



IMBA Affiliated

Backcountry Tracks

Volume 1998 Issue Number 3

The Official Newsletter of the Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club

May - June 1998

Access

**IMMEDIATE ACTION NEEDED!!!
LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD...**

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting is on Friday April ,24 1998 In Issaquah, WA . They will be discussing the non-motorized trail policy for Washington state parks. it will be held at Tibbets Creek Manor at 9am. Tibbets Creek manor is located at 750 Renton - Issaquah Rd. For direction to the meeting and any additional info, please call Tibbets Creek Manor at 425-837-3366.

Randy Pearson has received about 60 letters regarding this issue. About 30 of them were for them brethren and sistren of Mt Biking!!! Keep those letters coming!!! Let's not go un-heard at this meeting!!!

BBTC'S ROOTS RUN DEEP INTO ACCESS ISSUES

by The Ride Guru

When I moved to this area in 1987, there were well over 100 miles of public singletrack trails open to mountain bicyclists in King County. By 1990 when the "original BBTC" and "CORBA Northwest" merged to form the present-day BBTC, nearly all of those trails were closed due to new management policies on Tiger Mountain State Forest and Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park. BBTC members and others fought vigorously to oppose these closures. Within the next several years the cities of Seattle and Redmond both chose to severely restrict mountain bicyclists on park trails, despite public input to the contrary. The BBTC was born out of the need to organize or suffer extinction.

The Fat Hand (Iverson), Preston Railroad, and Waterfall (NW Timber) trails on Tiger Mountain were still only a gleam in the eyes of planners and BBTC members back in 1990. Yet hard work by the BBTC and a willingness to iron out our differences with the local State DNR manager made them a reality within a few years. We were denied a seat on the Cougar Mountain Master Plan Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC), but have nonetheless built a good relationship since then with King County Parks staff and Council members through our involvement with Section 36 (Beaver Lake East), Big Finn Hill, and Grand Ridge.

Continued on page 2

BBTC'S ROOTS RUN DEEP INTO ACCESS ISSUES *continued...*

Ranger Joel Pillars invited the BBTC to assist him in managing mountain bicyclists at St. Edward State Park, and we responded by designing and building a wonderful two-mile trail system, including a brand new bridge completed last November. New trail opportunities in King County and Washington depend on our early involvement in land management planning decisions. Examples include recent King County acquisitions on Grand Ridge, Taylor Mountain, and Rattlesnake Ridge. The County will soon form CAC's for the master planning of these parks, and BBTC members are encouraged to offer their services to King County for the committees.

The USFS North Bend Ranger District is holding a series of meetings in the next several weeks concerning the Access and Travel Management (ATM) plan for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River area. This is our best chance to re-open the Middle Fork and Pratt River Trails, and to ask that new singletrack trails for mountain bicyclists be included in the ATM.

Perhaps the most ominous threat this year to trail access is the Washington State Parks Draft Non-Motorized Trail Policy. If adopted, this plan would close all trails in the State Parks system to bicyclists, unless specifically permitted by the Parks Director. Over 300 miles of prime singletrack throughout the state are threatened by this proposed plan. If you don't like the idea of riding only on pavement or rail trails, get involved now, before it's too late. Dial up the State Parks web address at www.parks.wa.gov to download a copy of the Draft Report. Contact agency staff Daniel Farber (360)902-8652, or Randy Person (360)902-8655 to discuss your concerns, or e-mail Randy Person at randy@parks.wa.gov, or send snail mail to Randy Person, Wash. State Parks and Recreation Commission, PO Box 42650, Olympia WA 98504-2650.

If you just received a notice to renew your BBTC membership this will be your last newsletter so send in soon so you don't miss the Epic July/August issue. Yikes, and miss out on the gripping issue's discussed in BBTC Tracks?!? Shudder the thought!!! Send that \$15.00 today to Back-

country Bicycle Trails Club
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Legal Representation

BBTC Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of every month.
Place: Various locations throughout the Puget Sound area

BBTC Events Hotline (206) 283-2995

Email listserv: bbtc@cyclimg.org

Web Site: <http://www.dirtnw.com/bbtc>

Thanks to DirtNW.com for the web space.

Send Backcountry Tracks submissions to mtnbykr@worldnet.att.net (preferred) or snail mail:

1306 Mill Creek Blvd #N-206
Mill Creek, Wa 98012

The View from up here... an equestrians side of the story...

