Mobilizing Your Trail Network: A rural experience



Alberta's Iron Horse Trail



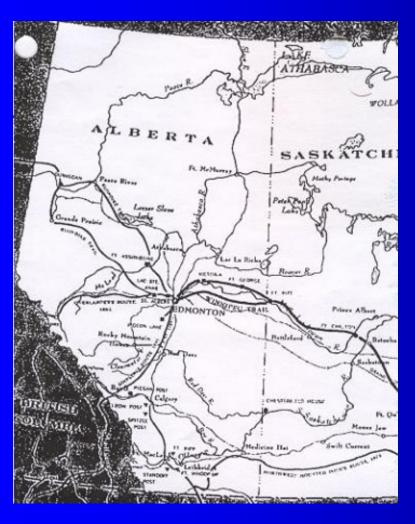
Presenters:

- Robert Bouchard
 - Reeve, County of St Paul
 - President of NE Municorr
- Marvin Bjornstad
 - President of Riverland Recreational Trail Society

Focus of Presentations

- History how we got to today
 - Trail Acquisition and Governance
 - Formation of various separate entities
- Tactics we used with examples
- Where to from here?
- Questions

Early History of Trails



- Iron Horse Trail now follows Carlton Trail of 1815 to 1900
 (Winnipeg to Ft Carlton to Edmonton)
- Rail line arrived in 1920s
- Towns moved to the CN rail line

An Early History of the Iron Horse Trail 1993 - 1999

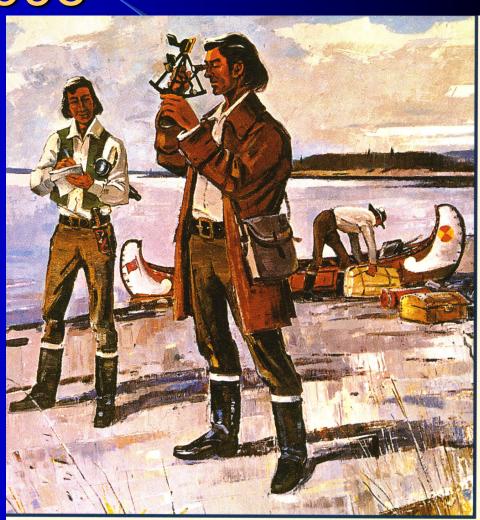


- Once there was a gravel pit...
- The county needed gravel
- 32 km of trail was part of the deal
- Clean up very bad
- Early committee ineffective

Elk Point Historical Society 1998

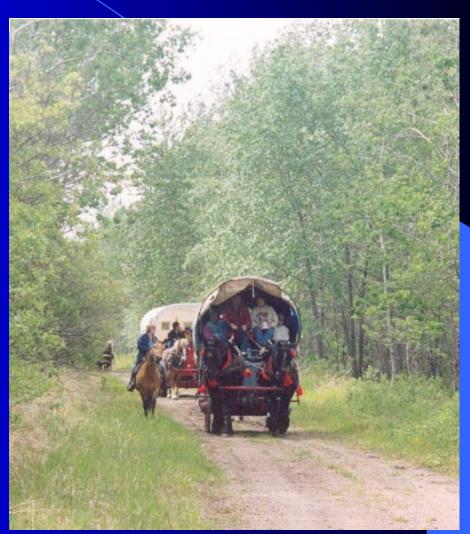
- Getting together a small group or users
- Municipal Connection with council
- Looking for partners
- Start looking at expanding the trail

Peter Fiddler 1892



Tactic: Getting Connected (in the Early Days)

- Bringing in partners
- Awareness of the pros and cons of the partnership
- Willingness to work together
- No one group big enough to work by themselves
- Riverland Recreational Trail Society (RRTS) formed 1999



Tactic: RRTS works with many organizations



- Alberta TrailNet
- Alberta Snowmobile Association
- AVT groups (make them if they don't exist)
- Cyclists
- Horse users
- Historical groups
- Trans Canada Trail

Tactic: Use what resources your group gives you



- Business contact lists
- Power of phoning
- Townhouse meetings with speakers to build commitment, publicity
- Work with partners on win/win
- Many small victories
- Promotion of the cause
- Keep local reporters on your side

Tactic: Be aware of motivations



We knew it was a great resource to be saved for the future!

