

# NORTHWEST MOUNTAIN BIKER

BACKCOUNTRY BICYCLE TRAILS CLUB > SEATTLE, WA > MAR/APR 2004 > VOL. 17 > NO. 2 > WWW.BBTC.ORG

## Dream Rides: Moab, Tiger and Summer of the Hammer

### Catch BBTC at Bike Expo

Seattle's annual Spring Bike Expo, sponsored this year by Group Health under the auspices of Cascade Bicycle Club, will run March 5-7 at the Seahawks Exhibition Center along Royal Brougham Way between the football and baseball stadiums.

BBTC will again have a booth where all matters MTB will be on display and available for study, and questions about mountain biking in the Pacific Northwest will be answered. Stop by and say hello to the crew, and if you're a mountain biker, sign up for club membership (see form on the back of this newsletter). We can always use another helping hand!

### Jonesing for Moab

If you ride a mountain bike, there is one mecca you must pilgrimage, one temple you must worship, one dream you must never wake from and one glory you must grab before you die. Moab. Say it. Do it. Ride it.

From April 10 through 18, Jim Lyon and I will be in Moab riding our legs off and hearts out in the sun and warmth, living large with MTB. The ride has been posted on the BBTC calendar, check it out and sign up now! Note that if we get a full complement—8 riders—our accommodations in a rented condo will run under \$10 a night. Yes, you can camp in Moab for less. But it gets brisk to the bone at night. And what about showers? Laundry? What about hot meals? What about phone, TV, and main street Moab only a couple of blocks away? Breakfast is supplied. There's a full kitchen for other meals. Plus the camaraderie of mountain bikers from all around the world in adjoining units.

Jim has never been to Moab but as everyone knows is one of the club's leading racers and epic riders. On the list of must-do's are Slickrock, Amasa Back, Porcupine Rim, Bartlett Wash and Moab Rim (including Hidden Valley). We may scamper up to White Rim, the La Sal Mountains or even to Fruita, depending on conditions and circumstances. In any case, a great time is guaranteed for all.

The dates are cast in stone because of our schedules, but others are planning Moab trips as well later in the spring. So keep your eye on the BBTC calendar and get ready to rumble the red rock with the BBTC!

— Paul Andrews

### Tiger Burning Bright

I remember making a promise to myself when I moved up here from San Diego in the winter of 1996. I made the promise, in part, to keep myself from feeling guilty about all the trail workers I passed on my bicycle while learning to mountain bike in various parts of southern California.

We've all said it as we ride by: "Great work guys! Thanks! Uh, who are you guys again?" Most were polite. A few



BBTC member John Loomis hard at work on the trail.

Photo by Peter Partel

grumbled and muttered under their breath. Saying things like: "We'll be out here next week." And "That's what you said the last two times ..."

My promise to myself was that before I even rode a bike on a trail in Seattle, I would do some trail work. So I searched the web before I moved up here and I found this club called the Backcountry something or others—I could never remember the name but I could just type in "Seattle mountain biking" and its site would come up.

Through that site I hooked up with the BBTCers doing trail maintenance up on Tiger Mountain. I loved it and after I took a class offered by Volunteers for Outdoor Washington I was ready to roll. For three joyful, happy and carefree years I toiled away on Tiger Mountain's trails, attending the few scheduled work parties up there and eventually though timidly posting work parties on our newly redesigned Web site.

Then the fateful phone call came in from BBTC's president, Jennifer Leshner. "Brian, we think you should run for president."

"What? Uh, why?" At this point I didn't know a thing about the club other than that they let me play in the dirt on Tiger and now suddenly I might be president. Well, whatever Jennifer said worked and I ran for president in 2000 and then again in 2001 and then yet again in 2003, and then and hopefully for the last time in 2004.

"But all I really want to do is trail work!" my inner trail worker keeps screaming at me. So this year, as the club depends less and less on a core group of folks to get it all done (hint: see retreat goals for this year in forthcoming issue) I will return my focus back to Tiger Mountain.

Last year we had some amazing success in getting volunteers out to place rock in key spots on the lower part of the Preston trail. This year, we need to finish

the job by incorporating the rock into the trail to quell the water flow that has for years followed the old and concave railroad bed, digging it deeper and deeper every winter.

Our philosophy is simple: Move the water off the trail and leave the challenge on the trail. If we are successful this year then we can expect to have the trail opened year-round this year. It will take a dedicated effort on our part to do it. But, as evidenced by last year's success on Tiger, I know we'll make it... it just takes you all to make it happen.

If you haven't figured it out by now, listen up: This is a call to do trailwork this winter and spring! Tiger needs your help but there are also several other areas where there will be work parties. Check the Web site or call the hotline for upcoming work parties. Check back often, they have a way of appearing when you least expect them. So put in your sweat (or snow) equity now so this summer when you ride on that trail you worked on you can hold your head high and say, "I did that!"

Here's to many happy and healthy trails in 2004.

— Brian Jones

### The Hammer Can Dream

First we'll head out to Orcas on the 15th (of May) where we may miss the Bournique banter for yet another year.

Then, MAYBE... do the yearly pilgrimage to Bend for those willing to repeat a little hike-a-bike o'er to an even more snowed over Mrazek. Remember, Whistler weekends ought to be poppin' by then.

June will get us early out to Squamish, The Shore, Hood River and whatever early gig Preston's got in mind...

July will see a hopeful Lake Wenatchee to Lake Chelan grunt, Canadia, and a North Umpqua River romp (the full monty!).

August will still see heavy traffic into Canadia but the highlight will be a trip to the Sun Valley area (I'll have to bring my O<sub>2</sub> tanks this time, I'm afraid). More Eastern WA...