Becky Hope, Director; BCHW Tahoma Chapter

I am a trail user, I happen to ride a horse, and enjoy being out in the woods and the mountains. I was asked to give a few ideas on how horse riders and bike rider could understand each other when we encounter each other on the trails.

The first idea is just this: We are the same we are both folks out on the trail to enjoy the experience of being out in mother nature, get some exercise, getting away from civilization, and seeing what is around the next bend in the trail. We just happen to do it a different way. One group, who is decidedly crazy, happens to chose the experience from the back of an unpredictable animal with its fluid of motion and freedom that this gives us. The other chooses a bicycle with it's motion and exercise that it gives.

Second idea: Horse back riders are on the back of an animal, it's first response is to flee first, ask questions later, when startled. The way we keep this from happening is to give the horse a chance of realizing that something is coming and that the 'something' is not dangerous. Above all speak: Horses know what the human voice is and generally like it, because its associated with something that it is familiar with. If you don't want to speak to every horse person you meet then you can try a bell or something, but you can't guarantee that the horse will be any more familiar with that, but at least it will give horse and rider a chance to be aware that you are coming up behind, and adjust for that. Keep from coming up on the horse fast: On most trails the bike rider is going faster than the horse rider. For both groups just realize that you are on a trail that is being used by different user groups, and that at any moment you may come around a corner and find the other in front of you. Choose you speed accordingly. This also goes for horse riders encountering hikers on the trail. Horse Back Riders need to get their horses used bicycles coming up behind them: I have asked bicycle riders to let my new horses smell and look at bicycles up close. To begin the process of getting them use to the bicycles and their riders. I purposefully go out to these rail trails where there are always some bicycles and lots of room to get my horses used to bicycles before I encounter them on a small single track trail with no room. I get them off the trail and let them take a long look at them.

Third I dea: Keeping the above ideas in mind. When we encounter each other on the trail, I think the 'rules of the trail' applies here. Remember common sense · If a smaller group meets a larger group, the person or the smaller group if they can do so safely gets off of the trail. · If the groups are the same size the group who can get off of the trail the most safely does so.

Continued on page 4

The View from up here... an equestrians side of the story... continued...

- Let the Faster user go on through when safe and let the other group know if it is not safe and that you will pull off as soon as possible.
- Bicycle Folks be patient with the horse folks who are trying to get off of the trail, again horse are their on beings, sometimes have their own ideas about what they want to do.
- If on a wider trail such as a rail trail, just speak to the horse and rider, let them know you are coming up behind and which side you are coming past on. I generally like the 'rules of the road' on this and the slower user pulls to the right and the faster users passes on the left.
- Meeting head on, on a rail trail again 'rules of the road' stay to the right , slow down and pass each other. I think it is still a good idea to talk to each other. Horse riders if you think your horse is going to spook or jump around get them off the trail all together and try to avoid scaring the other user.
- Although I strongly recommend that another solution be tried first, if a biker and horse person meet head on a trail, and there is no other of either backing up or turning around for either of you, the horse folks would appreciate if the bike folks step on the down hill side of the trail, that way if the horse spooks he is not going down hill taking the rider with him.

Remember: Use Common Sense. Speak to each other. Follow rules of the Trail/Road. Be aware of the other users .

SAFETY

SAFETY

SAFETY

From the Prez... Leonard Francis

Access to trails for mountain bikes continues to be the number one advocacy topic. Many a conversation includes, "that trail isn't open anymore," and that continues to be a sad thing. This month Moran State Park will close several key miles of trail ruining what is currently the finest mountain biking experience in all of the Pacific Northwest. Trails are often closed for reasons such as conflict and damage so my challenge to everyone of us is to do something, at least one very important thing, this year to lessen these charges. Do trail work to underscore how much you care about the land. To diffuse the conflict issue: walk! When you see a walker or equestrian yield by dismounting and walking past. Take 15 seconds to be a walker and save the access for future generations. Mainly don't be selfish and always think of the other person's perception and needs. To quote a great philosopher, "Do unto others what you would have them do unto you." I also like Bill and Ted's version: "Be Excellent to Each Other!" It is still the best way to think and live on and off the trail. Let's get ready for summer!