- Each Groups had their own goals
- Groups started to take ownership of trail
- Individuals Legacy
- Motorized –Younger; Legacy -older
- Theme working together
- Regional interaction

Abandonment of Railway



- Trans CanadaTrail and CNcall us
- RRTS call in Reeves of municipalities
- They start on NE MuniCorr

Review: Acquisition of Elk Point to Heinsburg

Rail line focus on recreation

The future of the abandoned rail line between Elk Point and Heinsburg will focus on recreational use by horse and ATV enthusiasts, cross-country skiers, snowmobilers, cyclists and hikers, combined with summer pasture usage for adjacent livestock owners.

Close to 50 area landowners and other interested individuals attended a meeting at Elk Point Seniors Recreation Centre last Tuesday, and voted overwhelmingly in favor of joint recreational and pasture use for the line, although a few landowners wanted it kept strictly for pasture.

The County of St. Paul No. 19 purchased the line and an adjacent gravel pit from Canadian National Railways last year. The gravel pit is estimated to contain 1.5 million cubic yards of gravel, which with a purchase price of \$125,000, comes out to just over 8 cents per yard. The gravel pit was "the main purpose of the purchase," according to Division II Councillor Ray Danyluk. With their gravel supply needs taken care of, the County is looking for input from interest groups regarding the use of the rail

line which came with the pit.

One of these interest groups is the Heinsburg Community Club, which according to Division I Councillor Bob Smith, "has been trying to get the right of way for years" in order to continue the development they have started at that end of the line. "We kept getting put off, and we couldn't get grant funding because we didn't have the title." The Club was unable to purchase a portion of the trackage "because CN wanted to get rid of it all at once." The Community Club and Heinsburg Seniors have developed the trackage in Heinsburg near the historic water tower "until it's like a lawn," with lots of dollars and work put in by the clubs and community residents.

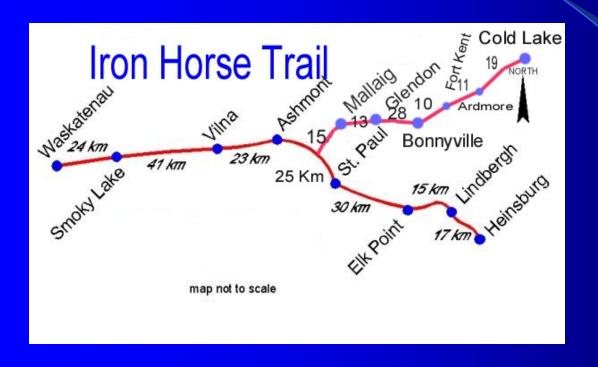
A few of the landowners present had hoped to see the rail line used exclusively for pasture, but Danyluk said that as County property, it must benefit all residents. Nor will the County sell portions of the line to adjacent landowners. "We did not buy it for that purpose, and we will keep it intact."

Several concerns with recreational use were noted, including the risk of cattle rustling, disturbance of wildlife habitat, the possibility of fires, and trespassing on adjacent land. It was agreed that fires will only be permitted if and where areas are designated, and that vehicle access and hunting will be prohibited. Landowners may post 'no trespassing' signs and lock their gates. Access to the trail will not be permitted for cars and trucks.

Three waterways cross the line, in Lindbergh townsite, beside the Salt Plant and at Middle Creek, and ways to deal with these were discussed. The County plans to make these crossings fordable for horses and off-road vehicles such as ATVs, as well as grading the roadbed and cutting grass and brush. This work will be done this spring as soon as conditions permit. Gates to allow trail users access to the portions of the trail used for pasture were also discussed, and a standardized design for a steel gate with reflective paint for high visibility was suggested.

- 1993
- Lessons learned

1999 Abandonment



- Waskatenau to Elk Point to Cold Lake
- Need to develop a tool to bring CN to the table
- Organization of three rural municipalities into a group

First Meeting with CN, Rail Link, and 3 Rural Municipalities



- Realization to formally organize all 10 municipalities (7 urban and 3 rurals)
- Need for passing a bylaw about rail abandonment and reclamation

First meeting with CN and Rail Link in Edmonton

- First offer to purchase
- Take over 99 foot right-of-way
- Issue tax receipt for appraised value
- \$500,000 cash for replacement of infrastructure

Letter of intent with CN and Municipalities

- Rail Link forfeits interest in CN property
- Bylaw called for a development permit to dismantle rail
- All 10 municipalities withheld issuance of permit pending a letter of intent from CN

Formation of NE Municorr



- Importance of forming a freestanding non-profit company to own and manage all properties
- CN wanted to deal with one entity

Letter of intent with CN



Cold Lake trestle – 102' high

- Trestles
- Safety
- •Adjacent land transfer
- •Environmental liability
- •Clean up