September will take me half way around the world during my trip to Siberia... believe me, there will be some kind of Taiga bike adventure in my report... upon return, we'll do more Canadia, and possibly squeeze in the Fall 5K.

October gets a trip to Winthrop and more Canadia...

November, what can I say... "OH CANADA" (just call me "NAFTA GUY"), Ft. Ebey and a dive into the ole closet for the snow gear!

Of course this plan will be discarded for an all-out Canadia summer!

So, join in solemn prayer for those who will partake in Freeride antics, which may curtail a lovely season...

— Armando

# BBTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2004

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For club issues, questions and suggestions  
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Founded in 1988, Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club is a volunteer-powered, nonprofit 501c3 organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing mountain biking and the trails that we enjoy. We focus on education, advocacy and recreation, in addition to believing in a philosophy and practice of building common ground and fostering a club culture that "gives back." BBTC seeks to represent mountain biking across a wide realm, including cross-country, freeriding, racing, downhill, and BMX. In addition, we are a proud affiliate member of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). Membership is \$15 a year for individuals, \$25 for families and \$150 for commercial outlets. Contributions also are welcome and are fully tax-deductible. E-mail [membership@bbtc.org](mailto:membership@bbtc.org) for further information.

## CLUB CONTACT INFORMATION

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## Letter from the Prez BY BRIAN JONES

We, the 2004 BBTC Board, just finished our retreat for this year.

You may notice that this letter sounds a lot like the last "Letter from the Prez," and echoes the message in most of the "Letters from the Prez" for the last several years.

When I started as president of BBTC in 2001, I had one semi-articulately expressed personal goal: To take the club to a professional level that was sustainable and didn't rely on a small number of people and their memories and energy to get everything done.

I wanted to switch our focus from a "We need to do this now," putting-out-fires mode to a "What do we need to create to allow us to become exponentially more effective and to retain continuity and velocity even when the current crop of active volunteers has moved on?" mode.

For the past three years, we've been focusing on building a strong foundation for the club in a way that will allow us to grow effectively and become exponentially better mountain bike advocates. This in turn translates into more miles of better trails.

A creative, responsible, and diverse volunteer base will allow us to reach for the stars. We are a volunteer driven club and we can only grow and be successful if we foster a volunteer base that can energize that reach for the stars.

Look for us to start leveraging all we've been working for in 2004 ... and my challenge to you is to look for ways small or large, one time or continuously, to give back to the trails that you love to ride on.

This is the year folks. Watch us reach the stars!

Brian Jones

President, BBTC

## THE INSIDE DIRT

### Making It Happen in 2004

2004 promises to be a big year for us.

Big because the club foundation that Brian and the Board have been building for the last 3 years is ready to be leveraged.

Big because there are exciting trail projects ahead of us, in the city, in the foothills and out in the backcountry. Within the next several years I-5 Open Space/Colonnade, Duthie Hill and Olallie have the potential to dramatically change mountain biking in Washington, and make our region a premier place for off-road riders.

This year we will be building upon our foundation and reaching for the potential that our region holds. In order to fully leverage our potential, we will be focusing this year on effective communication and increasing our capacity by building strong and dynamic volunteer teams.

Improved communication will allow us to leverage our existing resources more effectively, and reach out to new bikers who can help us in our goal of building more miles of trail.

I now send out regular "Update from BBTC" emails to our entire membership.

Paul Andrews has reinvigorated the newsletter, which is now being sent out every two months. We will be holding new membership meetings four times a year, which will be a place for mountain bikers to meet our Board, talk about the issues we are working on, and get involved with our projects.

We also have several online communication initiatives for this year: The Web team will implement a new BBTC bulletin board with several categories to enable better discussions, we will add an easy way to find the "Contact Us" tab on our Web site, and we will be updating content

on the Web site to keep folks up to date and educate them on current issues.

We are creating a marketing team, to be led by Erik Krause, which will help us let the world know all the great things we are doing for mountain bikers. This external communication is key to growing our membership and gaining political and popular support for our trail projects.

We have an amazing group of volunteers who are the driving force behind everything we do. In order to increase our ability to take on bigger and better projects, we will be creating teams for each function within the club. This will allow our volunteers to share the load with other volunteers, and ensure that when someone moves, gets busy, or goes out of town, our projects stay alive. These teams will set and achieve their own goals that help us move towards BBTC's strategy and mission.

Several of these teams are already in place, and several more of them need team leaders. Over the next several months we will be reaching out to mountain bikers to step in and make us a stronger and more effective organization that can build more miles of mountain bike trails. It's all about the trails!

— Justin Vander Pol, executive director





An example of Tiger damage on Northwest Timber Trail.

## Tiger Mountain Needs Help

The trails on Tiger Mountain frequented by MTBers (Iverson/Preston/NW Timber) were assessed for storm/winter snow damage during the first week of February. From what we had heard one could not walk into the NW Timber trail more than a few feet without coming to a complete halt due to the downed trees.

There were also the courtesy photos of the I-90 side of Tiger (hiker-only trails) and the storm damage they endured to support that claim.

Brian, his new pooch, and I met for a top to bottom walk-through of the Preston RR trail on the first day. It was threatening to snow—but then that is what 4WD is for. We did count 32 downed trees; some were huge and had binds on them.

Up to the first switchback we counted 13 downed trees. And of course if you'll recall the branches in your yard after the first windstorm, or ice storm; this was four miles of a sea of green. Only one root ball up in the middle of the trail about mid-way through.

A few days later I persuaded my wife and a coworker to come along for the NW Timber trail assessment. Yes, walk in 50 yards and you'll not be able to find the trail although you'd swear it should go this way, then that way. What blight: 60 downed trees in all from start to finish. The worst section was up (about 40 in that first mile of trail).

