



# ROMP MOUNTAIN CYCLIST

LEADING THE PARTITION OF MOUNTAIN CYCLISTS IN THE TRAIL COMMUNITY

NOVEMBER — DECEMBER 2004

## And Access for All?

By Eric Lafferty

Land access and trail access... We regularly talk about these. ROMP works toward securing access for mountain bikers. But where should we be seeking access? Who should have it? Who should not? What groups should we work with to secure access?

This past summer I was lucky enough to have spent two consecutive weekends in the Sierras. The high mountains separating California from Nevada have been a draw for outdoor enthusiasts since John Muir first wrote of the natural wonders that are hidden throughout the mountain range. Like so many others before me, I'm drawn to them.

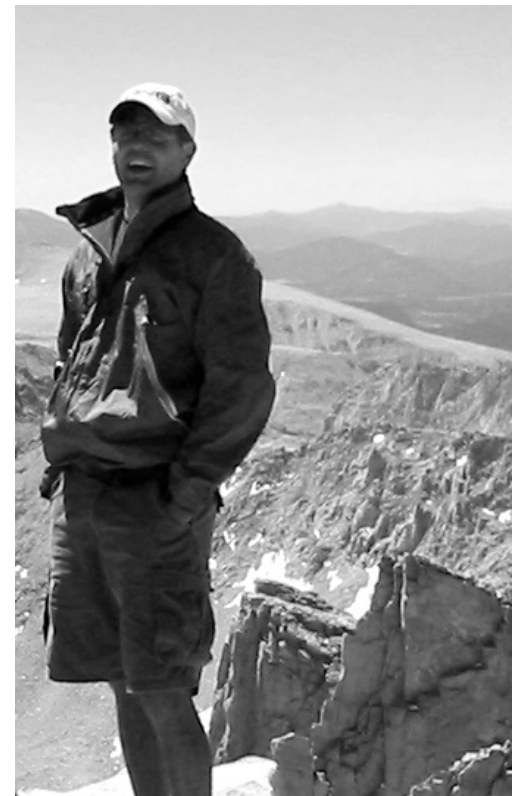
My trips in to the Sierra could not have been more different. The first trip was a four-man backpacking trip to the top of Mount Whitney. The following weekend a group of 12 friends mountain biked the trails above Downieville, California. Each trip was unique, and both highlighted issues of trail access in areas popular with the "outdoor crowd."

Mount Whitney is located in the eastern Sierra and is both the highest peak in California and the contiguous 48 states. The peak is accessible as a multi-day hike from Sequoia National Park, or via the much shorter 11-mile Whitney Portal Trail that starts above the small Owen's

Valley town of Lone Pine. Access by way of the Whitney Portal Trail requires a permit that is secured via a lottery system that requires submitting a request to the National Forest Service in mid-February. The permitting process limits the number of hikers on the trail in an attempt to reduce user impacts on the fragile ecosystem that the mountain supports. Mountain bikes are not allowed on the trail.

Downieville on the other hand is a Mecca for mountain bikers. Probably less well known than Moab or Fruita, CO, Downieville is the focal point of a region that offers countless trails with breath-taking views, lung-bursting climbs, and hair-raising descents. Hikers and bikers share most trails, and a significant number are also shared with off-road motorized vehicles (primarily motorcycles).

The contrast between these two areas is dramatic and readily apparent to trail users. In theory bikes could ride the lower portion of the Whitney Portal Trail, although doing so is illegal. The upper portion, particularly the switchbacks that wind their way through the upper reaches of the mountain (strongly resembling a prolonged Lombard Street) would be virtually unridable except by a very skilled trials rider. The homogeneity of the trail users (i.e. all hikers) did not



Eric Lafferty on the summit of Mt. Whitney.

seem out of place; in fact it seemed natural. Bikes are banned from the trail, yet I felt no remorse in this, nor did I feel that attempting to gain access would be something I'd ever stand behind.

On the other hand, the Downieville trails are genuinely multi-use. Hikers, bikers and motorcyclists share many of the trails. A balance between the various user groups exists, and although each person has different tolerances for

*(Continued on page 4)*

# ROMP Helps Save Blue Blossom

By Charles Jalgunas

We've reclaimed the steep on Blue Blossom, relegating it to that corner of your brain where memories of scary skids ending in soil sampling are tucked away. The 200-foot elevation loss with slopes as much as 45% grade helped us develop our nerve and our technical mountain biking skills. We are sad to see it go, because the challenge of making it down that fall-line drop without crashing was legendary.

Blue Blossom's steep was tagged for closure because of its potential contribution of silt to the watershed. Under orders from the National Marine Fisheries Service and other water quality agencies, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District developed a Watershed Protection Plan to make huge changes to miles of trails and fireroads in the El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve. Sedimentation downstream has become a serious impediment to reviving the historic Steelhead Trout and Coho Salmon populations that used to fill our coastal creeks and rivers. Silt deposits from old logging roads like Blue Blossom covers the coarse gravels in the stream bottoms and is making restoration of the spawning habitat difficult. Reducing siltation is critical for these endangered species to survive.

