

Chamber updated on Iron Horse Trail opportunities

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Sheila Thompson reported that Riverland is hoping to organize a cycling event for the trail on International Trail Day, June 5, which would coincide with Elk Point's Auto Club Show and Shine. She noted that the stretches of trail from St. Paul to Elk Point and Elk Point to Heinsburg are the only portions with an appropriate surface for biking at this time. Bjornstad added that these are "two of the most scenic parts of the Trail."

"You've got one of the best advantages," Wayne Nowak agreed. "Events and festivals are a huge draw and people will come for things. You've got a great opportunity. If you support each other, you can build on the events." He noted that with \$150,000 in federal money which was matched by the Province, the Iron Horse Trail's marketing component has "the money to build a base and to support what's already done." He said that an educational component will include customer service training, and that marketing will be done

through partnership buy-in. The product club plans to take over Lakeland's website and make it more tourism-friendly, "or start a new one." with members linked to it. "We're doing a new Iron Horse Trail brochure with advertising, and partnering with Lakeland in province-wide publications." Nowak said there will be workshops in late March and early April regarding the product club and the Trail, "and we'll be taking information to other conference, trade shows and media events." He encouraged everyone to work together to maximize marketing potential.

The Trail will be a featured location at two upcoming events. On February 2, representatives from a major Canadian snowmobile magazine will be visiting Elk Point, and on February 7, the Way Out Women (WOW) Snowmobile Relay, which is crossing Canada and the USA to raise money for breast cancer research, will stop in Elk Point for lunch hosted by the Elk Point TrailRiders on their way between Two Hills and Cold Lake.