Many have SCBs (super complex binds) and diameters pushing three feet. Also, three sections of trail have been decimated due to root ball upheaval in the middle of the trail. Seems the recent logging there from the last year has allowed the wind to do more damage, with fewer trees to slow it down than in the past. The high bridge has a monstrous leaner against it and is currently impassable.

Two days later, with the same two suckers in tow, we assessed the Iverson trail. It wasn't bad initially, but right below the re-route section (new bridge), all heck apparently broke loose. Remember that game you played with the sticks as a kid (Mikado?) where you would hold them together and let them fall only to have to remove them from the heap uninterrupted? Well, the downhill side from the new bridge looks like that. One tree after another piled on top of the other. Sort of a Rubik's cube for loggers. Let's see Hans Rey clean that section! There are about 30 downed trees on the Iverson.

Roger Donahe and I will be posting work parties starting in February to get the Tiger trails ready for the opener. A

de-greening of the trails will need to be done first from beginning to end of all trails (unless you don't mind a few snapped spokes and bent derailleurs). After that some de-berming and drainage clean out will be in order.

Beyond that, we'll need to repair the sections where the root balls destroyed the trail (NW Timber) is needed, and then Brian Jones will coordinate the Iverson re-route and Preston upgrades slated to make Tiger a year-around, no-it-won't-close-for-winter, experience.

— Mark Klinke

*[Ed. note: As of print deadline, Tiger was undergoing massive rehabilitation thanks to tireless Department of Natural Resources crews. If you see any of these hardhatted guys up there in their trucks or scouting the area, please be sure to offer a heartfelt thank-you. However, the trails still need a lot of finishing work and Art Tuftee says the club will be recruiting volunteers. Watch for calendar and mailing-list announcements.]*

## Paradise Valley Update

It's been nearly three months since the last public meeting on Nov. 20 regarding Paradise, or what Snohomish County now refers to as the Paradise Valley Conservation Area. Thank you to all those who have attended these meetings and written letters, etc. Whether you believe it or not, it has made a big difference!

As you know, this property was acquired with a federal grant using Salmon Recovery Fund Board money, the purpose of which is to preserve salmon habitat. That includes the tributaries, headwaters and watersheds that flow into or comprise their habitat. IAC oversees the grant process from Olympia. Snohomish County Parks Department (SCPR) accepted responsibility to manage the property per the acquisition and grant agreements.

Nearly a year ago, the project was reassigned to Tom Murdoch, a senior planner. Mr. Murdoch works part time for SCPR as he is also the Director of the Northwest Adopt A Stream Foundation. Very shortly after Murdoch was put in place, the property was officially closed to all public access pending a field study to inventory the natural habitat on the site. This took everyone, including IAC, by surprise. IAC reportedly urged SCPR to reconsider the closure and adopt an interim use policy instead until more conclusive findings could be obtained. The closure remains, however.

In May of last year, the final grant payment was made to complete the property acquisition. This payment triggered a clause in the IAC agreement stipulating that a formal stewardship plan must be submitted to IAC by SCPR no later than May 12, 2004. The IAC agreement calls for public input into the stewardship plan. If you were at the meeting in November, you may recall that this point concerning public input became a somewhat volatile issue with the people from the mountain biking community wanting answers and insight into the public input process, and Murdoch seemingly doing his best to avoid the subject altogether.

With the impending May 12th deadline, you might be asking what's happened since the last meeting. Unfortunately not as much as we would have hoped. But here is what I can tell you.

None of the county agencies, including SCPR, has any money to conduct a natural resource inventory on the site, yet the property was closed to public access for

this explicit purpose. It's a bit of a catch-22 you might say. Following the Nov. 20th meeting, Murdoch and Ron Martin, Director of SCPR, no longer wanted to head up the site inventory effort out of concern that it might look inappropriate. So SCPR issued a formal request to Joan Lee, Director of Snohomish County Surface Water Management, asking for help. There have been two meetings between the two groups to discuss it. At issue are such things as who is actually going to be on the ground gathering data, what methods will be used to do so, who will lead the project and which set of wetland standards will be followed.

Although numerous concerned volunteer groups, including BBTC, have come forward offering to assist in the process, SCPR is indicating that they will not use any of these groups for fear of jeopardizing the results of the study. Rather, Murdoch has determined that he will use trained volunteer scientists to collect scientific data in a controlled fashion. Apparently King County will be pitching in some volunteer help as well.

Murdoch favors using the King County Waterways 2000 monitoring protocols and the Washington State Wetlands Identification and Delineation Manual as published by the Washington State Department of Ecology. An alternative approach would call for using the Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation manual. The Critical Areas Regulations apparently leave more latitude for qualitative input by those gathering the data. Murdoch feels the presence of qualitative input would however open the entire process up to unwarranted scrutiny and therefore prefers the more objective approach.

The Wetland Delineation manual calls out five specific upland wetland classifications that can be scientifically measured and identified. He feels that four of the five wetland classifications are certainly present in the PVCA and that it is their job to clearly identify them. Once identified, it will be necessary to compose a comprehensive inventory listing of the site's natural resources. Following that, the next step will be to convene the stewardship planning committee to review the study findings and make recommendations. Ultimately, those recommendations will include trail closures if the trail runs through a wetland. The current plan calls for having one member from each identified user group on the committee along with several SCPR staff. Several environmental user groups have been identified along with the BBTC, and possibly an equestrian group and a motorized vehicle group. Motorized vehicles are strictly prohibited on the property, however, so it is unclear whether they will be represented or not.

As you can see, there is a great deal of work to be done in fewer than 90 days. Murdoch feels that it will not all be completed but hopes enough will be to satisfy the initial IAC requirement.