Over the years the steep had grown wider by riders who were unable to maintain traction and either skidded down with brakes locked or walked down, trampling the vegetated edges of the track. Rain added to erosion by scouring the ruts, and the bottom of the steep was covered by thick deposits of sediment ready to wash into the creek below.

In the process of designing environmentally-focused re-routes to problem trails like this, the District is also making them



The steep eroded section of the old blue blossom trail dumped sedimentation in to the creeks of ECDM.

more fun by realigning them to milder, bi-directional, grades and reducing the tread to a two-foot wide standard. The new standard as applied to Blue Blossom represents the narrowest multi-use trail the District has ever built. It creates a slower trail experience that blends in more with natural surroundings and other trail users. Riders will have to nimbly weave between trees, over roots and rocks, and up and down flowing rises and falls in the trail.

We are delighted to have replaced Blue Blossom's wide steep with true single-track. This type of trail contrasts with wide-open dozer-built trails where mountain bikers can easily attain speeds well over the 15mph speed limit. The work was originally proposed to be done by bulldozer, requiring about 24 hours of heavy equipment use at a cost of over \$4,300, however ROMP's volunteers built a better trail in three short workdays, totalling 420 hours of fossil-fuel-free manual labor at no charge.

The District's maintenance staff, assisted by volunteer consultants from

Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers, The Bicycle Trails Council of Marin, the International Mountain Biking Association, and numerous ROMP members, have completed this first trail realignment for the Watershed Protection Plan. The result is about 1500 feet of new narrow singletrack in the middle of Blue Blossom that replaces three overgrade sections of what had once been a steep logging skid road.

One of the steepest sections, pictured above, grew more than 20 feet wide, and was potentially a real contributor of sediment downstream. The greatest challenge for the volunteer crews was to restore these sections of trail to reduce their erosion, and foster the forest's reclamation of them as habitat for trees and understory. Their first step was to dig trenches diagonally across them to divert any water falling or running onto them off the old trail and off toward the roots of the surrounding trees. The areas above the trenches were perforated by picks and mattocks to create places

*(Continued on page 8)*

# Beginner's Curve

by Anne Henmi

I have this love-hate relationship with hill climbs. Nothing hurts more than climbing a long hill, and there are plenty in the Bay Area. Then again, nothing feels better than making it to the top without stopping. Okay, even making to the top with stopping is still a great feeling.

I've been mountain biking a long time, and long climbs are hard for me. When I first started mountain biking, I learned in the wilds of North Carolina. It's lovely country where there are a lot of roots, rocks, and tight singletrack, but not much in the way of long climbs (not like here).

When you climb, it helps to have less weight when you go uphill. Trust me, it has nothing to do with XTR versus XT for weight savings that you push uphill. It has to do with the weight on YOUR frame, not your bike's.

I'm a weight weenie. I really need to lose about 25 pounds (from my human frame, not my bike) to be able to climb and not have people at the top of the hill bored waiting for me. I'm still working on it, so if you ride with me, just enjoy the view at the top.

Here are some tips for long climbs. If you pass me on the uphill, please let me know you're passing me while I'm spinning my heart out.

**Pace yourself:** This is the most important one I can think of. If you don't pace yourself, you may not make it to the top or even enjoy the rest of your ride.

What should your pace be? Especially when you're just starting out, try going slow. Put the front in your granny gear and mess with only the rear gears (except the smallest cog).

Allow just enough resistance so that you spin instead of mashing your pedals. Use your clipless pedals or toe straps to

pull up when you're pedaling.

**Keep your front wheel straight:** When you're going slow on a climb try and not let your front wheel wobble. The less energy you waste going sideways, the more energy you have for going uphill. This is some of the best advice a friend gave me.

**Take the least technical line:** Especially if you find climbs difficult, take the least technical (i.e. most smooth) line. The less resistance you have from the ground, the more likely you are to make it uphill.

This doesn't mean go off the trail and make your own trail. In parks like Arastradero, you need to be able to climb over some waterbars on the uphill.

**Make the climb interesting:** Let's face it—long climbs can be boring. There are a couple of things you can do to

make it interesting. The mental bungee cord from section to section is one, but I can't see it like that. I break it up into little climbs and take them one at a time.

Sing, hum, or whistle. Do something to keep your mind on the trail. At the same time, don't let yourself get bored.

**Let other people pass you:** Ok, so you're slow up the hill. Let the other people pass you. Let them make it up the hill first. Or better yet, you may get to pass them because they forgot to pace themselves.

**Ride the bike:** It's usually easier to ride uphill than walk the bike uphill. I can't tell you the amount of sore backs I've had from pushing the bike. Try to ride than walk where possible. You did get the bike to ride, right?



