



In 1865, even before the Transcontinental Railroad was completed, the Central Pacific acquired the California & Oregon Railroad, which had plans to build a line from Marysville, California (about 50 miles north of Sacramento) north to Portland, Oregon. The C&O reached Redding, California, at the north end of California's Central Valley, in 1872, and construction stopped there. The CP ran several surveys to find the best route to Oregon from Redding, and their favored route was the route that was eventually built through Klamath Falls in 1912 and today is the active mainline between Oregon and California. In 1872, however, the C&O had an agreement to join up with the Oregon & California Railroad, which took the more direct route south of Eugene, Oregon (north of map area). So in 1887, the difficult construction through the Klamath Mountains was completed when the C&O linked with the O&C in Ashland, Oregon, and created the "Siskiyou Line," which later merged into the Southern Pacific.

The C&O reached the location of the town of Weed, California, around 1885; Weed was the location where the CP's preferred Klamath Falls route would have veered from the Siskiyou Line. In 1905, with the Siskiyou Line unable to handle the traffic of forest and agriculture products originating in the Willamette Valley in western Oregon, the SP and Union Pacific started construction of three new lines, two built in Oregon north of the map area, and a third built northeastward from the Siskiyou Line at Weed, along the CP's original survey via Klamath Falls to connect to the new Oregon lines. In July 1905, SP incorporated the California & Northeastern Railroad to build the line northeast from Weed. The C&NE completed the line to Klamath Falls, Oregon, in May 1909, and reached Kirk, Oregon, north of the map area, in September 1912. Financial and legal issues delayed completion of the lines in Oregon, and finally in September 1926, the line was completed to Eugene, Oregon (north of map area) and the Siskiyou Line became the secondary route between California and Oregon. Today, the Central Oregon & Pacific Railroad operates the Siskiyou Line between Weed, California, over Siskiyou Pass to Eugene, Oregon, for local hauls of logs and lumber.

This northward view of the Weed wye shows the 1880's CP Siskiyou Line grade in the foreground continuing straight into the 1905 CN&E grade in the distance. The northern continuation of the 1880's Siskiyou Line grade is now configured as the branch line on the left.



A northbound train speeds through Weed on today's Union Pacific mainline, consisting of the CP Siskiyou Line grade south of the Weed wye in the foreground and the CN&E grade north of the Weed wye in the distance carrying today's train. The branch on the left to Siskiyou Pass is the original CP Siskiyou Line grade north of Weed wye and owned today by the CO&P.



Eastern view of Weed wye, with the CP Siskiyou Line (today's CO&P) in the foreground, connecting with the CP Siskiyou Line-CN&E line (today's UP mainline). Mount Shasta is an active volcano.