You are urged to keep your eyes and ears open. If you know a stream ecologist, an environmentalist, a forester, a marine biologist, etc., ask them what their thoughts are on the PVCA proceedings. What have they seen work in the past in terms of shared use in what might be an environmentally sensitive area? Although we are working well with SCPR in other areas of the county, this remains a contentious matter and so we are looking to learn as much as we can to bring about a reasonable outcome for all.

— Jeff Mack

## BBTC Board Meets and Sets Goals for 2004

Our Board of Directors recently met for a weekend to discuss our accomplishments in 2003 and set goals for 2004. In 2003 we met several important goals. We hired our first-ever paid Executive Director, gained 501(c)(3) nonprofit status and continued to build our trail crews with trained and accredited crew leaders. 2004 will be an exciting and important year for us, as we undertake several high-profile projects. This year our goals will focus on leveraging the foundation we've built over the last three years by increasing our capacity, leveraging our volunteer resources and improving communication about what we're doing.

More information about our goals for 2004 will be posted on the Web site in the next several weeks.

## Fill out the 2004 Member Survey

The 2004 BBTC member survey is now online at [http://www.bbtc.org/advocacy/bbtc\\_survey.php](http://www.bbtc.org/advocacy/bbtc_survey.php). Tell us what you think and help us keep mountain biking great in Washington State.

## We Have a New Home!

BBTC has officially moved into our new office space. We want to extend a huge thank-you to Cascade Bicycle Club, which has donated the office to us. The office is located in the building at the entrance to Sand Point Magnuson Park, 7400 Sand Point Way NE. Mail should continue to be sent to our PO box. We are in the first building on the right side of the drive at the main entrance to the park. We will have storage space here, and there is a meeting room that can seat 12 people.

## Make a Difference — Be a Team Leader

As part of our goal of building capacity in 2004 we are looking for leaders who are responsible for our different teams of volunteers. Our immediate needs are for Web team leader, events team leader and fundraising team leader. Contact Justin Vander Pol for more information, [justin@bbtc.org](mailto:justin@bbtc.org), 206-390-2237.

## Want to Get Skilled in MTB? Boot Camp WANTS YOU!

So you want to get started mountain biking? Boot Camp's the place for you. In a fun-gated 3-hour class you will develop the skills and confidence to ride singletrack. Learn about bike maintenance, climbing and descending, shifting, braking and cornering as well. By the end of class, we'll even have you hopping logs.

We offer several opportunities to take the class during the spring/early summer starting in May. The classes

are held at St. Edward Park in Juanita. We are working with the park to arrange our current year schedule. As soon as we have determined the class dates, we will post them to our Web site ([www.bbtc.org](http://www.bbtc.org)) under the education page. So feel free to check out the Boot Camp Web pages. You'll find the syllabus, driving directions to St Ed's, FAQs, Boot Camp pictures and (soon) our schedule. If you have any questions you can contact our Boot Camp coordinator at [bootcamp@bbtc.org](mailto:bootcamp@bbtc.org).

— Rachel Agent

## Whistler: An Offer You Can't Refuse

Attention members of the Back Country Bicycle Trails Club! This is a special offer on accommodation in Whistler, to club members only! My name is Trevor and my company manages several two-bedroom townhomes in Whistler Village. All of my homes have a private hot tub (great after a day of riding), Jacuzzi bath, full kitchen, laundry, gas fireplace and a prime location called Glaciers Reach. This is in Whistler Village North beside the valley trail, minutes from the gondola and across from the Market place Liquor and Grocery stores.

Several of my homes have an enclosed patio with water, making them ideal for cleaning and storing your mountain bikes. I invite you to visit my Web site, [www.whistlervacations.com](http://www.whistlervacations.com), to find out more about my homes. The homes best suited for a mountain bike holiday are seen in the suite gallery as Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10.

We have very low rates in the spring, summer and fall and I am happy to offer members of the BBTC a 10% discount on any accommodation. If you book within two weeks of your desired arrival dates I will lower my minimum night stay to two nights and offer you a 20% discount as well. I show my availability online so you can fill a gap or book last minute. In the spring and fall I have often rented a two-bedroom to a couple for a discounted one-bedroom rate when booking last minute. Simply call me and I will find a way to save you money on great accommodations in Whistler.

You can get 10% to 20% off the rates listed below: Spring and fall rates in a two bedroom are \$169 CDN/night. Summer rates in a two bedroom are \$189 CDN/night. [Note: \$1 CDN is approximately \$.75 USD.]

Play hard and then relax with us in your own private hot tub at Glaciers Reach!

— Trevor Chelswick, owner, AllSeason Vacation Rentals [tlc@whistlervacations.com](mailto:tlc@whistlervacations.com)

## Kudos From Oregon

My name is Eric Meglasson, I'm the president of COTA, the Central Oregon Trail Alliance down in Bend Oregon. We are a trail advocacy group similar to BBTC, only on a much smaller scale.

Our organization is preparing to release our first newsletter. We've looked at your newsletter as well as ones

from other groups for inspiration. You guys are putting out a good product and we are hoping to emulate the quality of your publication.

Mainly I'm writing to ask if you don't mind if we borrow heavily from the format of the Northwest Mountain Biker. Hopefully you won't mind; it will allow us to spend less time on layout and more time on content.

I noticed an editorial in a past issue that we might be interested in reprinting in one of our future issues. We'll contact you about that later.

Your club seems to be doing an impressive job with your political clout and advocacy efforts. I believe a newsletter is a critical tool for distributing information. Keep up the good work. I can't wait to get up to your area to ride some of the trails I've been reading about.