## Land Manager Directory

**Acterra (Arastradero Preserve)** 3921 E. Bayshore Blvd., Palo Alto, CA 94303, 650-962-9876, fax 650-962-8234; [www.arastradero.org](http://www.arastradero.org), [www.acterra.org/info@acterra.org](http://www.acterra.org/info@acterra.org) (general), [www.participation.com/arastradero](http://www.participation.com/arastradero)

**California Recreational Trails Committee** Ken McKowen, Trails Coordinator, PO Box 942896, Sacramento 916-653-6501

**Castle Rock State Park** Bob Culbertson, 408-429-2869; Dave Keck, 916-322-2997

**City of Palo Alto (Arastradero) Recreation** Open Space and Sciences, 650-329-2423

**East Bay Regional Park District** 11500 Skyline Blvd., Oakland 94619, 415-531-9300

**Henry W. Coe State Park** 9000 East Dunne Ave, Morgan Hill 95037. 408-779-2728 Gavilan Sector Supervising Ranger Mike Ferry [mferry@parks.ca.gov](mailto:mferry@parks.ca.gov); Coe Senior Ranger Barry Breckling [barryb@coepark.org](mailto:barryb@coepark.org); [www.coepark.parks.ca.gov](http://www.coepark.parks.ca.gov)

**Monterey District California State Parks, Gavilan Sector; Henry W. Coe State Park.** P.O. Box 787; 19 Franklin Street; San Juan Bautista, CA 95045. 831-623-1659. Monterey District Superintendent C.L. Price

**Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District** 330 Distel Circle, Los Altos 94022; 650-691-1200; [mrosd@openspace.org](mailto:mrosd@openspace.org), [www.openspace.org](http://www.openspace.org)

**Mt. Diablo State Park District Office** 96 Mitchell Canyon Rd., Clayton 94517; 510-673-2891; Larry Ferri, Park Superintendent

**Santa Clara County Parks & Rec. Dept.** 298 Garden Hill Dr., Los Gatos, 95030; Mark Frederick, Capital Projects Mgr., 408-358-3741 x143; fax 408-358-3245; [mark.frederick@mail.prk.co.santa-clara.ca.us](mailto:mark.frederick@mail.prk.co.santa-clara.ca.us), [claraweb.co.santa-clara.ca.us/parks/](http://claraweb.co.santa-clara.ca.us/parks/)

**Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors** 70 W. Hedding, San Jose, 95110; 408-299-2323

**Santa Cruz District** 600 Ocean St., Santa Cruz 95060; 408-429-2850; David Vincent, District Superintendent

**The Trail Center** 3921 E. Bayshore Road, Palo Alto 94303; 650-968-7065, [www.trailcenter.org](http://www.trailcenter.org)

(Continued from page 1)

other types of trail users, the situation seems to be working.

It was in Downieville that the realization that bikes were not allowed on my previous weekend's adventure hit me. As we passed hikers and as motorcycles passed us in the mountains around Downieville, it occurred to me that such a thing had not happened on Whitney. The Whitney trail was lined with hikers gasping for air, but no bikers, equestrians or motorcyclists. It was in Downieville that I decided that some trails are not multi-use, and to me that is okay. The terrain and ecosystems should determine what activities are acceptable.

The Downieville experience is one that is harder to reconcile. Who should be allowed? What activities surpass the level of "acceptable" impact on the land?

All human activities have an impact. Whether it is a hiker's boot, a mountain biker's tire, or a motorcyclist's tire and exhaust pipe, there are impacts. Often we tend to draw the "line of acceptability" at whatever activity we perceive as impacting the land at a greater level than our preferred activity.

Some hikers perceive that mountain bikers impact the land more than hikers, and therefore should be excluded. Some cyclists perceive that off-road vehicles impact the land more than bicycles, and therefore they should be excluded. Where does the line of acceptability get drawn?

At no point during my Downieville trip was this issue more evident than on long climb through a set of steep switchbacks. In each of steepest section of each switchback and on the trail immediately afterward, dirt had been kicked up until a fine powder several inches deep had been deposited. The

switchbacks would have been challenging enough without the cake-mix consistency trail surface, but the added front wheel resistance and reduced rear wheel traction increased the difficulty level several notches. The driver of the shuttle that had deposited us some 20-miles from civilization earlier that morning had warned us that motorcyclists had destroyed the trail in the area. He was right.

When we finally reached the top of the climb and stopped to regrouped, one of



"Cake mix" dirt can wash away in Winter exposing rock in Spring.

the riders said, "I wish motorcyclist weren't allowed on these trails. They only tear them up." This statement hit me hard. I've heard the same thing said about mountain bikers by hikers and equestrians. Here we were, a persecuted group stating the same prejudices that are used against us.

Off-road motorcyclists build many trails in certain areas, and are often the first users in the springtime on remote trails where they remove deadfall from the winter storms. These users enhance our enjoyment. Moab was an off-road vehicle Mecca long before it was for mountain bikers. We can thank the

motorcyclist and Jeep-enthusiasts for many of the trails there.

