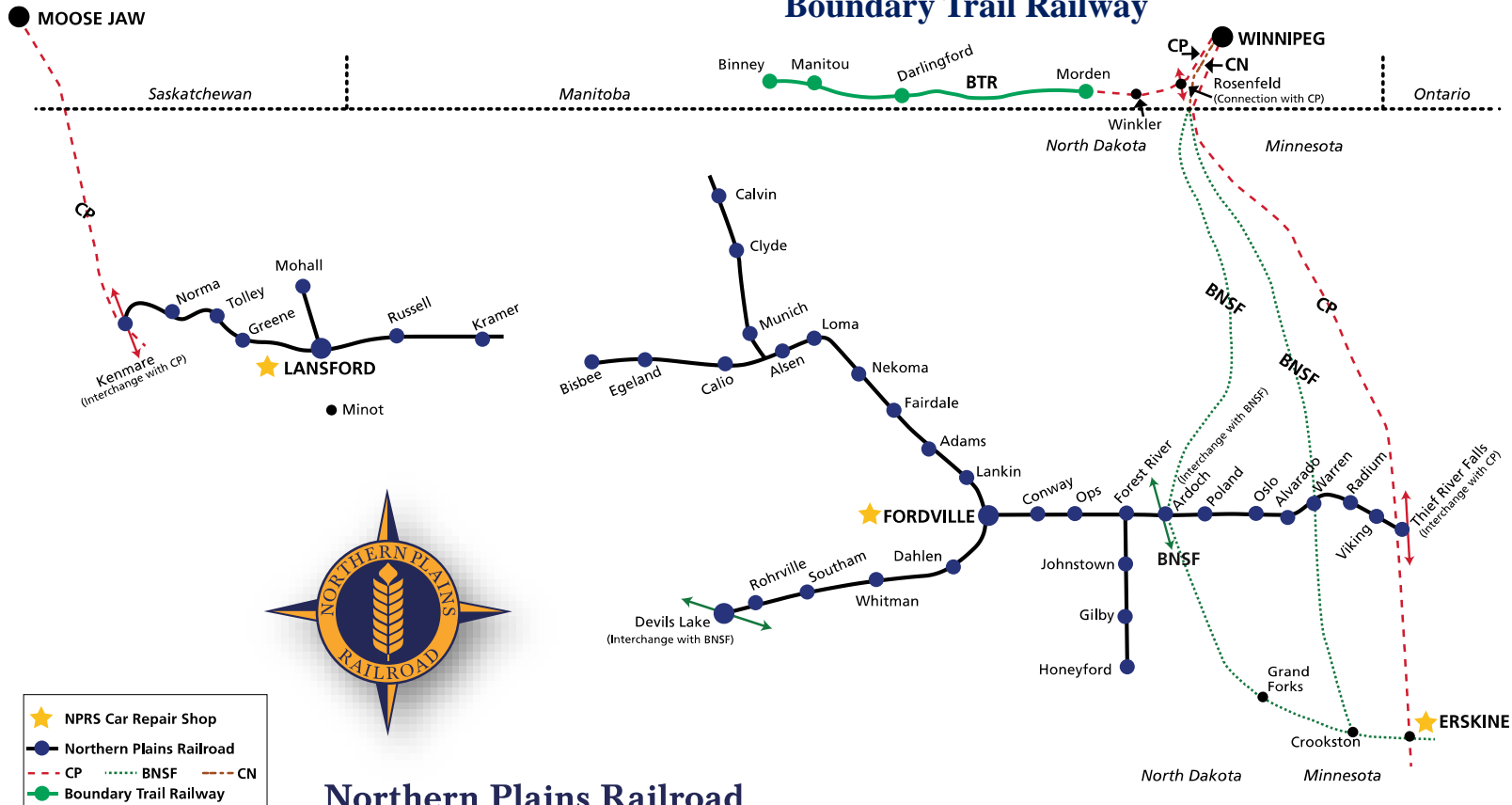


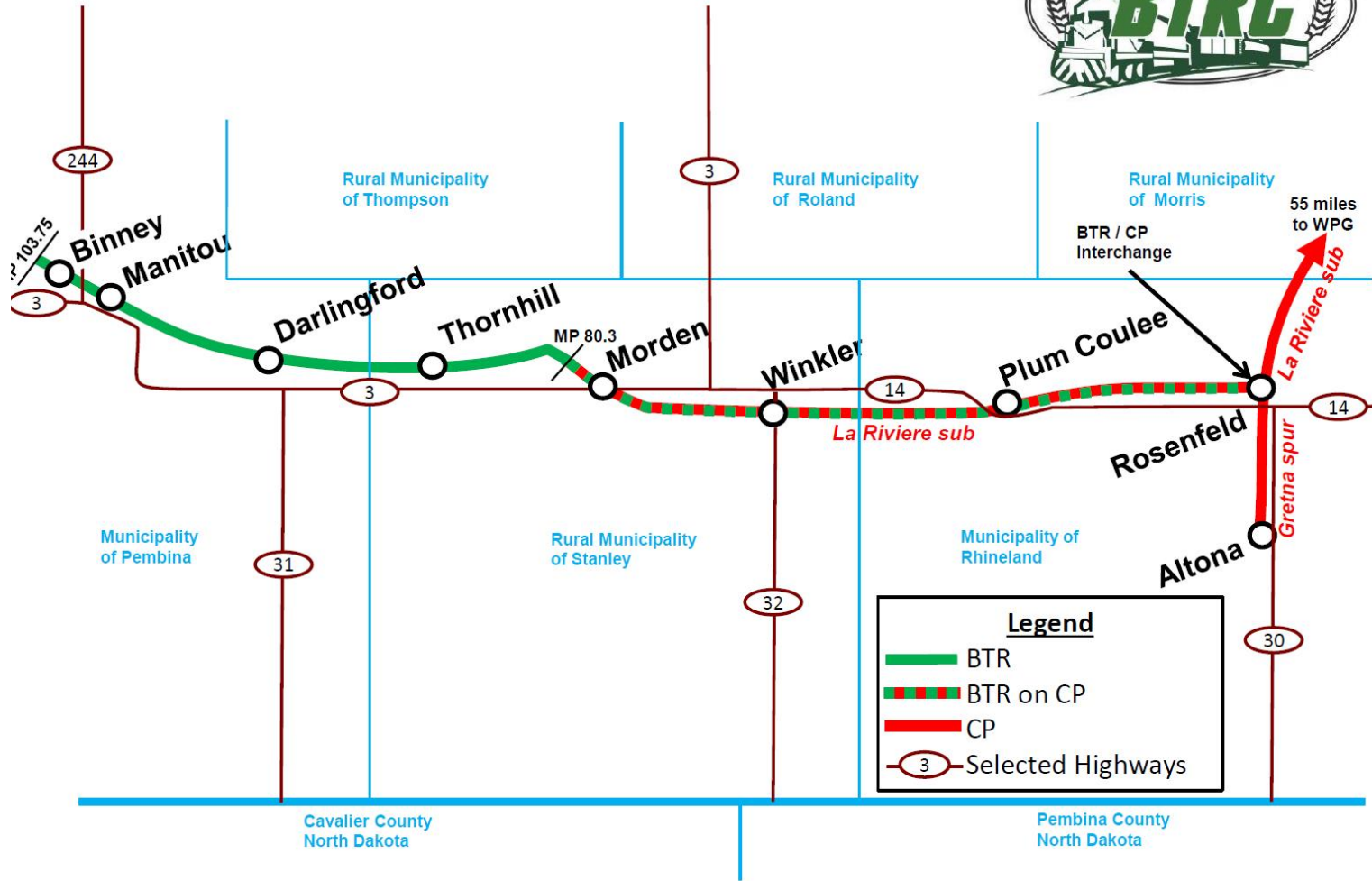


## Boundary Trail Railway



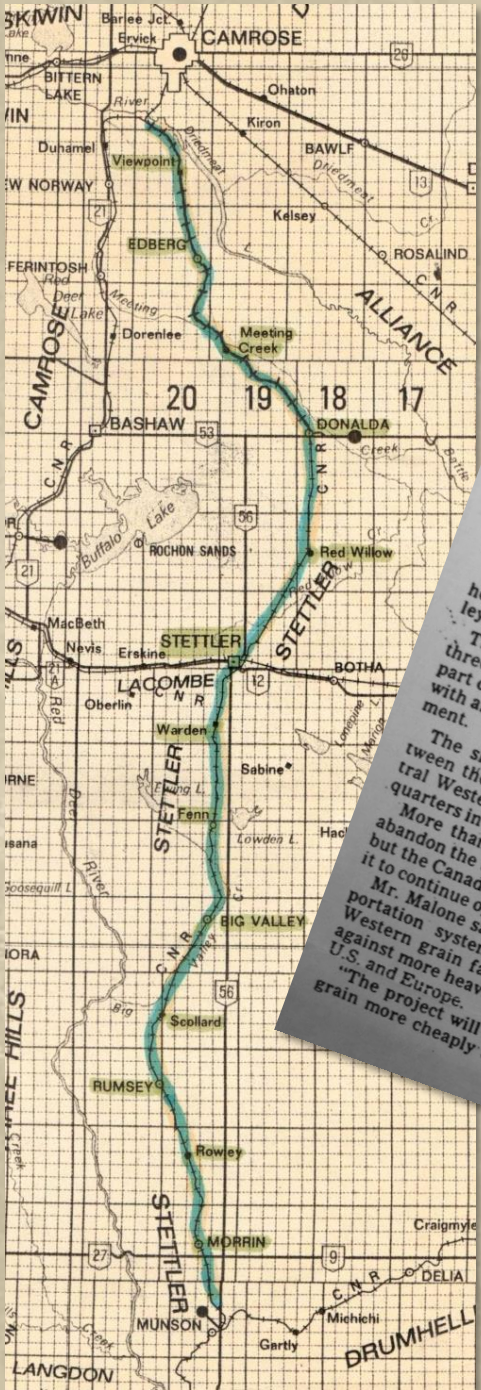
## Northern Plains Railroad

# BTR Overview



**Legend**

- BTR
- BTR on CP
- CP
- 3 Selected Highways



**CENTRAL WESTERN  
RAILWAY CORPORATION**

# Private group takes over Stettler rail subdivision

*June 20/86*

By JIM LOZERON  
of The Advocate  
STETTNER — In a first for modern-day rail-  
way grain handling in Canada, a private com-  
pany will take over operation of the Stettler Sub-  
division.

A group called Central Western Railway will  
lease the line, now owned by CN Rail, and estab-  
lish a model short-line railway, Crowfoot MP Ar-  
mond Malone announced at a Stettler and District  
Chamber of Commerce meeting here Thursday.

The 180-km line runs from just north of Drum-  
heller to south of Camrose and includes Big Val-  
ley, Stettler, Donald and six other points.

The company will operate the service for a  
three-year test period beginning in September as  
part of a broader federal program to experiment  
