



Answers to Common Questions About the Corridor Trail Project

What is the local benefit? There are few better ways to enjoy our area's natural beauty. This trail will provide our residents with accepted and responsible recreation. In fact, providing such a developed and administered recreational corridor will serve to eliminate the exploring into areas that are not developed as such, proactively reducing unwanted pressures in our region. We have each chosen to live where we live, and raise our families here, and this "rail to trail" project presents an opportunity to raise the quality of our lives without the need to travel elsewhere.

What about safety? Trails provide safer recreation than open terrain, or along roadways for all user groups. For instance, statistics show that less than 15% of all snowmobile accidents happen on established and marked trails while over 85% of all snowmobile travel occurs on these same trails. Alberta to date has not recorded a single fatality on a recreational trail.

How may speed be controlled? The Alberta Snowmobile Association has an 80km/hr speed restriction presently on their trails and abides by reduced speed through town sites as regulated by individual town councils. Speed reduction barriers, signs, and enforceable bylaws are a few of the tools available to control speed.

How can trail users safely cross roads? Warning signs followed by STOP signs will be clearly placed on both sides of each road crossing. Spaced barriers, bumps, or staggered gate layouts would provide trail users another slowed approach to road crossings. Vehicles traveling on county and provincial roads will always have the right of way at trail crossings.

Shouldn't all rural residents share equally in the use and the ownership of the corridor?

Who will own the property? The ten municipalities quickly recognized the multi-purpose potential and the real benefits of owning this unique continuous corridor. It is most unlikely that its ownership would ever be dispersed.

What about bridge and trestle safety? The salvage operation connected with the rail line abandonment includes installing safe and approved hand railing and decking. Steep berms will be secured as well.

What about hours of use? This item is regulated by bylaws passed within each municipality, and would vary according to the sensitivity of the residents in each area.

How will noise be controlled? Other parts of North America have successfully "pressured" motorized recreational vehicles on trails into maintaining muffler systems that comply with federal noise standards. Noisy engines will not be accepted on these regional public trails.

How would significant risks be handled? Conditions such as high risk fire season, the spread of disease, or others could cause trail closure at the discretion of the municipalities.

Who will pay for this trail? The RRTS has aided in ensuring that local taxpayers will not carry financial burden in the trail's creation and maintenance. Development funding will be hardly, if at all, required. Revenue that is being directed to other regions may find its way here, positively affecting our tax bases. Proven user-pay systems such as Trail Passes, will be at least adequate in covering insurance, grooming, and other related costs. The corridor will provide us with other public uses and benefits as well.



Are community ties a priority? They are extremely important especially for our rural future! Trails connect rural communities, and in doing so, promote inter-community relationships, regional projects, and economic benefits, superior to other forms of interaction. Reinforcing this bond also benefits otherwise isolated municipalities.

(Rev. 09.12.01)



(Photo from IronHorse wagon train 2001)

What part of this project will your grandchildren remember you for?

Who will govern the trail? A responsible and dedicated amalgamation of year-round trail operators will receive direction from the municipalities involved, with input from the adjacent landowners. Those municipalities through their councils, will as always represent the interests of their electors.

What about Wildlife? Trails are recognized federally as vital corridors for the movement of wildlife. As well, shrub lines allow for nesting areas for some bird species, not to mention supporting locally rare wild-flowers and greens.

How will the trail be policed? Organized trail users impose and enforce their respect for landowners on other users, especially since everyone is accountable on systemized trails. Legal enforcement is also an option.

Will hunting be allowed on the trail? As is the case in municipal and provincial parks, hunting is strictly prohibited by law.

What about adjacent landowner liability?

Destination oriented trail use on mapped, signed, groomed and approved trails has proven to keep enthusiasts on the trail from departure point to destination point, thereby eliminating random exploring as this region has experienced. A developed trail will require insurance coverage as has already been successfully placed for Provincial Association trails. Coverage includes not only usage on the trails but also, *ensures protection for the adjacent landowners*. These forms of insurance coverage will be required for any form of accepted trail usage. Trail organizations continually lobby for needed legislation changes on behalf of landowners. To date in Alberta, there is not a single recorded lawsuit on a valid trail or on property adjacent to one.

The abandoned CN corridor is and will remain in the hands of the municipalities in our region, no matter what the outcome of the vote on October 15th.

Trail supporters have repeatedly stated their commitment to work with adjacent land-owners in order to cooperatively address their short-term as well as long-term concerns ..

A solid YES vote effort now, will allow this irreplaceable corridor to develop to its true potential, dynamically benefitting future generations.