Ride Reports

Easter Weekend * Orcas Island Written by Leonard Francis

It rained both Friday and Saturday nights. The trails were unbelievable dry and solid. The CCC trails of Moran State Park on Orcas Island are 4 season industrial strength except one of two very minor exceptions. And now the rest of the story:

Scott, Loreen, Walt, Jenny and I caught the 2pm ferry from Anacortes to Orcas. Brian Zadow had already arrived and ridden up and down Mt. Constitution once with the Canadians. He rode up announcing the ride was leaving in 15 minutes so I inhaled a sandwich, dressed, and up we went for a tasty drop down the face of Constitution. I padded the descent thinking I could catch them, but I couldn't catch the Canadian's or Brian. In fact we never saw Brian again. I think he moved to Canada! Kevin, Kurt, and Ann arrived by the end of the evening.

Saturday the rest of the group arrived. Art, Nick, Greg, Sharon, Karen, Dave, Becky, and so on signed in and up we rode 2000' to the lookout. The day was clear and the view was perhaps "the finest marine view in all of the Pacific." We found some of our legs were a little wobbly from the climb so those riders took shortcuts safely down the mountain. They would fight another day. The balance of us made our way down the moss lined forest trail with the continuous smiles of biking pleasure and appreciation for our incredible surroundings. We capped the ride off with a group salsa tasting pitting two San Juan Salsa flavors (medium and traditional) against Bicycle Bobs (hot) and John's mom's (homemade). We were all winners of this contest. That evening Nick whipped up a vat of spaghetti and I washed and whacked a half-flat of strawberries for shortcake dessert. Like I said we were all winners and we all slept like babies while it rained all night long.

Sunday, we finally got up. Well some of us finally got up. Walt was getting back from breakfast by that time. After we all made our separate plans it played out like this:

Jenny rode up to the top and met a group of car-poolers (2 guys 3 gals) and they went down the same trail that had been missed by some the day before. Art and I went up the Little Summit trail and stumbled onto everyone all meeting at the Cold Springs parking lot at the exact same moment! Art and I were trying to meet Walt's group which was climbing up the singletrack alongside Mountain Lake and Art and I met them again exactly as they got to Twin Lakes just before the climb up to the top of Mt. Pickett. We descended Pickett with that team and I said farewell to the Natural Area Preserve that will close the area to cyclists after May 15th. As we rounded one final fun corner we stopped to stand in the sun. There was a carpet of moss 3 inches thick that was dry and soft as a *Beautyrest* mattress. Art's nap was interrupted by the decision: ride or relax - Both good options. He chose ride. He climbed up and out of the death march climb like he had just started riding, not just finished climbing both Constitution and Pickett. The grades were ride-able to most us about 2-5 feet. He rode nearly all the way up, hundreds of feet. My goodness - he's amazing. At another intersection Art wanted to go left but the group decided to go right to explore (we had a map). Up we went. Another supernatural mossy wooded treasure. There was a bit of climbing and I stopped at the top to put my shell away. I told the group to go all the way down to the next trail and I would meet them there. When I rode out to Mountain Lake Nick and Greg were there and then Art again appeared from his "detour". Walt and crew had just passed through undetected. We were again all meeting each other within 30 seconds of each grand intersection all over the mountain. After my dance down the final trail Kevin and I took the road back and met the girls who had just 30 seconds earlier arrived back at the cars. I may be taking liberty to speak for everyone here, but its safe to say a good time was had by all.

More Ride Reports

Grand Ridge, Issaquah

**Sunday March 8
Roger Donahe**

Four riders made it out Sunday morning for a ride up Grand Ridge in Issaquah, Kurt, Phil, David & myself. Skies were threatening as we mounted our bikes and rode to the trailhead. Spinning small gears we climbed and grunted our way to the top. Once there we chatted with some other bikers and snacked on fresh baked bread that a generous rider brought along.

All that climbing paid off as we were then treated to the sweet, rocky downhill that G.R. has to offer. Quite a treat indeed. Near the bottom of the ridge Kurt decided to take a sample of the local geology. Word has it that he'll have a full report at the next board meeting.

We finished out by riding over to the Lake Tradition plateau and down the hill ending up behind Issaquah High School and back to the cars.

Great ride folks.

San Diego Trail Story Submitted by Tom Myers

One of the funniest things (speaking of LeMond headbands in the woods) Jeff Johnstone and I saw one day on a technical section of the "Water District" trail in Carlsbad was a guy in full body lycra with wild striping and a \$4k full suspension bike with a female rider in the "hers" version of the suit and bike. He was frantically digging away at the exposed 10% of a large rock buried in the trail. When asked what the hey he was doing, he agitatedly answered that this rock was a "trail hazard" and should be removed for the safety of those wanting to use the trail. We told him to leave it alone and go back to the road if he wanted smooth trails after we asked him if he was responsible for the wood bridge across the treacherous 6" deep creek crossing (that we of course remanded to the surrounding poison oak thickets). He gave up his feeble attempts at stick digging after a few more minutes and grunted something in frustration as he and designer companion trudged away, determined to have a good time out there and look darn good doing so. The rock is still there, as are minute lycra fibers all over it..