Politics of Trail Development

- Question on the Ballot
- Municipal Elections October 2001
- "Do you support a municipally regulated public trail upon the soon-to-be abandoned CN railway right-ofway? Yes or No

- •Reasons for Question on ballot
 - Differing forces at work
 - •Election coming

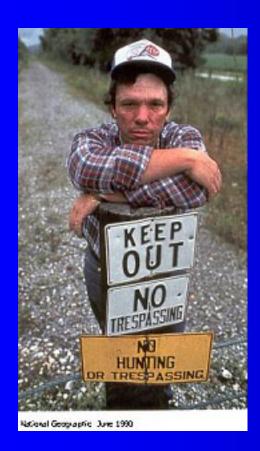
Question not binding

Not a referendum or a plebiscite

An election to remember...



Opposition arises





We organize and learn a lot



Raises awareness

Creating BUZZ

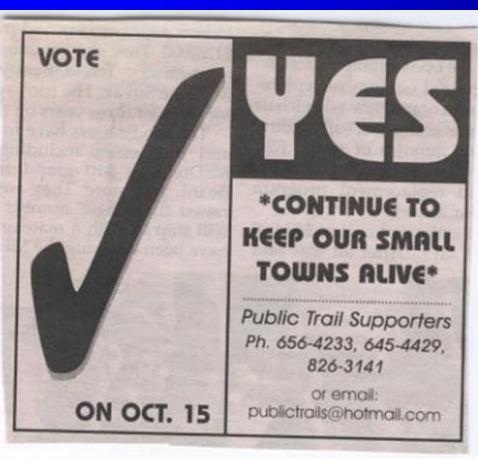
Using phones

Creating news stories

Identifying support and commitment

Getting out the vote

Communication in Campaign



- •Ads in papers (7)
- Letters to editors
- News releases
- Interviews
- Answers to letter in paper
- Radio ads
- •Lawn signs (becomes its own BUZZ)
- •Budget \$33,000

Organization is strengthened



We identify support

We raise \$33,000

We have many small successes daily

We are unified by opposition

The People Voted YES:

- 54.1% Overall (in the 3 Rural Municipalities)
- 64% in the County of St. Paul
- 50% + 12 in the County of Smoky Lake
- 45% in the M.D. of Bonnyville
- 71% in the Town of Smoky Lake
- 60% in the Village of Glendon
- 90% by the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce
- 85%+ at the last St. Paul Town Trail
 Committee meeting

Building on the Election victory

- Realization we were only starting; opposition was waiting for failure
- Now construction and much much more....
- Building Infrastructure
- Building Partnerships
- Building Success



Tactic: Build an evolving trail structure

Northeast MuniCorr: Owns the corridor as a part nine company – One vote each
 Ten Municipalities: Regulate & supervise
 RRTS: Coordinates development
 Trail Steward Groups: On the ground

Grading the trail – done by municipalities, paid by CN



Completion of staging areas 7 major and 10 minor



- Signs and toilets
- Picnic tables
- Grants to each of seven major sites

Putting safety signage in place



- Over \$25000 in safety signage
- Almost \$18000 in other signage

Resolving Construction issues



- Trail surface
- Maintenance gates
- Water issues washouts
- Signage
 - Staging Areas
 - Commercial
- Vandalism

Official Opening



Ashmont – June 8, 2003

What tactics did we use to succeed over the years?



Real Co-operation

Tactic: We had a variety of Events, constantly....



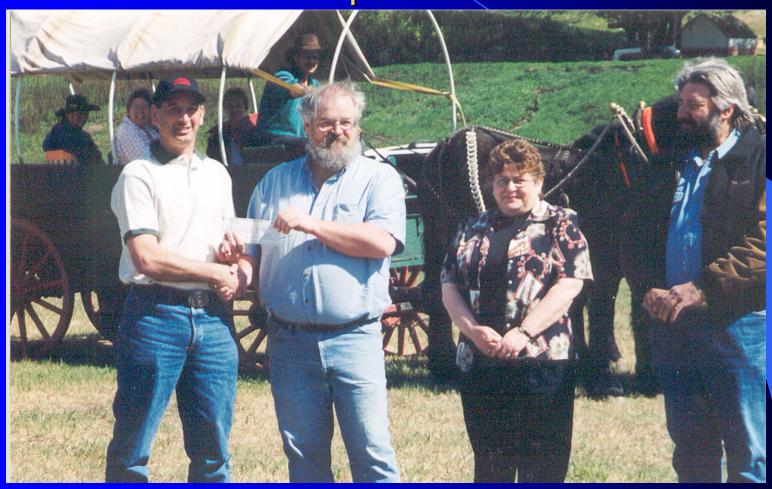
- Tourist presentationBonnyville April2002
- St Paul town meeting on trail - April 2002
- MLA golf day (lobbying) – May 2002