Thanks,  
Eric Meglasson

## Lots of Spokes (but no blokes), also known as Wine, Women and Wheels

Ever wonder how a pile of spokes and nipples plus a hub and rim can turn into a fully functioning wheel right before your eyes? Come to "Lots of Spokes" where BBTC Vice Prez Jennifer Leshner will show you how to build your own wheel from scratch. Instruction will be covered in two sessions of about 3 hours each. In the first session we discuss the concepts of wheel building, then lace the wheel. In the second session we will finish the wheel by bringing the spokes to the appropriate tension and prestressing the wheel. We will also cover basic wheel truing techniques. Both sessions will also include drinks, snacks and social time.

**Dates/Times:** Thursday, March 11; 7:00 PM and Thursday, March 25; 7:00 PM (this is a two-session class)

**What is it?** A wheel building class for women.

**Where is it?** The event will be held at a private residence. I will send address and directions to confirmed attendees in advance of the event.

**Who may come?** BBTC members who are women and who want to learn to build wheels. Class is limited to 8 participants, so sign up soon.

**How do I sign up?** On the bbtc website calendar <http://www.bbtc.org/recreation/> or by calling Jennifer Leshner at 206-919-3704.

**What will I need to bring?** You will need to bring all necessary parts for your new wheel. I will send out a shopping list to all confirmed attendees.

Truing stands will be limited, so please bring your bike; we will be using the time honored "dropouts as truing stand" method. If you have a truing stand, feel free to bring it instead of the bike. In addition, each participant is asked to bring something to eat or drink.

**How much does it cost?** There is no charge for the class. However, as noted above, I ask that everyone pitch in a food or beverage.

— Jennifer Leshner

# TALES FROM THE TRAILS

[A SAMPLING OF RIDE REVIEWS FROM THE BBTC EMAIL LIST AT [BBTCMEMBERS@YAHOOGROUPS.COM](mailto:BBTCMEMBERS@YAHOOGROUPS.COM)]

## Graduate Ride Series ... and more!

To all the fine folk who've been going on some of Bob Hollander's excellent series of beginner rides this winter: It's now time to step up to the next level! You can no longer be called beginners. It's time to graduate and reap the rewards of your new skills.

I'll be doing a series of rides, typically one a month, to introduce you to some (hopefully) new riding areas and also show you that you're ready to take on many of the rides that appear on the club calendar. The level of instruction will be less than on Bob's rides. Instead, we'll focus on riding at a steady pace but will stop for do-overs if people want to. These rides are intended to work on your new technical skills.

Now for the "more" part. This series of rides will culminate with an epic ride on Fawn Ridge (near Greenwater, WA) in early summer. To prepare for the epic ride, you'll also need to do some aerobic rides (Tiger, Tokul or even the Thrilla route) to work on your endurance. Fawn Ridge is about a 15-mile loop and has about 2300 feet of elevation gain. The loop is situated on the lower flanks of Sun Top Mountain and has beautiful views of the Palisades across the scenic White River valley. The loop utilizes portions of the famous Sun Top Trail.

The first ride in the series was Feb. 22 on the Section 36 trail system (near Sammamish). Keep an eye on the BBTC Ride Calendar for future rides in this series and we'll see YOU on the trails. Long Live Long Rides!

For questions or more information about this ride series and/or the ultimate epic ride, contact Kevin Axt ([mtnwuff@yahoo.com](mailto:mtnwuff@yahoo.com)).  
—Kevin Axt

## Fort Ebey Rhapsody

Had a good ride yesterday with Tim C, Maarten v D, and Ed C. And then this guy Dustin, who lives in Oak Harbor, joined us for the first hour. Was the first time he'd heard about BBTC but said he'd check out the Web site soon.

Trails at Ebey were kinda moist but didn't have much mud or water to speak of. Parts of the bluff trail were actually torn up, looked like they'd had some recent work done on them.

Skies were sunny off and on. Strait of Juan de Fuca was really calm when we first got to the bluff. Almost like glass. Then, by the time we'd leisurely biked north along the bluff, stopped at the gun turrets for snacks, and then got to the beach at the north end of the coast, the waves were picking up and some surfers were heading out into them.

All told, only saw like 5 other bikers, 6 or 7 surfers, and about 10 hikers all day.

Thanks again guys. Fun ride.  
—Ethan Espie

## Super Bowl Sunday: A Tradition Revived

This ride was one of my favorites for five or six years, but I couldn't do it the last two years. So I was very happy to revive it for 2004.

Since the traditional location for this ride is Cranberry Lake in the Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL), I usually can depend on nice weather for the ride due to the San Juan Rain Shadow. This year was no different. It was cold, a little cloudy, but rain-free. The trails were fine except for a few downed trees on Trail 128 on the west side of the lake. (Mike and I cleared a small one with my folding saw.) Roots were slippery and we all got dirty, but trail surfaces were in great shape.

This year I wanted to do a longer ride, so it went something like this: We started at the A Avenue trailhead near the old city dump, and went counter-clockwise around the lake. Trail 10, a jeep road loop, took us to Trail 124, then 113, then 108 and 104 up the east side of the lake. We were warmed-up by the time we got to the trailhead at the north end of Cranberry Lake.

Up to this point, trails were mostly fast and not too technical. Trail 127-128 is more interesting, with rocky-rooty climbs from the trailhead; then we went on some more relatively easy trails to Trail 129, a steep descent to the west border of the ACFL near the Anacortes airport; it loops back with some stiff climbs and technical sections to Trail 12, an easy trunk trail that took us to a long stiff climb up Trails 120, 115 and 116, at the southwest corner of the ACFL.

From this high point we had a fun technical descent down Trail 118 back to 10. From there we decided to loop back around the lake clockwise, starting up Trail 117. At the top of 117 Dan Becraft and Jason Cass had to bail so they could make it back to Seattle for a Super Bowl party (no word on whether they were in time to see Janet Jackson [or at least part of her]...). The rest of us continued back around the lake, for a ride that took about four hours in all.

