



In 1887, the Central Pacific-owned California & Oregon Railroad connected with the Oregon & California Railroad at Ashland, Oregon, to complete the first railroad between the namesake states. However, the route of the “Siskiyou Line” was not the CP’s preferred route and in 1905, the Southern Pacific (successor to the CP) 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 Siskiyou Line at Weed, California, to connect to the new Oregon lines via Klamath Falls, Oregon. The SP incorporated the California & Northeastern Railroad to build the line northeast from Weed; the C&NE reached Klamath Falls in May 1909, then continued north through Shady Pines (this location) 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 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.

Northeastward view of the C&NE (1912) (now UP), 8 miles north of Klamath Falls. The ditch provided fill dirt for the railroad and/or the paved road (on which I’m standing) to raise the grades above this marshland on the eastern shore of the huge Upper Klamath Lake (at the far end of the marsh but not visible). The conical peak in the left distance, the top hidden in clouds, is 9,495-foot Mount McLouflin, one of many volcanos in the Cascade Range.