

- 1980 - CN rail service between Elk Point & Heinsburg was discontinued. People began using the 34 km corridor as an informal trail.
- 1993 – County of St. Paul buys a gravel pit and rail corridor and agrees to using it as a ‘linear park’ recreational trail.
- 1999 – TransCanada Trail promotes the dream of a national trail. (Water Relay)
- 1999 – Rail line abandonment in rest of north east Alberta
- 1999 – Riverland Recreational Trail Society forms
- 1999 – N.E. Muni-Corr Ltd. is incorporated as a not-for-profit Part Nine Company
- 2001 - N.E. Muni-Corr took ownership of the Bonnyville-Coronada Rail Line
- 2001 – Regional elections ask the question: Do you support a municipally-regulated public trail on the soon to be abandoned CN railway right of way?
- 2003 – Alberta’s Iron Horse Trail official opening
- 2003 – Alberta’s Iron Horse Trail wins the Travel Alberta “Alberta Pride” Alto Award.
- 2003 – Alberta’s Iron Horse Trail Tourism Product Club is formed and receives \$150,000 in funds from the Canadian Tourism Commission
- 2004 – Designated part of the Trans Canada Trail
- 2005 Alberta – Saskatchewan Centennials
- 2007 – N.E. Alberta is selected as the first of a series of eight provincial trail maps.
- 2007 – N.E. Muni-Corr Ltd. wins the Alberta Snowmobile Association’s Excellence Award for Outstanding Snowmobile Tourism Promotion and Development
- 2007 – Riverland Recreational Trail Society is nominated for Travel Alberta Alto Friends of Tourism Award
- 2008 – N.E. Muni-Corr Ltd. wins the Canadian Council of Snowmobile Organization’s Canadian Excellence Award for Outstanding Snowmobile Tourism Promotion and Development

Other wording:

1980: CN rail service between Elk Point & Heinsburg was discontinued. The rails were taken up and people began using the corridor as an informal trail. Parts of this corridor were on the historic Carlton Trail, which was used to explore Western Canada from the 1700s onward.

1993: CN sold the corridor to the County of St. Paul. The county was initially interested in a lucrative gravel pit included in the deal. Trail users lobbied to have the corridor deemed a public trail and have since that time operated it on an informal basis.

1999: September Interested citizens from Smoky Lake to Heinsburg (approx. 150 km) applied for society status as Riverland Recreational Trail Society with the objective of building a trail from Fort Saskatchewan to the Saskatchewan border, north of the North Saskatchewan River.

1999: October CN announced abandonment of rail service in Northeastern Alberta. A partnership of ten municipalities negotiated to keep the line intact and in public ownership through a not-for-profit company called North East Muni-Corr Ltd.

2001: May N.E. Muni-Corr took ownership of the Bonnyville-Coronada Rail Line including 300 km of corridor, sidings and trestles. As part of the agreement, CN included fencing and decking to all trestles as well as preliminary grading of the corridor surface.

2001: October In municipal elections, the question was asked: Do you support a municipally-regulated public trail on the soon to be abandoned CN railway right of way?

1. 54.1% Overall (in the 3 Rural Municipalities)
2. 64% in the County of St. Paul
3. 50% + 12 in the County of Smoky Lake
4. 45% in the M.D. of Bonnyville
5. 71% in the Town of Smoky Lake
6. 60% in the Village of Glendon
7. 90% by the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce
8. 85%+ at the last St. Paul Town Trail Committee meeting

A majority of voters said yes and trail development proceeded with the support of ten municipalities, Alberta TrailNet, Alberta Snowmobile Association and many community organizations.

2002: Working with the N.E. Muni-Corr and the 10 municipalities, Riverland helped complete the legal steps necessary to begin work on the trail. Much planning and work with each community helped kick off construction in the fall with the installation of 90 gates and 1500 signs.

2003: Construction began in earnest. Staging areas and maps were ready for trail users. Promotional and marketing programs were designed. Operational details were finalized with the municipal governments. The official opening of the trail was on June 8, 2003 with 300 people in attendance.

2004: Completion of essential facilities was done. Marketing and promotion through tourist organizations began. Application to be part of Trans Canada Trail was accepted.

2005:

Alberta's Iron Horse Trail is a major feature of the Alberta - Saskatchewan centennial celebrations with a flag relay connecting communities from Edmonton to Regina. A CD is produced highlighting the celebration.

2009:

Riverland Recreational Trail Society celebrates its tenth anniversary of trail building in Northeastern Alberta.