A Historic Route

The Klamath Falls Municipal Railway was the dream of journalist, railroad scout and publicist Robert E. Strahorn. He envisioned a railroad that would connect Klamath Falls with Lakeview, Burns and Bend.

Construction began on July 6, 1917. By 1923 the line had reached the community of Sprague River. Six years later, the railway reached Bly, which became the end of the line for the OC&E Railway.

The new railroad brought growth to the area. Logging camps with spur railroads sprang up almost overnight, and by 1919, four lumber mills were located on the main line. The engines transported carloads of enormous pine logs to the mills, often carrying as much as one million board feet a day.

In 1990, OC&E’s incarnation as a logging railroad ended. Weyerhaeuser Co. railbanked the right-of-way to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, and the transition from a railroad to a trail began.

Trail etiquette:
- Bicyclists and pedestrians: yield to horses. Greet the horse and rider to avoid spooking the animal.
- Equestrians: please travel single file and use the wood chip trail where available.
- Walking with dogs: A 6-foot leash is required. Please remove pet waste from the trail.
- Respect private property adjacent to the trail. You are traveling on a right-of-way.
- Motorized vehicles are prohibited.
- Pack it in, pack it out.
- Discharge of firearms is prohibited.
- Camping is not allowed along the trail, except where designated.

From Rail to Trail

Welcome to Oregon’s longest linear park. The 100-mile trail is built on the old railbed of the Oregon, California, and Eastern Railroad (OC&E). Open all seasons to non-motorized recreation, the trail begins in the heart of Klamath Falls and extends east to Bly and north to the lush Sycan Marsh.

OC&E Woods Line State Trail

Collier Memorial State Park
46000 Hwy 97 N
Chiloquin, OR 97624
541-783-2471

Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
725 Summer St. NE, Suite C
Salem OR 97301
www.oregonstateparks.org
800-551-6949

Support the OC&E by joining Klamath Rails-to-Trails. Email: ocerailstotrails@yahoo.com
Phone: 541-882-3141 or 541-882-0247

Printed on recycled paper
All information or fees subject to change without notice.
This brochure is available in alternative formats upon request.
Call 1-800-551-6949. Oregon Relay for the hearing impaired: dial 711.
www.oregon.gov/CDOT/PA

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1. Urban Section
Klamath Falls to Olene
This paved section of the trail is typically bustling with joggers, walkers, in-line skaters and bicyclists. Mt. Shasta rises to the south as the trail passes through farmland on its way to the tiny community of Olene. Approaching Olene, notice Olene Gap, a naturally-formed narrow opening in the mountains that allows just enough space for the trail, Highway 140 and the Lost River to course through.

In Olene, you will encounter gates on the trail—please close them behind you. The remaining 136 miles are unpaved and suitable for wide-tire bicycles, walking, cross-country skis and horseback riding. The trail surface in the Gateway Section is gravel. The roughest section is from Sprague River on, where the trail is loose rock.

2. Gateway Section
Olene to Sprague River
This section travels through Olene Gap and north through juniper and sagebrush before swinging east at Swede’s Cut, a portion of track that was cut through high ground in order to maintain a gentle grade. The section is named for the Swedish workers who used star drills and black powder to move more than 10 feet of boulders and hardpan soil. Continuing east, the trail skirts the town of Dairy, named for the Dutch dairymen who first settled here.

3. Sprague River Section
Sprague River to Bly
As the trail descends into the Sprague River Valley, it traverses timber and ranch lands and passes the Sprague River. This scenic section is rich in wildlife and waterfowl. Agricultural activities abound in this fertile valley, and trail users may encounter livestock. The main trail continues east to the end of the line at the quiet town of Bly, once a booming mill town.

4. Woods Line Section
Woods Line Spur to Sycan Marsh
The spur trail splits off and heads north in Beatty. This rough section passes from open farmland to thick woods, then crosses over Five Mile Creek at mile 10. The spectacular Merritt Creek Trestle awaits at mile 27, stretching 400 feet long and 50 feet high. The Woods Line breaks at the expanse of grasslands known as Sycan Marsh, then continues north of the marsh for seven miles.

**Landmarks**

**The Switchbacks**

* Gateway Section, mile 32
  * Original construction plans called for a tunnel through Bly Mountain, but funds ran short, and crews instead built what was to be a temporary double switchback over the hill, allowing trains to be split to navigate the hill. This switchback was the last of its kind in the U.S., operating until the rail line shut down, in 1990.

* Merritt Creek Trestle
  * Woods Line Spur, mile 27
    * As you head north, you’ll see a spectacular structure known as Merritt Creek Trestle. This monument stands 400 feet and towers more than 50 feet above the creek bed.

**Sycan Marsh Preserve**

* Woods Line Spur, mile 32
  * This 30,000-acre wetland in the headwaters of the Klamath Basin is home to thousands of birds, aquatic animals and threatened fish. Bring your binoculars and be prepared to explore on foot; bikes are not allowed in the marsh. The Nature Conservancy protects the site; see www.nature.org for information.

**Sprague River Section**

* Sprague River Section, 24.3 miles
  * Winema National Forest
  * Devil’s Garden remains
  * Scenic Sprague River
  * Fishing
  * Buttes of the Gods rock formations
  * Wildlife viewing
  * Historic trestles
  * Split to the Woods Line Spur

**Woods Line Section**

* Woods Line Spur to Sycan Marsh
  * Please bring plenty of water—there is no drinking water on the trail.