Tactic: Helping Calgary Cyclists, a small volunteer effort



Tactic: Combine events -

AB TrailNet Grant Presentation with a wagon train event + politics



Tactics: Work with partners

•Win/win, have fun



Trail Advisory meeting at St Edouard – September 2002

Tactic: Rent a crowd

Historical Trail presentations in Heinsburg



Tactic: Create New Trail Events



- BoscombeATV
- Elk Point Bike Rally

Tactic: Be a small part of Regional Events



- Cold Lake Air show
- Pumpkin Festival and completion of Pumpkin Park
- Opening of TransCanadianSnowmobileTrail

Tactic: Live up to commitments



Tactic: Work the political scene constantly

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Vol. 3 No.47 "Locally Owned, Community Oriented" Tuesday, October 22, 2002

Ministers Fur Trade Ball



Tactic: Getting Ministers visit your project



Tactic: Working to Change Legislation



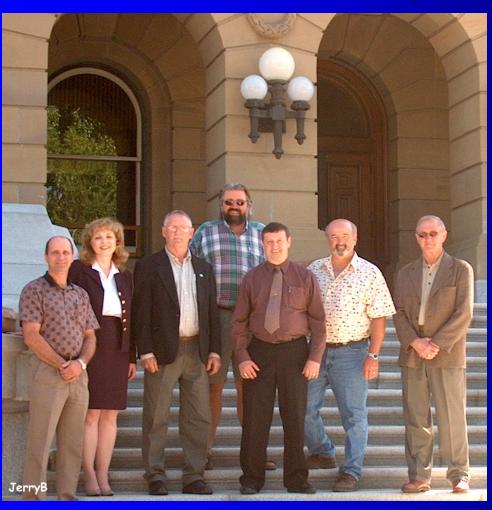
- In court
- Changing many trail regulations
 - Trespassing
 - Line Fencing Act
 - Crown Leases
- MLA private member bill

Tactic: Organizing promotion



- IHT Product Club
- Working with Minister Economic Development
- Iron Horse TrailCoordinator in place
- Working with Lakeland DMO

Tactic: Targeted Political Lobbying



- Meeting with government officials
- Working on trail legislation
- Financing
- Work with TCT

Tactic: Work with local government



- NE MuniCorr (monthly)
- Municipal consultation on all local projects
- Trail Stewards System
- Meet one-on-one as problems arise

Tactic: Respond to changing local politics



Tactic: Find ways to convince the Timid!



Tactic: Formation of Trail Steward areas (11)



Tactic: Active patrolling fall and winter



- EducationPrograms
- Monthly reports
- Communication with Muni-Corr

Tactic: Develop our organization



RRTS Ashmont workshops – Feb 2002

Tactic: Building an organization, constantly



- Keep all regions aware and involved
- Develop Trail steward groups
 - Handbook
 - Skills
 - Commitments that suit the person

Tactic: Constantly Improving Communications



- Connect with local government
- Use multiple media: web, email, fax, papers
- Educational materials for members:
 Handbooks,
 Newsletters

Tactic: Developing volunteers



- Break up work into manageable portions
- Keep meetings to a minimum
- Keep Multiple users in mind

Tactic: Work through existing groups



- Recreational groups (ASA, ATV, Horse...)
- Work with adjacent landowners
- Service organizations

Tactic: Constant Promotion



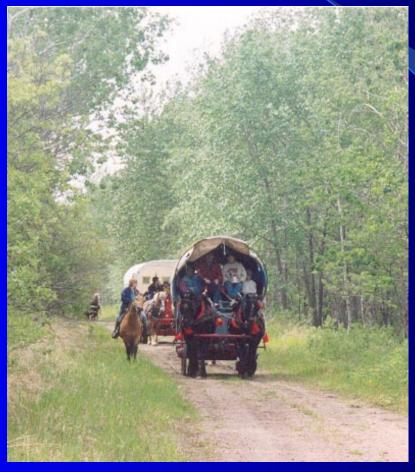
- Winter
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall
- Use any and every possibility for promotion

Tactic: Use Promotional material with crossover



- Work with other municipalities, groups, tourist organizations
- Develop their amenities –
 Pyrogy, Mushrooms
- Use their plans with some coordination and \$\$
- Cross over promotions

Tactic: Build Family Recreation



For all user groups

Tactic: Paying attention to legal details



Signing letter of occupancy 2003

- Started with common goals and little on paper
- Build the paper trail slowly
- Operating without every detail nailed down builds

Trust

Tactic: Be ready when opportunity presents itself



This Week In Brief

solving van theft

for AUPE award

MD Council opens door to rural trail development

MD trying to make it work

The latest round in the ongoing issue

"It's inconceivable that we should be held at ransom by what looks to be 26 people."