Two things immediately came to mind when my friend said that motorcyclist should be excluded. First, by excluding other users are we being hypocritical? Is excluding others wrong, or is there a limit to the impacts that are acceptable? Second, our shuttle-driver explained that it is not motorcycles that destroy trails, but motorcyclists who don't know how to ride that destroy trails. The same can be said of mountain bikes – a consciousness rider does not greatly impact a trail (i.e. leave no trace), but there are some riders that do leave an impact. (The same can be said of hikers and equestrians too.)

So where are we in the access game? Should motorcyclist be allowed on trails? Do mountain bikes belong on every trail? Is each trail or trail-system unique and require custom-tailored access criteria? I don't have the answers. I do think that only hikers should use the Whitney Portal Trail. I don't think that motorcycles should be excluded from Downieville. I do want additional access for bikes in Bay Area parks and open space.

These are among the questions that we as advocates need to answer for ourselves. We need

to understand the points of view of other groups, and better explain ours when needed. Land and trail access issues throughout our region and the state will require creative solutions, partnering with unlikely groups when needed, and compromise where necessary. Consider issues completely, and advocate effectively.

## Mountain Cyclist

The Mountain Cyclist is the monthly newsletter of the Responsible Organized Mountain Pedalers

Send general newsletter material directly to the editor (not to the club PO box):

◇ newsletter@romp.org

Send ride listings to the club web master

◇ Josh Moore (408) 420 7342  
webmaster@romp.org

# Donner Lake Rim Trail Work

By Berry Stevens

Once again ROMP teamed up with the good people with the Viking Ski Club and came out to support the Donner Lake Rim Trail project, lead by Susan Sheffield of the Tahoe Donner Land Trust. Paul & Chris Voci-Nam and myself were joined by Warren, Louise, Mike Masek's two daughters (of Viking Ski Lodge) & two guys from Grass Valley.

We assembled near the Donner Lake interchange of I-80 & after sign in, introductions & project overview, we were shuttled up near the worksite. There we loaded up with tools

and the 15 cinder block pavers that were the primary objective for the day. A short hike, that seemed longer when toting 40lb pavers, led us to the worksite.

There was a relatively straight, steep approach to a switchback and mt bikers were skidding into the turn & carving a rut down the middle. Our goal was to lay the pavers & armor the approach and make subtle changes to the trail alignment up-trail to slow cyclists prior to the pavers. Five of us, including Paul & myself worked with Susan and two other volunteers and did a fine job of it, finishing before lunch. We made the trail weave left to right & placed barriers to encourage slowing. We restored the areas adjacent to the re-routed trail segments with duff & pine needles to complete the job & improve the visual

aspect. The rest of the crew was doing much needed maintenance in the area & we joined them for lunch and assisted with those fixes afterwards. We then hiked back to the trailhead, where some ran or hiked out & the rest were shuttled down to our vehicles. After we were given bike jerseys or t-shirts & much thanks for our efforts.

