



WHY A NEWSLETTER?

This newsletter is a way to highlight some of the accomplishments of RRTS. Hopefully it will develop into a volunteer information pamphlet emailed each month. This issue will go back January 2012 doing a year in review with pictures and stories that highlight our accomplishments.



Figure 1 Original Lease Signing in 2002

Remember to Breathe

In July, four members of Riverland became actors for a few days filming an ATV promotional video. Alberta Tourism's campaign "Remember to Breathe" included a segment riding the Iron Horse Trail from Smoky Lake to Heinsburg. Besides the opportunity to showcase our beautiful region, we received many hours of high-quality video footage for our own use. View the "Remember to Breathe" ads on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ThFCg0tBDck>). Thank you to all Riverland members who provided back-up to this project.

To see our earlier video (20 minutes)

<http://www.ironhorsetrail.ca/downloads.html>

New Lease on Life

You're not going to believe this, but ten years has gone by since we entered into this improbable partnership: ten municipalities owning 286 km of rail line, and Riverland Recreational Trail Society, the stewards of what was to become Alberta's Iron Horse Trail. This may have been the first of such partnerships, but it is not the last.

River Valley Alliance has seven municipalities from Devon to Fort Saskatchewan working on trails and other connections. Clearwater County and Rocky Mountain House have combined forces to rehabilitate the Rocky to Nordegg abandoned rail line.

In September, 2012, the first ten years of the lease ended. Riverland Recreational Trail Society and North East Muni-Corr sat down to a close discussion and review of the trail. The two parties agreed the arrangement was working and the lease was renewed for another 10 years.



RIVERLAND RECREATIONAL TRAIL SOCIETY

Box 587
Elk Point AB T0A 1A0
780 645 2913 or 888 645 4155 office • 780 645 5790 fax

www.ironhorsetrail.ca



Cold Lake Trestle Damaged by Fire

In early July, 2012, an abandoned car under the north end of the Cold Lake Trestle was set on fire. This fire soon started the timbers on fire and, in spite of the efforts of the Cold Lake Fire Department, the fire burned within the timbers for about a week. Three suspects have been charged with arson in the case.

The trestle is now closed to all use as the north end is extremely unsafe. NE Muni-Corr and Riverland have been actively looking for a plan to address the rebuilding of the trestle. An engineering company, ISL, has been selected to assess the damage, stabilize the structure, and develop a plan for rebuilding this connection. This work will probably start in February.

Discussions on funding the project have begun with various levels of government and potential funders. Riverland has completed arrangements for public fundraising with the Alberta Treasury Branches. We are now awaiting a plan and costs from the engineering company so we can proceed.



Cold Lake Fire Department showing around Riverland members a few days after the fire.

RRTS Receives Maintenance Funding

Riverland Recreational Trail Society and the Iron Horse Grooming Foundation sat down with North East Muni-Corr last spring to discuss maintenance issues on the Iron Horse Trail. The difficulties for volunteers to fund on-going maintenance were addressed in a new plan. In June, NE Muni-Corr agreed to divert some promotional funding to trail maintenance and add a bit more to meet the needs of the two trail groups. Riverland then met with each municipality, explained the plan, and asked for funds on a three-year trial basis.

After these meetings, eight of the ten municipalities agreed to fund the plan under the NE Muni-Corr contribution agreement. Later, the MD of Bonnyville met with snowmobile clubs and Riverland executive and agreed to fund winter grooming maintenance each time the groomer did the Iron Horse Trail in their area. The County of Smoky Lake has not yet joined this agreement.

Riverland will invoice the municipalities in 2013 and distribute the funds for grooming and other maintenance. This agreement is a significant improvement in non-profit groups' ability to achieve ongoing maintenance and trail safety work. Funding is based on actual expenses over the past five years.

RIVERLAND RECREATIONAL TRAIL SOCIETY

Box 587
Elk Point AB T0A 1A0
780 645 2913 or 888 645 4155 office • 780 645 5790 fax
www.ironhorsetrail.ca





Figure 2 New temporary hazards on the trail

Waterlines, Waterlines

At the moment, much of the Iron Horse Trail is fulfilling its other purpose. In addition to being a recreation and historic trail, the rail line provides a common utility corridor throughout the region. Summer 2012, a water line was laid from the St Paul Water Plant to Elk Point providing water to both Elk Point and county residents.

Piping was directionally drilled under the trail often going 500 m between open pits. Marianne worked all summer with the construction company to reroute traffic around construction zones. We are still in discussions with the water commission and the construction company concerning safety of obstructions and standpipes along the route.

Warranty work on settling areas, safety details, and bringing the trail surface back to agreed-upon standards will take place the next two years.

In fall 2012, two construction companies started directionally drilling under the Iron Horse Trail: one company in Smoky Lake going east and another in Spedden going west. Long-time Riverland member Hector Dalpe was hired by NE Muni-Corr to represent the interests of NE Muni-Corr and trail users regarding the Smoky Lake Water Commission, the engineering company and the construction company.

This arrangement is working well. Since the entire trail bed is being used by equipment, the trail has been closed for the winter. Once construction is over this spring and the trail surface has been repaired to standard conditions, it will reopen.



Trail Pass

Riverland is working with businesses along the trail to let trail users donate to the trail and buy a voluntary trail pass. Trail users who make a donation at a participating business receive an oval sticker for the year. The business will forward the cheque or money on to Riverland Recreational Trail Society.

Last fall users donated over \$800 to the trail, mostly from visitors from other parts of Alberta. You can make a donation in this way at a business or fill-in the attached information at the end of this newsletter. Memberships in Riverland are always available. New members are always welcome.



RIVERLAND RECREATIONAL TRAIL SOCIETY

Box 587
 Elk Point AB T0A 1A0
 780 645 2913 or 888 645 4155 office • 780 645 5790 fax
www.ironhorsetrail.ca



Voluntary Trail Pass Contribution	
Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Fax Number	
Email	
Date	
Amount Contributed	
Year of Contribution	2013
	Want to receive more information

Membership wanted - \$10	
Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Fax Number	
Email	
Date	



Figure 3 President Maurice Dargis moving rig mats

Geo Cache Power Trail in Place

Canada's longest geo-cache power trail is almost complete and has active users on the trail searching for the small hidden geo-caches. Over 1000 caches were placed over the past year by Marianne Price and a team of avid geo-cachers.

Visitors have been drawn to the area to attempt the Power Trail. They are spending money in local businesses while enjoying their time on the trail and in the area.

Once water line projects are complete, we will need to do minor repairs to a few geocaches. Some of the waterline workers are geo-cachers and have found locations while working on the trail.

Souvenir geocache medals (in the shape of a locomotive, railway car, and caboose) are available from Marianne's office in the St. Paul Town Office as a memento of finding caches on the Iron Horse Trail.

Riverland has received a donation of rig mats for use in repairing wet spots along the trail. Let us know if you see a spot that might use some repair.

As well some picnic tables need repair. If you see one, let us know where it is.

Info@ironhorsetrail.ca

1 888 645 4155

780 645 2913