MD Bonnyville Court case ends September

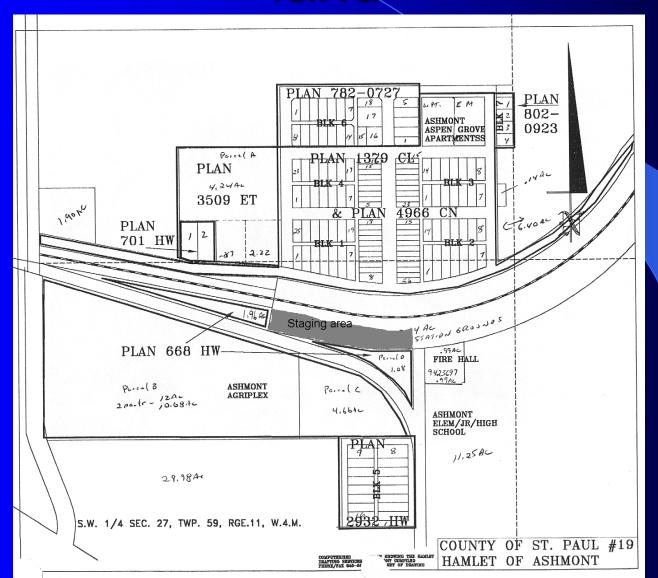
Tactic: Completing a legal process with style



Bonnyville

- NE Municorr Application for trail
- Phone, get members out on Thursday 10 am
- Approval

Tactic: MuniCorr setting aside land



NE Municorr today



- Monthly meetings
- RRTS on agenda
- Delegations from interested parties

NE Municorr Master Agreement

Equal Partners

Revenue and expense sharing formula

Realize people want municipal input

Process is part of ongoing solution to problems

- Infrastructure management with municipalities
- Sale of Municorr land
- Minimum requirement for staging areas
- Utility rights-of-way management
- Development of crossing agreements
- Adjacent landowner leases

A Vision for the future

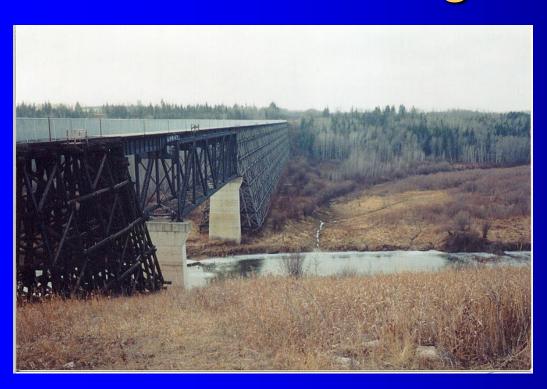


Is it really only a dirt trail through the bush?

Where are we headed?



Tactic: Keep people aware of the gains



- Trestles
- Legacy of the land
- Multiple user's cooperation
- Multiple municipal cooperation
- Multiple organization interaction

Tactic: Reminding all of major accomplishments



The Trail is up and running (Year 12)

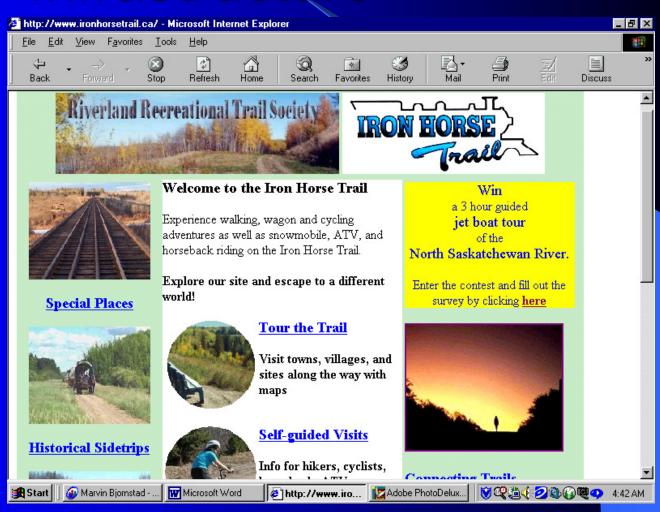
Tactic: Make it happen!