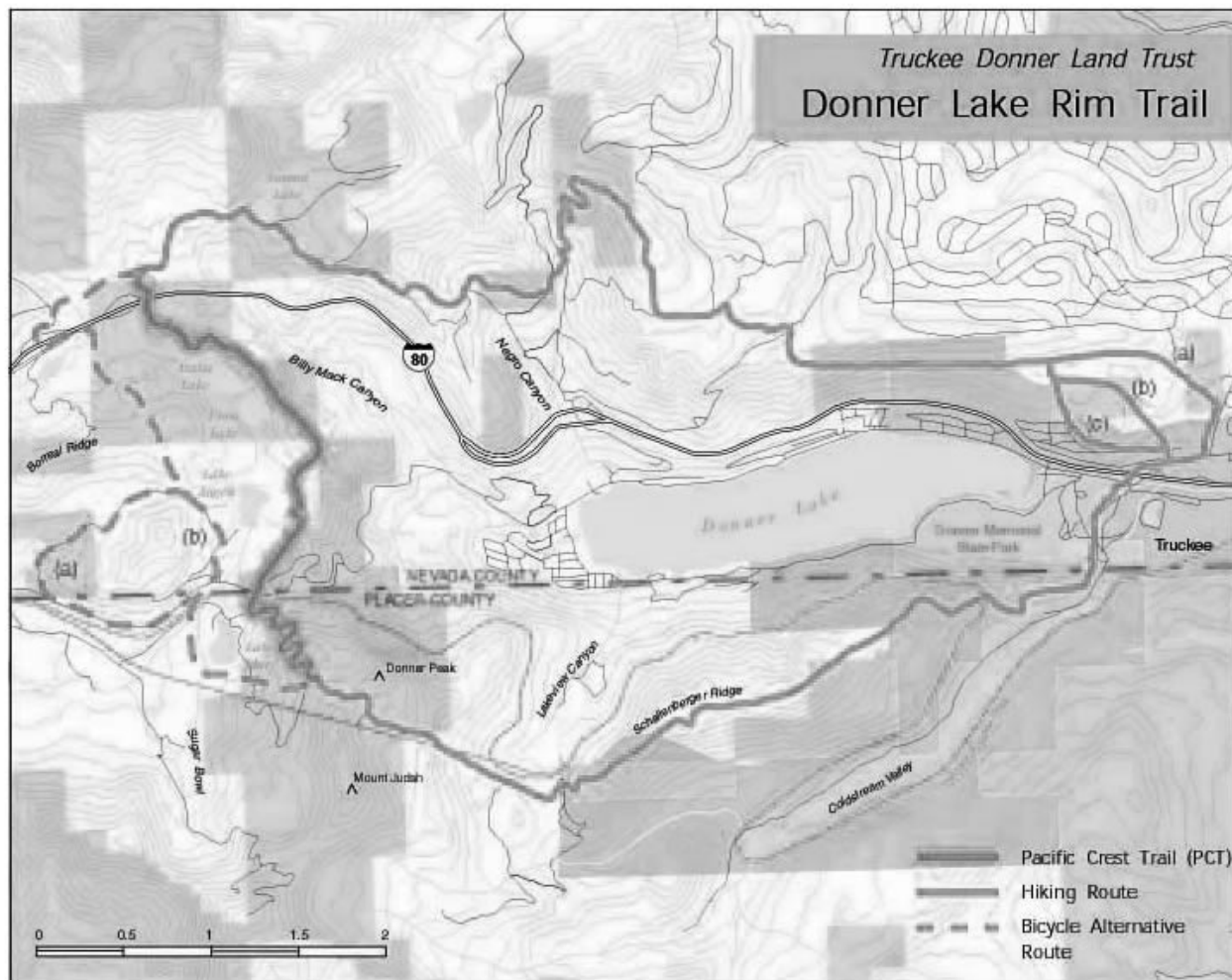
The whole trail from Tahoe-Donner down to Quinn Memorial Bridge is now in great shape and the project will move on to other areas later this year & next.

At this point most of us retired to the Viking Ski Lodge where Alice & Mike Masek had been busily preparing a delicious turkey dinner for those of us who worked on the trail. The rest of us contributed to the meal in one form or another & we all enjoyed a delightful &

well earned meal. After enjoying the fellowship & relaxing after the dishes were done, we melted into our seats & drifted off to bed as the days events caught up with us.

The next morning we were motivated by the weather to head out soon as snow or rain was predicted. Some did a short bike ride, others hiked. Buster & I explored the remains of the old Lincoln Highway, the predecessor to old US Highway 40.

Thanks to Susan for coordinating the trailwork, Mike Masek and family of Viking for co-sponsoring the weekend and ROMP for paying for our night's lodging there. All in all, we were able to make a quality contribution to the trail, have fun and enjoy good companionship throughout the weekend.



# Ride Calendar

## Monthly Rides

**First Saturday 10:00 AM Easy "Cruzin' Camille" Ride (2:00) A/EASY/5-6/1000** Meet in the Fremont Older Prospect Road parking lot at 10:00AM. This is an easy ride, open to novices of all ages. The preserve entrance is on Prospect Road in Cupertino. Exit Highway 85 at DeAnza Blvd. (From northbound 85 turn left on DeAnza Blvd. and from southbound 85 turn right on DeAnza Blvd.) Travel on DeAnza (toward the mountains) about 0.5 miles. Turn right on Prospect Road. At the first stop sign, turn left across the railroad tracks to remain on Prospect. until you reach the preserve parking lot. Parking for approximately 15 cars is available here. Contact Information: Claire (408) 255-3464 [claire@cruzincamille.com](mailto:claire@cruzincamille.com) [cruzincamille.com](mailto:cruzincamille.com)

**10:00 AM First Sunday Social Ride at Saratoga Gap (3:00) B/EASY/11/1500** Meet at 10am at Grizzly Flat on Skyline Blvd (inbetween Junction 9 and Page Mill Road). This is a social ride so there are plenty of breaks, and we wait for everyone. Bring a helmet, water and some power bars. After the ride we will go for lunch in Saratoga. Contact Information: Dave Tripier (408) 255-3464 [tripier@aol.com](mailto:tripier@aol.com)

**02:30 PM Arastradero Second Saturday Social (2:00) B/EASY/7/900** This friendly, introductory ride covers most major trails in the preserve, including some moderate hills, jumps, tight switchbacks and single track. More skilled riders are encouraged to join us, socialize and provide support. Directions and MapTake Oregon Expressway / Page Mill Rd south past hwy 280. Turn right on Arastradero, and right into the parking lot. Bring your helmet, a snack and water. Rain cancels. Contact Information: Josh Moore (408) 420 7342 [josh\\_moore@comcast.net](mailto:josh_moore@comcast.net)

