



Innovation in Community-Driven Railway Technology

Mendocino Railway

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mendocino Railway
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MENDOCINO RAILWAY COMPLETES HIGHWAY MOVE OF NEW PASSENGER RAILCAR, THE *NOYO*, FROM FORT BRAGG TO WILLITS

WILLITS, CALIFORNIA - August 18, 2026 - Mendocino Railway has completed the over-the-road movement of the *Noyo*, the newest car in the California Western Railroad/Skunk Train fleet, transporting it from Fort Bragg to Willits by highway. While the railroad traditionally moves equipment along its historic 40-mile corridor, service through Tunnel #1 remains paused due to ongoing litigation initiated by the City of Fort Bragg and the California Coastal Commission. These actions have delayed critical restoration work and slowed progress on multiple infrastructure projects.

Despite these challenges, Mendocino Railway continues to advance its rehabilitation program with determination and measurable momentum. President and CEO Robert Jason Pinoli recently spoke about the significance of this moment, emphasizing that the *Noyo's* highway move underscores both the resilience of the railroad and the urgency of restoring full corridor service.

Rather than framing Tunnel #1 as a crisis point, the railroad is highlighting its importance as a historic asset poised for renewal. The restoration of Tunnel #1 will strengthen operational reliability, expand freight capability and enhance the visitor experience. It is a forward-looking infrastructure improvement that will unlock new economic opportunities for Mendocino County.

Mendocino Railway remains optimistic that, under the current presidential administration, a public-private partnership will finally deliver the federal investment needed to modernize this nationally significant short line. The California Western Railroad is one of the most iconic railroads in the United States, a 141-year-old corridor that has shaped the identity, economy and culture of the Mendocino Coast. With proper support, it has the capacity to further

transform rural Mendocino County by expanding freight service, strengthening tourism and supporting local industry.

The movement of the *Noyo* is more than a logistical milestone. It is a reminder that Mendocino Railway continues to push forward, innovate and invest, even when external obstacles slow the pace of progress. The railroad remains committed to restoring full service, completing Tunnel #1 rehabilitation and ensuring that this historic corridor thrives for generations to come.

The *Noyo* will begin passenger service in Willits in early September.

ABOUT MENDOCINO RAILWAY

Mendocino Railway is a federally recognized Class III public utility and common carrier railroad providing freight, excursion, and commuter passenger services across Northern California. Formed in 2004 with approval from the Surface Transportation Board, Mendocino Railway owns and operates several lines, including the California Western Railroad in Mendocino County—home to the world-famous Skunk Train—and the River Fox Train along the Sacramento River in Yolo County. Mendocino Railway is committed to safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible rail operations. The company continues to invest in infrastructure, sustainability, and community partnerships that preserve California's rail legacy and support the regions it serves. For more information, visit www.mendocinorailway.com.

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Media Assets:

High-resolution image available for download here: [Noyo Highway Transport - Media Assets](#)

Media Contact:

Kimberly Preciado

Public Relations Manager

Mendocino Railway

kpreciado@mendocinorailway.com

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