- Sign up members
- Support financial campaigns
- Talk to other people, BUZZ
- Partnerships

Tactic: Building Hidden Infrastructure

- Attention to detail
- Go with flow
- More small successes

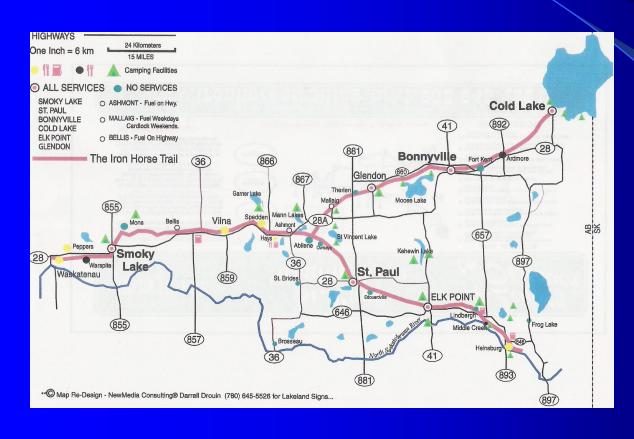


Trail Call 800 645 4321



- Responding to inquiries
- Using email and web as well

Trail Information Systems



- Maps
- Brochures
- Trail Guidebook
- Better Web sites access
- Our internal communications

Getting Resources for Trail



RCMP Training

JerryB



No Bull

Page 18

helmet

Pg. 6

District Youth

Pg. 8

Annual street clean up set for May 26

may boost employment

TALKING ABOUT THE THEY GET WHEN THEY

May 14, 2002 7/311

OURNAL Call 645-4799 by May 10 if you

EVERYONE'S GREAT RESULTS

ADVERTISE

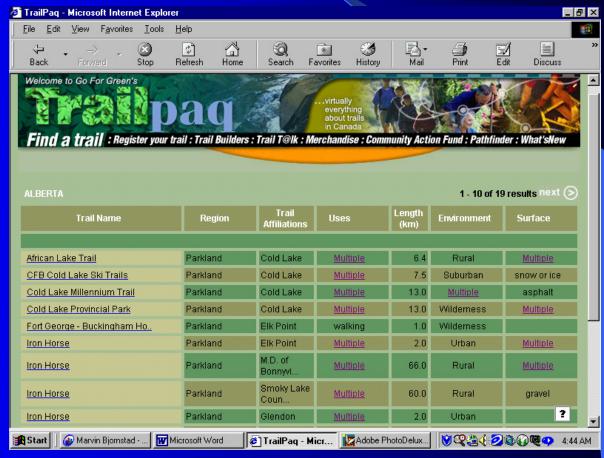
Promotional Donations



RCMP (3), Bylaw Officer (1)

Tactic: Use free opportunities - web promos

- National website
- Map series
- Possible revenue?



Tactic: Continuous Promotions, 2004



- Local Community awareness nights
- IntrepidSnowmobiler –Craig Nicholson
- WOW fundraiser
- Many Tourism shows
- News stories

Tactic: Dealing with trail issues



- Investigate all issues immediately
- Consultation with NE MuniCorr
- Consultation with municipalities
- Consulting with trail users
- Consulting adjacent landowners

Tactic: More creative partnerships



Making Texas gates safer – Opportunity Corps

Tactics: Working with really small communities



- Finding champions
- Working with small groups ie Fire departments
- Have meetings in their site
- Help with funding

Alberta Trail Net and Trans Canada Trail Partnership







Tactic: Use partner's needs for your gain



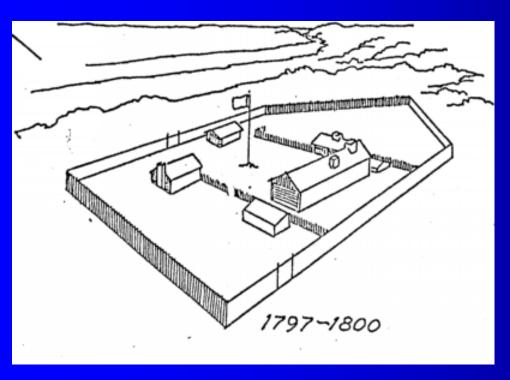
Alberta Trail Net AGM - Smoky Lake

Tactic: Use partner's needs for your gain



Ag Service Board Tour; County builds 2 new turnarounds

Tactics: New Partnerships beneficial to all



Connecting to Tourism
Connecting to History
Connecting to other
group's goals

What Challenges lie ahead?