**10:00 AM 2nd Sunday Ride at Soquel Demo Forest (4:00) C/INT/12-18/2500-3000** Meet at 10am at the entrance to SDF on Highland Way. From hwy 17, take the Summit Rd exit and head SE. Go 5 1/2 miles to the first stop sign, turn right and then bear left onto Highland Way. Go another 4 miles to the

entrance. More info on SDF at [mtb.live.com/rides/SoquelDemo.html](http://mtb.live.com/rides/SoquelDemo.html). Rides will vary covering single-track such as Ridge, Braille, Tractor, or Sawpit; Double loop option if you didn't have enough fun the first time down. Contact Information: Rich Andrews 408-738-1384 [randrews@arc.nasa.gov](mailto:randrews@arc.nasa.gov)

**10:00 AM 3rd Sunday Ride at ECdM (Skeggs) (3:00) D/DIFF/15/3000** --Meet at Skeggs Point on Skyline Blvd at 10am. This is a hard ride filled with technical challenges. Bring plenty of food and water and a good pair of legs. Contact Information: Dave Tripier (408) 255-3464 [tripier@aol.com](mailto:tripier@aol.com)

**05:00 PM 3rd Tuesday Alpine Road (3:00)** This year round ride has a couple options on where to meet up. 1st chance is the California ave Caltrain station in Palo Alto @ 5:05 pm, meeting the Northbound#79 and the Southbound#66 trains @ 5:05 pm. From here we pedal through Stanford's "Professorville" on lightly travelled streets, over Old Page Mill rd, through Arastradero Preserve to The Portola Valley ranch . The 2nd chance to meet up occurs here @ 6:15, corner of Alpine rd. - Willowbrook in Portola Valley, please park on Willowbrook. The ride then meanders up Alpine rd, following El Corte De Madera creek , all the way to Page Mill rd x Skyline. This 3 hour ride requires the use of lights in the fall- winter months, loaner sets are available, and rear flashing lights are highly recommended. Please contact Jim beforehand for any equipment questions. This complete ride is for intermediate level riders, however, many of our participants show up and ride a portion of the distance just to stretch the legs after work. The main concept of this ride is FUN, any hammeheads are summarily ditched and left to prove something somewhere else Contact Information: Jim Sullivan 650-493-8774 [ssulljm@juno.com](mailto:ssulljm@juno.com)

**01:00 PM 4th Saturday Beginner's Clinic (3:00) A/Easy/6/800** On the 4th Saturday of each month, meet at 1pm at the Arastradero Preserve, at the main parking area on Arastradero Road. We'll cover the basics of mountain biking while riding a combination of fireroads and singletrack. Be sure to bring a helmet, water, and something to eat. Please RSVP to Jim at 650-493-8774 or [ssulljm@juno.com](mailto:ssulljm@juno.com). RSVP is a must, as the meeting spot at the Preserve can vary with class focus Contact Information: Jim 650-493-8774 [ssulljm@juno.com](mailto:ssulljm@juno.com)

**10:00 AM Fourth Sunday Ride to Skyline (4:00) C/35/4000** Meet at the corner of Stevens Canyon Rd and Mount Eden Rd at 10:00am for a nice long ride. The route will vary from month to month depending on interest. The general plan is to head up Table Mountain or Monte Bello and explore the many parks and trails off Skyline. Location: Corner of Mt. Eden and Stevens Canyon rd Cupertino Contact Information: Julie Barott 650 814 8271

[jbarott@equinix.com](mailto:jbarott@equinix.com)

**10:00 AM ROMP Last Sunday @ Wilder Ranch (4:00) B-C/INT/16/2000'** -- Wilder Ranch is 2 miles past the traffic light at Western Dr. on Highway 1 (No). We will meet in the parking lot near the restrooms. Leave the parking lot at 10:00. Lots of single track on your favorite trails: Old Cabin, Rodrigo, Twin Oaks, Zane Grey. Many regroupings and "do-overs". Bring water and a snack. Be prepared for the best views of Monterey Bay, great technical single track and faces you may not have seen for a while! Lunch in Santa Cruz after for those interested. --Michael & Jain Location: Wilder Ranch Hiway 1 (West of SC at 2 mi.) Santa Cruz CA Contact Information: Michael & Jain Light (831) 662-9744 [malight@pacbell.net](mailto:malight@pacbell.net)

## Special Events

### Newsletter Mailing Party

This fun is repeated bi-monthly. If you would like to help next time (and eat some pizza and talk bikes at the same time), contact Glenn Wegner at 408-257-8284 or [newsmailing@romp.org](mailto:newsmailing@romp.org) for more details.

