



In 1905, the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific cooperatively started the construction of three new lines, two built in Oregon north of the map area and a third built northeastward from the California & Oregon (1887), part of the "Siskiyou Line," at Weed, California, to connect to the new Oregon lines via Klamath Falls. The SP incorporated the California & Northeastern Railroad to build the line northeast from Weed; the C&NE reached Klamath Falls 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 C&NE was completed to Eugene, Oregon (north of map area) and the Siskiyou Line over Siskiyou Pass became a secondary route between California and Oregon. The new SP line from Weed to Eugene became known as the "Cascade Line" or "Natron Cutoff" and made Klamath Falls an important railroading center, where three separate railroads ultimately built from the C&NE (1912) mainline.

The first railroad to build from Klamath Falls was the Klamath Falls Municipal Railway, organized and owned by the City of Klamath Falls (not shown separately on the SWRRH Map). The City of Klamath Falls contracted Robert Strahorn to build the first 20 miles of the line to Dairy, Oregon, which was completed in early 1919. In the same year, Strahorn incorporated the Oregon, California & Eastern Railroad, with big plans to connect to other railroads, including the narrow-gauge Nevada-California-Oregon Railroad (1912n). Thus, in 1919, as soon as the Klamath Falls Municipal Railway was completed, Strahorn made a deal with the City, approved by voters, in which the first 20 miles of completed railroad was transferred to Strahorn's OC&E, which in turn had to build the next 20 miles of line to Sprague River (about 10 miles north of the map area). The OC&E arrived in Sprague River in September 1923 with a "golden spike" to mark the completion of the first 40 miles of the OC&E. The completion of the OC&E to Sprague River opened new stands of timber and loggers had already accumulated huge stacks of logs adjacent to the grade before any rails had been laid. The SP purchased the OC&E in 1925, and despite the OC&E's big plans, the SP extended OC&E only 26 more miles from Sprague River eastward to Bly, Oregon, in 1927 (the SP's extension is entirely north of the map area). Six different lumber companies built logging branch lines supplying logs to the OC&E. The largest and longest lasting logging branch was the Weyerhaeuser "Woods Line" extending 45 mi into forests north of the map area. Lumber traffic increased in the 1960's and in 1975 Weyerhaeuser upgraded the mill at Bly and purchased the OC&E from the SP. Business peaked in the late 1970's but dropped to less than half that number in the early 1980's as surrounding forests became completely harvested. Weyerhaeuser ceased operations in 1990 and in 1992 the tracks were removed and the line's right of way was given to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, which converted it into the OC&E Woods Line State Trail.

Northeastward view of the OC&E (1923), now the OC&E Woods Line State Trail, 9 miles east of Klamath Falls (start of track). A snowplow is on display on tracks on the OC&E grade. The rail stop at this location is called Olene, which is in a topographic feature called "The Gap" on topo maps, referring to the fact that this valley is a water gap in which the Lost River has cut a gap through Hogback Mountain to allow the railroad to pass through the mountain without crossing a summit.





Another view of this funny looking snowplow. Below, the small store behind this rail-themed kiosk is the Olene Store.







Eastward view of the OC&E (1923), just steps east of the previous location.





Now we've moved 3.5 miles north of the previous location at a rail stop called Swan Lake looking south at the OC&E (1923).





Northward view of the OC&E (1923)/OC&E Woods Line State Trail, same location as previous.