We urge you to contact the Public Trail Supporters with any questions you may have regarding the project, or to offer any form of assistance that you may be able to provide. Please contact us at:

Bonnyville 826-3141

St. Paul 645-4429

Smoky Lake 656-4233

email address: publictrails@hotmail.com

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Iron Horse Trail Adjacent Landowner Survey

The Elk Point Historical Society's five years experience co-managing the Iron Horse trail is not consistent with what has been suggested in some recent news articles about rural trails. The society has completed a survey of 18 (of 22) available landowners living on farms and acreages beside the Iron Horse Trail. Several attempts were made to reach all residents, however four were not available for comment. The survey was completed between August 25-28, 2001. The actual questions are provided below along with a summary of the data.

Do you use the Iron Horse trail? Thirteen of the adjacent residents did use the trail recreationally. Three used it only for farming operations or had visiting relatives who used it. Two of the eighteen did not use the trail.

What kind of activity do you see happening on the trail? All saw snowmobiles and quads using the trail. Five mentioned horses, hikers and wagons, while two mentioned bikes.

How much activity do you see on the trail? Some could not answer this question, as they could not see the trail directly. Five mentioned none or only a bit; eight said quite a bit, lots or lots in winter.

Is there any non-conforming (cars, trucks?) use going on? Eleven said none, five said occasionally, and two said lots of cars in one area near Elk Point.(To be followed up)

Are there any maintenance activities that need to be improved upon? Six answered no, three mentioned more mowing, and four mentioned smoothing some bumps.

Do you know whom to contact if there is an issue or a suggestion regarding the trail? All

mentioned either the county councillor or a member of one of the recreational groups that help to manage the trail.

Have you had any interaction with trail users? What were they like? Eleven said they had had none, seven mentioned positives about their dealings with users. ("Nice people", "good" etc.)

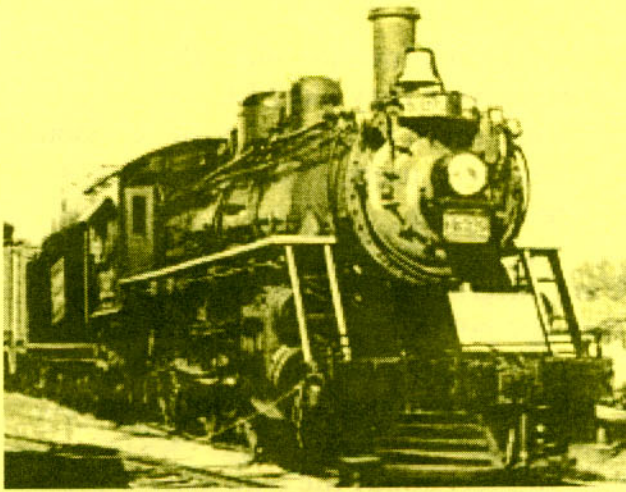
Were any interactions negative? Seventeen said they had not had a single negative experience. One said they had had a fence cut and a gate left open once. (To be followed up)

How do you feel about the trail after 8 years of living next to it? Eleven had positive comments. ("It's no problem - a good thing." "Greatest thing that has happened." "It is the best thing that could have happened to this land." "A good idea if used properly." "I like it." "A great thing to have near my home." "We like to use it." "Some nice folks drop by to see us." "I love it." "I like it and it has never caused me a problem.") Six had somewhat neutral responses. ("Hasn't bothered me." "If used properly it could be great but there are lots of stories on talk shows." "I can use it to move tractors back and forth much safer." "I had concerns but we have had no problems.")

Have you heard about the upcoming vote regarding the CN rail line? Fifteen-Yes and three-No

The survey indicates that adjacent landowners have co-existed with a local trail for eight years. **The fearful stories circulating in recent weeks are not the reality of the residents near the Iron Horse Trail.**





What landowners adjacent to the IronHorse Trail have to say about living next to a trail.

"After seven years of the trail running by our farm, we have never had a problem."

Patricia Andrishak, Elk Point

"I live very close to the trail. I am building my new house right beside it. We sometimes hear travelers but we rarely see them. We use it a bit. We think it is a good recreational trail."

Ken Orr, Elk Point

"I have a mile and a half of land on both sides of the trail as well as my farmyard next to it. I ride my horse on it a bit and use my wagon on it during trail rides. Trail users tend to stay on the trail."

Ross Morris, Lindbergh

"Snowmobiles used to be in my fields. Since the trail came in they go by on the trail and not in my fields. This trail is a good idea."

Dennis Holthe, Elk Point

"In eight years we've never had a problem. We use it for quadding and riding horses."

Randy Scott, Elk Point

"I use the trail often for walking my dogs I don't see anyone on it very often. I have not ever had any problems with trail users."

Cory Williams

"We have rode on the trail on horses and picked berries there. No trail users have given us any trouble."

Bob Baker, Elk Point

"I've met very friendly people using the trail. Often four or five different types of users are out there using it at the same time. It is helping strengthen the connection between our communities."

Roy Scott, Heinsburg