Converting interest into involvement

- Building on memberships and volunteers
- Adding user groups to the RRTS
- Education of user groups



Avoiding burnout of our many helpers



- Communication
- Sharing the load
- Replacing the executive gradually

Coordination with Product Club

- Common donors, members
- Tracking who makes what decisions
- Integrating our common efforts
- Building connections to other partners ie Museums, Ag Tourism

Working with adjacent landowners



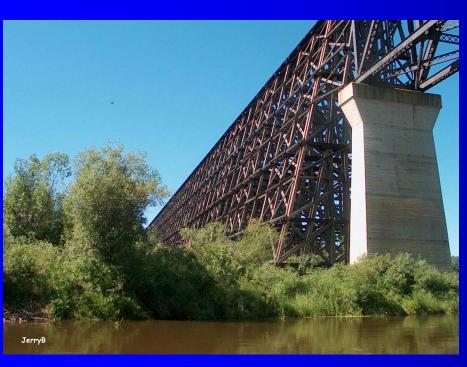
- Helping out if we can
- Looking for ways to add positives
- Constant surveying and communication

Developing more users



- School users survey, provincial initiatives
- Building room for unorganized users
- Fitting the promotions to fit users ProductClub

Each year has its gains



- 1993 Original IHT
- 1999 Foundation
- 2000 Abandonment, bylaws, lobbying
- 2001 Election, organizing,
- 2002 Starting moving, designing
- 2003 Opening, Product Club, Trail Stewards
- 2004 Product Club, Awards, Staging Areas
- 2005 Completing Infrastructure

This Year's Accomplishments



Centennial Relay over 7 weeks

ALTO award

Trail receives top Alto honours from Travel Alberta

By MICHELLE HULEY

Journal Staff

Three hundred kilometres, 11 years and the cooperation of 10 municipalities amounted to one of Alberta's highest honours last week as Travel Alberta's prestigious Alberta Pride Alto Award was brought home to St. Paul.

"What it means, I guess, is it's a sign for all partners of Muni-Corr. It's recognition of our accomplishment as something that deserves provincial recognition," said North East Muni-Corr president and County of St. Paul Reeve Robert Bouchard.

Muni-Corr won the award for the Iron Horse Trail, which Bouchard accepted on behalf of the organization at Travel Alberta's annual awards Nov. 8.

North East Muni-Corr Ltd is a partnership of ten municipalities: Waskatenau, Bonnyville, St. Paul, Smoky Lake, Vilna, Elk Point, Cold Lake, St. Paul County, Smoky Lake County and the Municipal District of Bonnyville were commended for their leadership in securing and developing abandoned rail line for public use and community benefits. recently named an official designated route in the Trans

North East Muni-Corr Ltd. v TrailNet Society whose executive Watson said, "We are delighted Corr win this prestigious award. were critical in securing the land Their efforts to successfully prese future generations is a model of nity cooperation. Alberta's Iron I cy for us all."

"The Iron Horse Trail gained exposure. And it's real nice to 1 said. The trail won over two o Canadian Heritage Classic ar Charters from Calgary.

The 300-kilometre Iron Horse ational trail that was officially or the North Saskatchewan River. ward from Waskatenau to Cold L



Minister of Community Development Mark Norris (right) and Andrew Whittick of Brewster Transportation (left) presented Alto's Alberta Pride award to Iron Horse Trail representative Robert Bouchard.

VICKI BROOKER PHOTO

TCT recognition took work







Official Trans Canada Trail



MuniCorr official opens trail Dec 20 2004 - - 30C with wind

Opening of Trans Canadian Snowmobile Trail Feb



New IHTF groomer ready for regional use

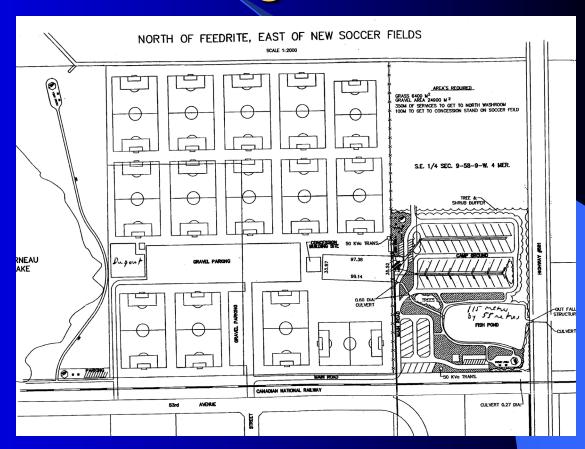
Wagon Trains of Summer



- Smaller user run events are working
- Some towns saw 3 major and many minor groups
- Fit with their events