Thanks to Dan and Jason, as well as Jason Shewchuk, Corky Luster, Randy Lee, Bill Hasenjaeger, Doug St. John and Micheal Regan for making the ride; you were all such congenial company. A special thanks to Doug for driving the car pool from Seattle, and especially back to Seattle after we were all tucked out from a great ride!

—Tom Fitzpatrick

## Senile Dementia XXXVIII: Another Tradition Revived

Tiger Mountain opens April 15. I've been in the habit of leading a Tiger Mountain Opener/Birthday Celebration because mine is April 17. So:

Saturday, April 17 10 a.m. Sign-up starts 9:30 in the upper parking area.

This will be a 20-mile ride: first Iverson, then out NW Timber, up Preston, lunch break, then down Preston and back in Timber. Should be almost 15 miles of singletrack, the rest road.

I encourage Seattle folks to car-pool, so I will be starting from the Ravenna Park & Ride at 8:45, from the lot south of 65th St. 425 487-3722 eves before 9:30.  
[t-cfitz@comcast.net](mailto:t-cfitz@comcast.net) —Tom Fitzpatrick

## Update on the Olallie Trails Project and Middle Fork Snoqualmie Situation

BBTC Members-at-large Art Tuftee and I recently attended an exciting potluck meet and greet for representatives of the various stakeholder organizations in the Snoqualmie River Valley.

Local organizations included the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Issaquah Alps, Washington Trails Association, and the Middle Fork Outdoor Recreation Coalition, among others. Several government agencies were involved including King County and Washington State Department of Natural Resources, US Forest Service, and Washington State Parks and Recreation. In other words, all the heavy hitters were there!

The agenda involved updates on several issues. There was discussion of proposed road work on the Middle Fork road, Snoqualmie River public access planning, and trail storm damage. Upgrades to Mt. Si and Mailbox peak trails were discussed.

Unfortunately there was no news on the recently rescinded Middle Fork planning decisions that affect the Middle Fork trail. The Forest Service is still actively working with several in-holders to solve legal access issues. There were several who appealed. As of now, the Forest Service expects to have the access concerns worked out by late spring.

I described the meeting as exciting, and now I'll tell you why. When I walked in, sitting prominently on the greeting table was a multi-color, 8-page brochure entitled "Olallie Area Mountain Bike Trail Study — Executive Summary." Doug Schrenk of the US Forest Service subsequently discussed the study during the meeting.

If you haven't heard of the Olallie project, it's a huge opportunity for Puget Sound muscle-powered recreationists to establish an alpine trail system on the mountain ridges south of I-90 between exit 38 and Snoqualmie Pass. Imagine it: epic, long-distance mountain bicycle riding half an hour from Seattle!

The Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission in cooperation with the Snoqualmie Ranger District and the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Service have officially released the Olallie Area Mountain Bike Trail Study.

The complete document is almost an inch thick. The BBTC has a copy on CD and we'll be attempting to post portions of it on the BBTC.org website. This study examined existing and potential trails and planning issues in this area. The study includes detailed multi-color contour maps of planned routes.

Plans are laid out for as much as 70 miles of new trail including several alpine lake destinations.

Most importantly, the study emphasizes bicyclists' desire for singletrack trails and natural settings. This study will be an important part of future planning for the entire South Snoqualmie River Valley, an effort

[Continued on pg. 6]

# Middle Fork/Olallie

[Continued from pg. 5]

that is just starting to take shape. Everyone involved in planning for this great local area can use this study as a common vision and basepoint.

At the same meeting, Art and I also established and renewed contacts with other organizations and government employees including the new Washington State Parks and Recreation Trails coordinator, who will obviously play a big role in this potentially awesome new trail system. In fact we decided that as the new State Park Trails coordinator he will definitely have to come and inspect the St. Edward trails with us sometime!

Art and I shared our enthusiasm and passion about the Olallie project and the commitment of the BBTC. Planners were genuinely interested in getting our input. Although the time frame of projects like these is long term (the project was first proposed in 1995), it's time to get the word out to you bicyclists and Puget Sound outdoor recreationists and start building some buzz! Stay tuned to the advocacy pages of the BBTC.org Web site to keep track of new developments. Begin envisioning epic local singletrack!

— Preston Peterson

## News from Lord Hill

Quick update on the Lord Hill cleanup. John said almost all the trails for the entire park are now cleared of the downfalls. We finished off the last bad section off, all but the final chainsaw work yesterday. John stayed with a volunteer to help finish that section up when I left.

John recognized me from the PVCA meetings and STILL seemed happy to see a BBTCer. It's obvious that public involvement is very necessary for big projects like those undertaken this year.

Turns out the saber saws aren't nearly as inefficient as I'd feared. It still took five or six saws to clear the branches from the downed trees, and three or four helpers to clear the debris.

John and the 'Friends of Lord Hill' said to pass on their appreciation to the folks who helped. They REALLY appreciate it.

I add my thanks to theirs!

— John Anderson

## The Urban Epic: Finding Wilderness in the Hearts of Our Cities

BY KELLY WOOD [Continued from Jan/Feb issue]

"Yeah" Jennifer chimed in. "I think we must have just done Skyline Hill."

"Seems reasonable," I thought. I-405 was the one highway we'd have to cross, with the Tapeworm just on the other side. Skyline Hill was the last neighborhood in South Seattle before it gave way to the 'burb city of Renton. We'd been heading south at a fairly steady pace and I tried to imagine how far it seemed on the highway driving to the trailhead. Everything seemed to match.