So it's not really a BBTC Ride Report but what the Hell...I thought it was pretty funny... Ed.

Local Land Manager's Perspective on Mountain Biking **By Gary Paull of Mount Baker / Snoqualmie (MBS) National Forest**

Mountain bike riding is a rapidly growing recreation activity in the Puget Sound area. An activity that was barely on the radar screen 10 years ago is now a common activity for many residents.

Planning for more trails on the National Forest is a difficult task. During the Forest planning process over 10,000 comments were received which supported improvements and additions to the trails system. Only about ___ comments were received regarding mountain biking. The Forest Plan was signed in 1990 at about the time the boom in mountain biking really took off. There will be far more comments related to mountain biking during the next round of Forest Planning which will start in a couple of years.

As most mountain bikers know, there are very few trails open to riding on the MBS. It is unlikely that there will be many existing trails open to bikes the future. Most new bike trails will likely be the result of road to trail conversions, such as the Chuckwich Trail on the Darrington Ranger District, coupled with short single track connector trails. New opportunities for mountain biking will develop gradually due to the difficulty of justifying the expanded trail system, while many existing trails are not maintained.

New trails for any purpose are required to follow the provision of the Pacific Northwest Forest Plan, the Endangered Species Act, and other laws. Protecting habitat for Grizzly Bears, Gray Wolves, and many other plants and amphibians will combine to make new trails more difficult and expensive to construct.

The National Forests are not required to provide for any and all types of recreational use, just because there is demand nearby. The defining feature of the MBS is the rugged wilderness along the Cascade Crest, which is known for its outstanding hiking destinations. Just over the pass, the Wenatchee NF has a much larger trail system and drier terrain that has made trail construction and maintenance somewhat easier and also provides for more diverse use on that trail system.

The way that new trails will be built and roads converted to trails will be to expand on the outstanding volunteer contributions to trail maintenance that the BBTC has shown over the years. This expanded role will include meetings with managers, finding common ground with other user groups, and helping to find funding sources for planning, construction and maintenance of trails.

Your Expertise Needed!!!

BBTC needs you. Maria has decided to take a much needed and deserved break from her position as secretary. If you are interested in filling this very important spot on the BBTC Board, please let us know!!! You can contact Art Tuftee at 425-226-4837 or email him at ArtTuftee@aol.com or you can call the world famous hotline at 206-283-2995 and leave a message. If you're the one who heed's the call let us know before 4-28-98 so it can be voted on at the next Board Meeting...

Trail Park Passes... Get 'em while their hot!!!

The passes are here! You'll need these passes for most trailheads located in Nat'l Forests in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. BBTC has decided to support Cle Elum District because of their support for Mt. biking opportunities close to the Puget Sound.

TWO DOLLARS FROM EVERY TRAIL PARK PASS SOLD BY BBTC GOES TOWARD OUR TRAIL FUND. That's right, all that money goes straight to buying tools, gravel, wood for bridges and other expenses necessary to help maintain YOUR TRAILS IN YOUR PUGET SOUND! Encourage your friends to buy passes from BBTC, you know where the money is going!

Trail Park Passes are \$25 each (please note the correction) for the 98 calendar year, and can be purchased for \$25 each by sending a check to:

Andy Woods
BBTC Treasurer
14924 206th Ave NE
Woodinville, WA 98072
425-703-6994
awoods@microsoft.com

Access: A Racers story...

Mikki Douglass Specialized Team Rider

The Northwest should be one of the best places in the world to ride a mountain bike. The mountains, thousands of existing trails, and natural terrain that challenges even the best in our sport, make this area a potential paradise for the dirt crazed, wide eyed, mountain bike enthusiast. Unfortunately, most of those trails are off limits for our use, leaving us all extremely frustrated and angry.

The motorcyclist's were the undesirables back in the early 80's, now the motorized dirt enthusiast is down right evil! The same thing seems to be happening to mountain bikers in this area. Most of the trails on Tiger Mountain are completely closed off to us. There is no compromise or flexibility - we are not allowed on 99% of the trails, period. I used to get asked all the time how I could possibly spend my winters in the Northwest. Most of my friends either live and train in Southern California, where it is warm and the local bicycle groups have successfully secured valuable riding areas, or Durango, Colorado where the air is dry and the trails are plenty. Their inquiry centers around our annual rainfall; most of them assume we have quality riding around the Seattle area - -just look around!!!

continued next page

Access: A Racers story... continued...

