated a timetable that, if it held, would have seen all or at least a majority of the fence, minus gates, completed in the 8 days.

The crew arrived on July 30 and began clearing brush from the property line, a task that was not simple due to the terrain. The next day, the first difficulty was encountered that would end up complicating the work. Namely, the ground proved so hard that shovels, picks and even gas augers were useless. Each fence post (and there are over 300 in the fence) needs to be dug 2' to 4' deep, depending on terrain and location in the fence. The crew was unable to penetrate more than 6" - 12" with their equipment and the gas augers. Finally, a Bobcat with power auger was rented from J's Feather River Rentals at a discount. Even this machine could not dig some of the holes near the apartments and I had to improvise a work around.

The end result was that the digging of the holes, planned to take no more than 1-1/2 days, took over 4 days. This was not any fault of the crew, but simply the nature of the ground around the museum.

The second complication was a failure of Underground Services to contact the city of Portola. This was discovered accidentally when the crew was nearly done with the line of fence holes along the eastern edge of the museum property, along what is known as "The Ballfield". A city worker came out and informed us that we were digging over a sewer main that was only 3' to 5' below the surface. We worked with him to verify this and I informed him that Underground Services had cleared us. Turns out he was the USA contact for the city and they had never consulted him. The end result was that several hours of work were wasted and we needed to redig the entire fenceline an additional 5' off the sewer line, plus refill the existing holes. This required several hours.

The final complication was the rain. It rained heavily for at least two days that I am aware of. While the crew did not stop working, it did slow them down.

In the end, the following was accomplished:

- Entire fenceline was cleared of brush and other ground cover. In addition, some ground restoration work was done in the picnic area.
- All needed holes were dug from the new east side entrance near the city corporation yard to the existing fence along the west side of the balloon track, except for holes north of the road along the city and UP property.
- Over 1/2 of the fence posts were placed in concrete and set, reaching to the old entrance road in the west end of the parking lot and covering the east side, hospital property and the apartment property line.

Still to be done:

- Placement of remaining fence posts heading west, including up on the bluff, the picnic area and along the south side of the balloon track.
- Stretching of fence fabric and placement, in select areas, of barb wire.
- Demolition of unneeded fence and reuse of its materials. (Intended to be later work not related to CCC effort)
- Placement of new gates. (Gates not yet acquired.)
- Construction of EMS access road. (Roadbase not yet acquired.)

While I regret that the crew and I could not complete what we intended, we still made it quite a ways. In terms of physical labor, the project is about 2/3 complete minus the gates and EMS road. If we had relied on volunteer crews, we would not be anywhere near this state of completion.

I am working with Kirk Baer to organize some work crews to get together and being stretching fabric and hopefully plant more fence posts. In addition, the CCC crew may be available again for a few days in October (and it may be at no cost) and they have offered to return if they are in fact available. I am working to ensure this project does get completed. If it means I am up there solo stretching fabric, so be it. If anyone would like to assist, they are welcome. Please contact me.

I would like to note that we received a couple of complaints from locals, including one man who was somewhat abusive toward the CCC crew. It appears that many of the local residents (not most of the apartment residents or the properties to our direct south, mostly those along Colorado Street) thought that the eastern portion of our property, including the hospital, belonged to the city or was public land and they have been using regularly to "walk" their pets and otherwise move through the property. During the work we saw several walkers and at least one mountain biker on our property. They were unhappy about the fencing and the one man even threatened to climb it or get it removed. I bring this up as these people represent a liability that was larger in scope than I think many of us realized and also represent another reason to fence the property: asserting our property rights.

In closing, I would like to thank the volunteers who assisted me in this project:

- Matt Parker
- Bart Hansen
- David Elems
- Matt Elems
- Rod McClure
- Charlie Spikes
- Gail McClure

and in particular I want to thank Kirk Baer who assisted with the surveyor, with negotiations with the city and took over supervising the crew during its last few days when I was required back in the Bay Area for both work and convention planning.

And I would like to thank Laramie Griffith and the CCC crew.

If you or a member has ANY question about the fencing work, please contact me directly.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT**

With the completion of the CCC 8 day "spike" and their work to install the new perimeter fence, here is the current financial status of the project.

At the September 2013 Board Meeting, the Board approved expenditure for the CCC work, estimated at \$18,367.80. The Board approved \$19,000 to cover the CCC work only. The final total on the CCC work was \$18,367.80.

At that meeting, an estimate of \$7,000 was given to cover additional materials needed for the project. I was asked to return to the Board for additional approval. In the run up to the work, I made an error and did not come back to the Board for that specific approval. However, in the 2014 budget, \$30,000 was allocated for fencing work.

Here are the expenses for additional material so far and still estimated:

ACE Portola	\$ 1,622.00	Post Hole Concrete
Home Depot	\$ 69.34	fence hardware
Home Depot	\$ 34.43	power pull
Home Depot	\$ 850.44	posts, tools and fence fittings
Tholl Fence Store	\$ 1,944.89	corner posts
J's Feather River Rental	\$ 1,041.50	Bobcat and auger rental

additional expense to date    \$ 5,562.60

About \$700 of the rental expense was unanticipated and was the result of ground that was much harder than expected.

About \$700 to \$1,000 additional materials expense was for materials known to have been delivered to us with the original fencing material, but which was unable to be located or was made useless by being left out in the lay down yard.

This places the total project cost over approval and estimate by about \$1,530.00. This is close to the unanticipated cost totals that occurred during the work session.

Based on actual approved costs specific to the fence at the September 2013 meeting, cost overrun currently is \$4,930.40.

Based on the 2014 approved budget, total costs to date are: \$28,390.40, including \$4,460 in surveying costs. Since line item 70025 – Fence in the 2014 budget is set at \$30,000, this places the fence project currently under budget by \$1,609.60, with an estimated \$3,600 in materials expenses, plus \$4,000 for an EMS access road to go. A difference of \$6,000.

I believe under our normal practices, the budget is the controlling item, which means the fence project is currently under budget, but will go over by completion.

To complete the project fully will require 3 new gates, some additional corner poles and, eventually, the creation of an EMS access road. Costs below:

estimated additional expense	\$3,600.00	gates, possible corner poles
	\$4,000.00	road base, drainage pipe, signs

Note that the additional costs estimated are materials only, the 3 drive gates and hardware, plus the road base for the EMS access road, and anticipates using volunteer crews. The CCC crew reports they may be available to us at no charge for a couple days in October.

The goal is to complete the fence by April 2015, including all gates and the EMS road.