**November 7th 09:00 AM 10th Annual Tour of the S.F. Hills (20's Ride) (5:00)** The ride explores a multitude of neighborhoods in the city, taking the most difficult path from cafe to taqueria. With the many hilltops in the city, and with the usual good luck with weather conditions, the riders are treated to frequent magnificent views. The parade of cyclists winding down Lombard St. and then climbing the 32% grade on Filbert St. always attracts the attention of tourists. Other sites explored on the ride are Potrero Hill (with the fast descent down the "other" crookedest street in the world), Coit Tower, Nob Hill, and Mt. Davidson. A bonus feature is the optional ascent of the Broderick St. sidewalk in Pacific Heights. This street, below the Levi mansion, is so steep that it is blocked off to traffic - the upper half being a driveway more crooked than Lombard St. A casual pace on the ride ensures that the attrition rate is low, but the prospect of climbing Hill St. after scarfing burritos in the Mission always sheds a few riders Location: Meet at the Marina Safeway Marina Blvd San Francisco CA Contact Information: Gary Gellin [gary@cmlhvac.com](mailto:gary@cmlhvac.com)

**ROMP XMAS Party 6:00 PM Saturday, December 04 2004** Blue Pheasant Restaurant Banquet Room, 22100 Stevens Creek Blvd Cupertino CA 95014 **Contact:** Linda Wegner 408 257-8284 Doors Open 6:00 PM Cash Bar. 7:15 PM Dinner Starts Dinner included for \$20 member entry fee (one guest allowed at this rate) \$23 nonmembers. At 8:30 PM our guest speak will be TOM RITCHEY - Founder of Ritchey Design Inc. a bike-frame and bike-components design company. Tom Ritchey is also a national racer.

### IMBA Rules of the Trail

ROMP, an IMBA-affiliated organization, supports and practices the IMBA Rules of the Trail. Following these rules is not only key to responsible riding, but essential to keep trails open to cycling.

1. Ride on open trails only.
2. Leave no trace.
3. Control your bicycle.
4. Always yield trail.
5. Never spook animals.
6. Plan ahead.

# General Ride Info

## Ratings code

Pace / Technical difficulty /  
Mileage / Approximate elevation  
gain

### Pace

- A – Slow; social or introductory ride. Riders need not be experienced or fit.
- B – Moderate; recreational ride.
- C – Quick; fun and fitness ride with multiple hours of strong riding.
- D – Sustained, fast; sweaty, intense ride.
- E – Hammerfest; riders should have their heads and knees examined!

Pace generally reflects climbing speed; downhill speed in most local areas is limited to 15 mph. A, B, and C rides are “no drop” rides with regroupings as needed and rest breaks appropriate for weather, terrain and pace. D and E rides may drop riders who cannot maintain the pace; the drop policy may be stated in the ride listing, or ask the ride leader.

### Technical Difficulty

- EASY – Smooth singletrack or fire road; obstacles such as rocks and roots might exist but are not numerous.
- INTERmediate – Steep, rutted fire road; singletrack with extended sections that can include medium or large rocks and roots; stream crossings; exposure; long singletrack descents.
- DIFFicult – Singletrack with very steep and/or rocky sections; narrow trails; exposed sideslopes; downhill-side-sloped sections.
- EXTreme – Singletrack with extended steep climbs or descents over rough terrain; many tight switchbacks and turns. Portions may require portage.

### Notes

For your first ROMP ride, try one of our monthly A, B, or C rides to get an idea of pace and technical difficulty.

HELMETS ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL ROMP RIDES. Please be prepared for the ride (make sure your bike is in working order, bring appropriate tools, food, water, clothing, etc.). All riders will need to sign a waiver before every ride; minors will need a parent or guardian to sign their release.

In general, rain at the area of the ride within 48 hours of the ride cancels. But, because different trails can withstand the weather differently, we allow the ride leader to make the final decision. If you are unsure about whether a particular ride will go on, contact the ride leader.

## MROSD Trail Closures

### Purissima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve

Grabtown Gulch Trail is CLOSED due to the loss of the bridge.

### Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve

The Equestrian Parking Lot may be CLOSED INTERMITTENTLY during wet weather. Equestrian users may use the circular lot, space permitting.

### El Corte de Madera Creek Open Space Preserve

The Lower Section of the Virginia Mill Trail is undergoing restoration. Expect trail closures and construction traffic.

## Land Manager Meetings

**Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD)** oversees many open space preserves throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. Board of director's meetings are open to the public on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:30 PM in the district offices at 330 Distel Circle (off El Camino Real north of Rengstorff), Los Altos. The MROSD also holds Trail Policy Committee meetings which develop and implement trail use policy.

**Los Gatos Trails Committee** meets on the second Thursday of each month from 6 to 7 PM at 41 Miles Avenue, Los Gatos.

**Santa Clara County Group of the Bay Area Ridge Trail Committee (BARTC)** meets on the third Wednesday of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at Greenbelt Alliance, 1922 The Alameda, Santa Clara (may change – call before attending). Call Judy Etheridge at 408-248-3900.

**San Mateo County Group of the BARTC** meets on the first Wednesday of each month from 9:30 AM to 12 noon at Coyote Point Museum (odd months) and other locations (even months). Call Bill Smith at 650-873-0415 for meeting locations and other information.