The spin to the next ridge was pleasant enough. At this point, we were high enough to catch glimpses between houses of the South end of Lake Washington and the foothills of the Cascades looming out of the mist to the East. When we started out that morning, the temps were on the cool side with thick low clouds blanketing the area. Now, the clouds had almost completely given away to sunshine and the temperature was feeling more like June. If 405 was indeed on the other side of the ridge, we'd be there in no time. I picked up the pace a bit and pushed to the ridge climb. I didn't know it at the time, but that was the last bit of pleasant riding we'd be doing for quite a while.

It was about halfway to the ridgeline that things started to get interesting. The grass and underbrush that had looked from a distance to be of roughly the same height we'd been riding on all day, turned out to be a bit on the high side. And when I say "high side," I'm talking Children of the Corn high side. We rode around the perimeter of this organic wall, looking for a path, road, trail, tunnel, lane, yellow-brick road, or anything that cut through. No such luck. We were actually at a road that intersected the greenway East-West. We could take the street and try to find a way around or plunge headlong into the unknown. I decided to test the waters.

"I'm goin' in," I said and plunged into the thick. I didn't get far. I'd taken the low side thinking it to be the shorter way, shorter being the best option in this case. Bad Idea. Low spots are generally low for a reason and this one was no exception. It was basically a bog.

"No good this way!" I called back as I tried to free my front wheel from the tangle of weeds and black ooze I'd steered it into. "We might want to head back to the street and..." But I didn't finish that thought. I could see a helmet barely sticking up over the tops of the weeds, moving fast. Chris had taken a running start and plunged into the grass on the high side. "Or, we could do that..."

I made my way back to where Chris had dived in. Jennifer was still standing there looking apprehensive and impressed at the same time.

"Well, we could leave him for dead and save ourselves or follow him," she said.

"What the hell," I replied. It was becoming the mantra of the day. I clicked into my pedals, put a few fast strokes on the cranks and disappeared into the hole Chris had just plowed through the brush.

I've ridden on some strange terrain before, but this was taking the cake. Visibility was reduced to how much grass your front tire could push down at one time. Even if I'd been riding right on the heels of Chris, I wouldn't have been able to see him. My legs were starting to burn from being slapped by endless shoots of weed stalk and from the strain of pedaling through the almost impregnable mass. Making a mental note to do a thorough tick check later, I slogged on. After what seemed like a mile, which in actuality was probably only a hundred yards or so, I ran into Chris. Literally. He'd stopped for a bit and was almost completely hidden in a sea of green.

"Is Jennifer coming?"

"Yeah, I think so."

We paused for a second, listening. Somewhere behind us we could hear the crunch, crunch, shhhhhh, crunch of tires on grass.

"Yep," I said.

"We need a fork-mounted lawnmower, or we could just

tow it behind the bike," Chris mused.

"No, what we need is a napalm strike," I thought.

Chris trudged on while I waited for Jennifer. In here we could be feet from each other and still get lost. Lost? We were in the middle of the city, probably surrounded by several hundred thousand people, and I was in a mindset like we were route finding in Nepal. Jen came crashing through the weeds a few moments later, once again with a mixed expression on her face.

"This is great! I feel like a kid!"

She was right. I'd been unknowingly running a debate in my head about whether this was fun or miserable. The riding had been bad, and was now bordering on terrible. But for some reason I was enjoying it; this was actually fun! It really felt as if we were route finding somewhere much more exotic and exciting than the South suburbs of Seattle. We seemed completely isolated even though we were practically in people's backyards. Aside from the chorus of dog barks we stirred up from time to time, we'd seen one person (a guy hiking through the grass with a backpack and 12 oz can of Bud Light). Amongst all these other souls sleeping, or watching TV, or coming back from church, or washing their cars, we were alone in the wilderness trying to find our way out.

I caught up with Chris again after another quarter mile or so. He'd taken a little jog to the left and wound up stuck. He backtracked to higher ground and pushed forward. The grass here was just about eye level so I could look ahead and see his helmet bobbing up and down like some strange sea-creature coming up for air. We'd been climbing, but now it looked like we were on top of a small plateau. I had stopped for a minute to watch Chris' progress when the helmet suddenly disappeared followed immediately by a muffled "umpf."

"Chris? Are you okay?"

"Yeah..." came his muted reply. Luckily, he was laughing. "Found a hole."

If there was a hole there, you couldn't tell from above. The tops of the weeds went on uninterrupted in what looked like a level plane. I rode on cautiously to see if I could help out. Sure enough, Chris had found a hole (it was more of a crater, actually) and was untangling himself from roots and bike at the bottom of it. The grass here was probably eight feet high, like someone had swept through on the world's largest John Deere leaving the grass here flush with the rest. I yelled back to Jennifer to be careful while Chris got back on his bike.

Within another half-mile or so, the forest of weeds finally started losing some height and we actually ran into a dirt road. There was what looked like a massive greenbelt to our left and on the right the familiar jumble of homes. Problem was, I-405 was not stretched out in front of us. In fact, it was nowhere in sight even though we could see quite a long way ahead. Not wanting to give up after what we'd just ridden through, we decided to follow the dirt road.

By this time, my legs were searing. Big red welts were forming on my shins and my calves looked like they were stricken with chicken pox. I doused them with some water from my camelback, trying to wash off the pollen and what looked like a million tiny seeds hitchhiking a ride, but they were still itching like madness. We followed the service road until it dead-ended into a city street.

[The exciting conclusion: next issue!]

Be sure to check out the calendar online at <http://www.bbtc.org/recreation/calendar.php> for the up-to-the-minute ride info.