with alternatives to railway branch line abandon-  
ment.

The short-line project is a joint venture be-  
tween the Transport Canada, CN Rail and Cen-  
tral Western Railway, which will have its head-  
quarters in Stettler.

More than two years ago CN Rail applied to  
abandon the track, claiming it was a money loser,  
but the Canadian Transport Commission ordered  
it to continue operating until the year 2000.

Mr. Malone said the grain handling and trans-  
portation system must be more efficient for  
Western grain farmers to compete successfully  
against grain farmers to compete successfully  
in U.S. and Europe.

"The project will be a success if we can move  
grain more cheaply and it provides service that

is equal to that today or better," he said.

Central Western Railway tried to purchase the  
line from CN Rail, but Ottawa opposed the sale,  
said Ralph Garrett, a partner in the company.

In spite of CN claims it lost \$2.4 million on the  
Stettler line in 1982, Mr. Garrett said he thinks it  
can still be a paying proposition.

"First of all, we don't have CN's large overhead  
and, secondly, we intend to operate a non-union  
shop so our labor costs will be dramatically  
lower," he said.

The firm has already recruited 14 employees.  
Mr. Malone said Ottawa will help the firm  
financially during the test period to maintain  
rates at the level set by the Western Grain  
Transportation Act.

But he said it is too early to speculate on the  
federal contribution as operational details for  
the service have not been worked out.

Announcement of the project got mixed re-  
sponses.  
Doug Herbert, deputy mayor of Stettler, said  
he was pleased, citing the business and employ-  
ment potential of the project.

But Glen Goertzen, area farmer and head of  
the transportation committee of the Western  
Barley Growers Association, said he doubts the  
line will be more profitable under private opera-  
tion.

In the long run, uneconomic branch lines hurt  
all producers because they are reflected in  
higher average shipping costs of moving grain  
across the Prairies, Mr. Goertzen said.





