Community plans in place and work starting

- Elk Point
- Ashmont
- Cold Lake
- Mallaig
- Bonnyville plan
- St Paul initiative 1.3 M



Interpretive and Historical signage – added value

History of Elk Point and Area

The thriving community of Elk Point is located a within the County of St. Paul in the middle of farm fields and fields rich with with heavy crude oil. This town of 1400 is cradled among green rolling hills on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River. From furs and penumican to grain and meat, to salt and oil, the Elk Point area has a colourful history that is showcased on a 100-foot-long Historical Mural depicting the people, places and events which have contributed to Elk Point's multicultural heritage. It is located in a small park four blocks off Highway 41, on 50 Avenue. From tribal chiefs Pakan, Big Bear and Poundmaker, to the development of a modern community you will see Elk Point's history unfold in colour.

Recorded history of this area dates back over two hundred years to the days of the für trade, when the Blackfoot and the Cree traded hides and Penmican at the Hudson's Bay Company's Backingham House and the North West Company's



Buckingham House 1800



Peter Fidler

Fort George, These two forts were established less than a kilometer from the River, 11 km southeast of the present town of Elk Point.

Another historical marker is the wooden monument honoring the explorer and mapmaker Peter Fidler (1769-1822), who hiked overland from Fort George to the upper reaches of the South Saskatchewan River on a mission in the late eighteenth century. His larger-than-life figure stands on the northern approach to Elk Point along the west side of highway 41.

Elk Point Pioncer Museum, at Highway 41 and 50 Avenue, is open by appointment and has a fascinating collection of fur trade memorabilia and settlers' effects.

This hospital was the center of medical care in the community when Elk Point's medical staff fed by Dr FG Miller and Dr AG Ross drew patients from 60 miles in all directions. Medical care was the main business and a major employer from 1925 to 1990.

Today's business community centers around farming and a busy heavy oil production system.

Peter Fidler Facts

- David Thompson was designated to go with Hudson's Bay chief surveyor Philip Turnor's expedition in 1790 to determine the exact location of and the best route to Lake Athabasca. A serious leg injury kept David Thompson behind. His place was taken by rookie surveyor Peter Fidler, who later succeeded Turnor as Inland Surveyor.
- In 1792 when William Tomlison came up the North Saskatchewan River to establish Buckingham House beside the North West Company's Fort George, Peter Fidler was the accompanying surveyor.
- In the late winter of 1992 Peter Fidler and few companions headed south on a surveying



Old Elk Point Hospital 1928 to 1978

expedition that took him all the way down to Waterton National Park where he was the first European to approach the area, and made the first recorded observation of Chief Mountain in early January of 1793.

. Surveying information from that trip was

used by Aaron Arrowsmith, a British map maker, in his first map of North America in 1795. In Arrowsmith's 1802 revision of the map of North America, he delineated the length of the Missouri River. The information concerning the Missouri headwaters, came from Peter Fidler's drawing of a map by the Blackfoot Indian Ac Ko Mo Ki.

 Peter Fidler loved clothes and often commented in his journals when he had new 'togs'



Iron Horse Trail Product Club Initiatives

- Survey
- Group meetings
- Community meetings
- Political lobbying
- Website
- Newsletters
- Saskatchewan connection

Relay planning 2005 and looking to 2010 (Olympic Relay)



New communities: Onion Lake Reserve, Vermilion River County

Review: Our Vision for the future

Extending the trail

Getting more facilities in place

Promoting the trail



Develop historical connections



Carlton trail
Historical groups
— Museums
Tourism groups
Saskatchewan
Connection
Recreational
groups

Develop volunteers



- Break up work into manageable portions
- Keep meetings to a minimum Work on the trail – creating ownership
- Community events by other groups

Build on our previous successes and methods



- Multiple goals; follow through
- Develop Trail steward groups
- Memberships
- Committee structure –
 Trail Stewards, Safety,
 Funding, Memberships
- Communications with other groups

Build a strong future



- Keep Multiple users in mind
- Find ways to get trail used
- Develop networks
- Keep costs down

Keep people aware of the gains and development



- Trestles, right of way
- Legacy of the land
- Local users recreation
- Multiple municipal cooperation
- Multiple organization interaction and cooperation
- Recognition for region

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- www.ironhorsetrail.ca