# MARCH

	1	2	3 >Wednesday Woodinville Womp	4 > Thrilla In Woodinville	5 >BBTC at the Spring Bike Expo	6
7 >BBTC at the Spring Bike Expo	8	9	10	11 > Thrilla In Woodinville > Lots of Spokes (but no blokes)	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 > Thrilla In Woodinville > I-5 Open Space Final Design & Naming Meeting	19	20
21 >Graduate Ride Series #2 at Metcalf Trust	22 >BBTC Board Meeting	23	24	25 > Thrilla In Woodinville > Lots of Spokes (but no blokes)	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## Wednesday Woodinville Womp

Wednesday, March 3rd - 6:30 PM

Ride Leader: Ellen Maude

We had fun on the first one, so I thought we could try it again. This is a slower paced version of the infamous Thrilla loop. We'll skip the stoner singletrack at the beginning ('cause I'd just get us all lost) and the second section at the end ('cause rumor has it that it's currently a hike-a-bike). Plan on getting in a great after-work 20ish-mile training ride with about 2-1/2 hours on the trail. Lights are required.

We'll meet at 6:30 by the front door of Redhook Brewery. Start time will be no later than 6:40.

If you have any questions, please send me an email. We'll go rain or "moonshine," but will bail if it's absolutely pouring.

## Thrilla In Woodinville

Thursdays in March and April - Check website for times.

Ride Leader: Kevin Axt

Weekly series of training rides in the Woodinville/Redmond area. We'll ride from the Redhook Brewery in Woodinville down the Sammamish River Trail (paved) to the Puget Power Trail (PPT). Take the PPT (dirt doubletrack) up to the Redmond Watershed area (some singletrack), over to the Tolt Pipeline Trail (dirt doubletrack), then back to the Redhook Brewery to complete the loop. Route distance around 20 miles with total ride time between 2-2.5 hours. A few hills to contend with (about 1300ft gain). LIGHTS: 2hr min. burn time needed. Recommend min. 10W power.

Meeting Spot - the front door at the Redhook Brewery in Woodinville. Parking there has been verified with the Brewery. Ride will leave no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled start time.

## BBTC at Bike Expo

March 5th, 6th, and 7th

See details on Page 1 of this issue.

## Lots of Spokes (but no blokes), aka Wine, Women, and Wheels

March 11th and 25th

See details on Page 4 of this issue.

## BBTC Board Meeting

Monday, March 22 and Monday, April 26

Location: Seattle REI

Meeting will be held at the Seattle REI. If you would like to be on the agenda, please email the Board at [bbtcboard@yahoo.com](mailto:bbtcboard@yahoo.com).

## I-5 Open Space Final Design & Naming Meeting

Thursday, March 18th - 7:00 PM at Seward School

Ride Leader: Justin Vander Pol

Please join Seattle Parks and Recreation at a workshop organized to get feedback on the final design for improving a 7.5 acre area under I-5 in the Eastlake neighborhood. The design for this Pro Parks funded project includes extending the E. Howe St. stairs to Franklin Ave. E.; providing walking and mountain biking trails; establishing a dog off-leash area; and installing landscaping. The 2000 Pro Parks Levy provides \$1,824,870 for the planning, design, and construction of the site. We will also begin soliciting ideas for a name for this new open space.

Thursday, March 18, 2004 at Seward School, Library2500 Franklin Ave. Time: 7 to 9 p.m.

For more information, please visit the I-5 Open Space web site or contact David W. Goldberg, Project Planner, 800 Maynard Ave. S, 3rd Floor, Seattle, WA 98134-1336, Phone: 206-684-8414, or e-mail [davidw.goldberg@seattle.gov](mailto:davidw.goldberg@seattle.gov)

## Springtime in Moab: April 10-16 (give or take)

Saturday, April 10th - 1:00 AM

Ride Leader: Jim Lyon

Moab is calling and I'm aching for some sun. Depending on group, participants can tailor rides to suit their abilities and conditioning. Paul Andrews and I will be planning on doing more advanced trails and all-day rides. We tend to get up early, hit the trail early and ride till we drop...but you can make Moab whatever you want:-) The desert calls!

## Senile Dementia XXXVIII

Saturday, April 17th - 10:00 AM

See details in "Tales From the Trails" on Page 5.

# APRIL

				1 > Thrilla In Woodinville	2	3
				4 > Thrilla In Woodinville	5	6 >Springtime in Moab
7	8 > Thrilla In Woodinville	9	10	11 > Thrilla In Woodinville	12	13 > Senile Dementia XXXVIII
14	15 > Thrilla In Woodinville	16	17 > Thrilla In Woodinville	18 > Thrilla In Woodinville	19	20
21 >Graduate Ride Series #3	22 >BBTC Board Meeting	23	24 > Thrilla In Woodinville	25	26	27
28	29 > Thrilla In Woodinville	30	31			

# JOIN BBTC

Founded in 1988, **BACKCOUNTRY BICYCLE TRAILS CLUB** is a volunteer-powered, nonprofit 501c3 organization dedicated to preserving and enhancing mountain biking and the trails that we enjoy. We focus on education, advocacy and recreation, in addition to believing in a philosophy and practice of building common ground and fostering a club culture that “gives back.” BBTC seeks to represent mountain biking across a wide realm, including cross-country, freeriding, racing, downhill, and BMX. In addition, we are a proud affiliate member of the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). Membership is \$15 a year for individuals, \$25 for families and \$150 for commercial outlets. Contributions also are welcome and are fully tax-deductible. E-mail [membership@bbtc.org](mailto:membership@bbtc.org) for further information.

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VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT [BBTC.ORG](http://BBTC.ORG) IF YOU PREFER TO PAY BY CREDIT CARD.

PLEASE SEND PAYMENT AND MEMBERSHIP FORMS TO: BACKCOUNTRY BICYCLE TRAILS CLUB PO BOX 21288 SEATTLE, WA 98111

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