In my opinion, the rain makes better trails and the wet ground makes better riders, so that really has never been an issue. What has made training difficult, is trying to find a place to ride! Saint Edwards is great, and BBTC has done an outstanding job at making the area a roller coaster of fun, but it sort of gets old day in and day out. As a Downhill racer, I enjoy the training environment of east Tiger, and the Preston Trail is a rippin' downhill, but it's impossible to do shuttle runs - which are invaluable to improving downhill skills and setting up bikes.

Downhill racing is growing in leaps and bounds. Big Bear Promotions (Big Bear, CA), says that in their area, downhill is actually more popular than cross country. Whether that will ever happen in this area, no one knows, but the fact is, we have the potential to turn out some of the best athletes in the world. We have the terrain, but not the availability; the talent, but not the resources. If we are serious about the sport of Mountain Biking, we have to become (gag, cough, choke...) politicians. The equestrians and hikers get their way because they are organized and active in local, and national politics. They are lobbyist and are dedicated to preserving and promoting their sport. We should do no less.

If you're reading this, you are no doubt already actively contributing to our sport by supporting BBTC. Kick down a few more bucks a year by supporting IMBA; they have worked miracles on our behalf! Start working on your friends; make them feel guilty for not having supported these organizations. Get them to join you at City Hall meetings and other political gatherings.

While I am a retired Downhill racer, and my skills are directed more toward that discipline, I am first and foremost a mountain biker who loves the sport. I would like to see a place open where we could safely train and develop downhill skills, not only for the gravity driven enthusiast, but for the serious Cross Country rider who wants to further their skills. We have an incredible pool of talent in the Northwest; let's work to get them a place to train. In doing so, we'll make this a better place for all riders - even old, retired downhillers!

Pilchuck Tree Farm Meeting

Bob Bournique Rides Coordinator

On April 4, I was invited to a meeting of the user groups of the Pilchuck Tree Farms. Duane Weston, Chief Forester and President put on the meeting. There were eight equestrian groups represented and two mountain bike groups. The subject was what to do about overuse of the trails in the area and parking problems that have been occurring along with numerous other issues. There are over 15,000 acres of prime West Side terrain here which seem to be in the void between the WIMPS and BBTC/STM areas. Many cyclists use the areas and the management has very little problems with us. The horse groups continually state that there is little, if at all, conflict and has been that way for the 9 years that I have been riding up there. A few bike shops in the area have weekly night rides there and have been contacted to the benefits of joining up with us as a user group at the farms. There is a moratorium on building new trails, which came out of the meeting. Don't worry, there is more there than some of us could ride in a season.. It would take years of weekends for all the users to buff out all the trails in these three tree farms. But, this is what Duane is asking. If we are to use the area, we should not just be coming up and enjoying it for now but thinking about the fact that it is private land and the owners are gracious enough to allow us to use it free of charge. Trail maintenance is the first call of action. Duane is walking the trails and assessing areas that need to be worked on with a priority basis. A fee system is another idea that was kicked around, as money needs to be raised for building bridges across streams and for materials to reinforce existing trails in environmentally precarious places. We have an opportunity here to deal with a forward thinking, private landowner who knows the benefits of bicycling through the woods and we should show him how much we care. Trail work parties will be scheduled throughout the summer and I will be leading rides in the area as well as others, to help show those out of the know what a gem this is. Be involved and we can continue enjoying this area for years to come.

BBTC Membership Application

Looking for someone to ride with? Want to find new places to ride? Want to learn about backcountry trail ethics? Then join the BBTC. Help keep our trails open!

- \$15 Regular
- \$30 Family
- \$50 Contributing
- Voluntary Trail Fund donation
- \$150 Commercial
- T-Shirt (\$18 each)
 - Large XL
- Total**

Name _____

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Make checks payable to BBTC

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- Newsletter

Thank You!!

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To become a BBTC affiliate, please contact Art Tuftee at (206) 226-4837

International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) (303) 545-9011, **Washington Wildlife Recreation Coalition, I-90 Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Single Track Mind Cycling Club** (253) 565-5124, **Cascade Bike Club** (206) 522-BIKE, **NOWBike** (206) 224-9252 nowbike@accessone.com

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