



MEMO

To: NCRA Board of Directors

From: Executive Director Stogner

Date: September 13, 2021

Subject: **Agenda Item E.8 – Discussion and Possible Approval of Contract Extension – Executive Director**

SB 1029(McGuire) and the follow-up bill pending in the State Assembly, SB 69 (McGuire), have established the process and timeline for the final dissolution of the NCRA. As you know, the goal is the transfer of freight responsibility to the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District (SMART) on the southern portion of the line, and the creation of a world-class Great Redwood Trail through the Eel River Canyon and around the Port of Humboldt Bay.

Since January 1, 2019, the NCRA's primary mission has been to assist the California Transportation Agency (CalSTA), the State Department of Finance and Sen. McGuire's staff to complete the assessment necessary to effectuate the orderly dissolution of NCRA and reallocation of the assets and liabilities accumulated since NCRA was created by the state in 1989. Additionally, we have worked collaboratively with outside counsel to begin the establishment of the Great Redwood Trail by railbanking the rail corridor from Willits to Eureka, including the 3 branch lines in Humboldt County.

Thankfully, SB 1029 (McGuire) and SB 69 (McGuire) establish the State of California as a full-fledged partner in what has been NCRA's ongoing struggle to preserve and restore this unbroken 316-mile rail corridor from the national rail interchange in Napa County to the Port of Humboldt Bay.

To complete this process and formally begin the transition to an agency with responsibility for creation of the Great Redwood trail, I am hereby requesting an extension of my current employment contract with the NCRA, without any change in compensation or benefits, until September 30, 2023, with the proviso that the successor agency under SB 69 may terminate the contract at its discretion upon 30 days notice .Please keep in mind that SB 69 calls for the transition of the NCRA to the Great Redwood Trail Agency(GRTA) on March 1,2022, with a deadline to settle staffing plans before July 1,2022.With that in mind, I respectfully request your approval of this proposed employment contract, which legal counsel has reviewed and approved as to form.

