



The Pacific Northwest Region  
National Model Railroad Association



**Kurt Laidlaw, President**

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13 Mar 2020

## **President's Statement on Health Issues and the PNR 2020 Convention**

PNR has received inquiries about the novel coronavirus Covid-19 and the status of *Make Tracks to Eugene 2020*, the PNR annual convention scheduled 21 – 24 April in Eugene, OR. After discussions with the sponsors of the event, the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, and the superintendents of the remaining PNR divisions, I have made the difficult decision to cancel this year's convention.

Lane County does not currently have any reported cases of Covid-19, but both Washington's and Oregon's governors have declared states of emergency because of increasing numbers of reported cases in both states. The Governor of Oregon has instituted a ban on meeting of 250 or more. The Centers for Disease Control recommend persons over the age of 65 or with suppressed immune systems should not fly nor gather in crowded venues. While the overall mortality rate from the disease appears to be low, they have further stated that the mortality rate in older adults who contract the disease is 15%. The health of our membership is of utmost concern to me and the leadership of the PNR.

We have decided to err on the side of caution. This is a difficult decision. The 1<sup>st</sup> Division and their convention committee have expended a great deal of time, money and effort to put on a great convention. We could have continued to plan for the event and hoped for the best, but we have no idea of how many members would decide the risks to themselves and their families was too great and would decide not to participate. Putting on a convention that nobody came to would be worse than cancelling the convention.

The Board will continue to deal with the fallout from this decision. We will continue to communicate further information as we work through issues in the coming months. If members have questions or concerns about how PNR is dealing with the situation they can contact me at [ananas99@klaidlaw.net](mailto:ananas99@klaidlaw.net)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kurt S. Laidlaw', written over a horizontal line.

Kurt S. Laidlaw

President Pacific Northwest Region, NMRA