

Take a trail to the rail

Sumpter Valley Railroad Interpretive Site preserves railroad history

TAKE A HIKE THROUGH HISTORY NEAR PRAIRIE CITY

Located on Highway 26, about 8 miles east of Prairie City and 60 miles west of Baker City, this site offers visitors an easy trail to hike and learn about the history of the Sumpter Valley Railroad.

By Cheryl Hoefler
GO! Magazine

PRAIRIE CITY – Choo-choo! Yes, trains used to rumble through the mountains and valleys of Eastern Oregon, with wheels grinding along the track and whistles announcing entry at towns and crossings.

You can't see or hear them anymore, but you can still let those yesteryear railroad scenes roar into your imagination at the Sumpter Valley Railroad Interpretive Site.

The wayside, right off Highway 26, is a recreational spot within the Malheur National Forest. It includes a picnic area, restrooms and parking, with pull-through spots for RVs and buses, plus an entrance and exit for easy access.

But the main attraction is the trail leading down to the narrow-gauge railway remains of the Sumpter Valley Railway (SVRy), which ran from Baker City and eventually to Prairie City. Though just a stone's throw from the highway, the path winds through peaceful pines.

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Cheryl Hoefler
The former Sumpter Valley Railway depot in Prairie City is now the DeWitt Museum, located in Depot Park.

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