## ROMP Monthly Meetings

Monthly meetings are where the vast majority of ROMP business is conducted, including policy development issues, budgets, and cyclist education. They occur at 7 PM on the fourth Monday of each month (except December) at the Round Table Pizza, Sunnyvale Town and Country

**Address:** 101 Town And Country Sunnyvale, CA 94086. (408) 736-2242

## ROMP Membership Update

### Renewals

Xavier Alcaraz  
Rick Anderson  
Sabine Axt  
Robert L. Faulhaber  
Tyler & Mary French  
Aaron Grossman  
Diane Haas  
Skip & Sue Hopgood  
Mark Hubbell & Family  
Brian Kane  
Lynne Leeper  
Derek Lindsey  
Eric Linthorst  
John F. Mason  
Mark McConnell  
Tom Oshima  
Bob Pemberton  
Scott & Marilyn Snapp  
Steven & Cindy Springsteal  
Richard V. Treakle  
Jeff & JoAnn Wong & Famil

### New Members

Ivan Eng  
Damian Garcia  
Anne & Russ Henmi  
Janet Lafleur  
Gil Roberts

## Other Cycling Organizations

**Access 4 Bikes** access4bikes.com  
PO Box 526, Pt. Reyes Station, CA 94956

**Bay Area Velo Girls**  
650-347-9752 velogirls.com

**Bicycle Trails Council of Marin (BTCM)**  
PO Box 494, Fairfax CA 94978  
415-456-7512 btcmarin.org

**Bicycle Trails Council of the East Bay (BTCEB)**  
PO Box 9583, Berkeley CA 94709  
415-528-BIKE btceastbay.org

**Folsom Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition**  
916-663-4626 fatrac.org

**International Mt. Biking Association (IMBA)**  
PO Box 7578, Boulder CO 80306  
303-545-9011 imba.com

**Monterey Mt. Bike Association (MoMBA)**  
PO Box 51928, Pacific Grove CA 93590  
408-372-2134

**Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz (MBoSC)**  
president@mbosc.org mbosc.org

**Northern California Mountain Biking Association (NorCaMBA)**  
norcamba.org suefry@norcamba.org

**Sonoma County Trails Council (SCTC)**  
sonomatrails.org/sctc/

**San Jose Inner City Outings (San Jose ICO)**  
sierraclub.org/ico/sanjose/

**Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition**  
svbcbikes.org

**Western Wheelers Bicycle Club**  
westernwheelers.org

**Women's Mt. Biking and Tea Soc (WoMBATS)**  
wombats.org

(Continued from page 2)

for seeds to take hold, and leaves and twigs were scattered over them.

Large chunks of Madrone and Tannoak were brought in from nearby in the preserve to reinforce the downhill sides of the trenches during periods of high rain flow. We intend for these trenches to function without maintenance for years, regardless of the weather.

Progressively smaller branches, then twigs, then leaves and other forest duff was spread on the area worked, both giving the hill a more natural look and increasing the chances our hard work will have lasting effects. This covers the bare dirt and prevents raindrops from eroding the soil, and helps protect seedlings as they grow. This is an after shot of the first photo area before we continued working down the hill.

This restoration effort took place on the third and final of our volunteer work days on Blue Blossom. During the first two, we built the new section of trail that bypasses the steeps. On our third day, finishing touches were put on our earlier work, and a District videographer and photographer help document the process. Here Greg Lydon helps define the trail where it meanders between the Tannoaks.

The finished trail looks something like the pictures opposite, and will naturally weather and ride in to something much more subtle with time. In a couple of years this section should look and feel a lot like the Leaf Trail.

When the work was done, ROMP's volunteers got to play. We had an official ribbon breaking, dedicating the new trail, and ROMP's president, Paul Nam, was given the honors of being the first man through. Here you see Patty Ciesla - ROMP Volunteer Crew Leader, Matt Freeman - MROSD Planner, Paul Nam, Craig Beckman - MROSD Maintenance Supervisor, and Charles Jalgunas - ROMP Volunteer Crew Leader.

After the ribbon was broken, the crew leaders were presented copies of IMBA's new trails book, *Trail Solutions - Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack*, donated by IMBA. The Specialized Bicycle Company donated a commemorative water bottle to each of the volunteers, and Trail Head Cyclery enclosed a special discount coupon in each of the bottles.

The District's Watershed Protection Plan will require another two to three years to complete. You can check it out at [stanford.edu/~imahorse/romp/ecdm](http://stanford.edu/~imahorse/romp/ecdm)

Trail work in ECDM is over for the current year, but there will be plenty of other opportunities at other parks during the winter months in Soquel Demonstration Forest (SDF) and Henry Coe.



First, work crews dug trenches divert water off the old skid-road trail.



Then crews reinforced the downhill sides of the trenches with dead wood.



Small branches, twigs, & leaves speed restoration efforts and give a natural look.





Other crews put final touches on the bypass of the steep section



The winding, wavy bypass is an interesting, sustainable multi-use trail.



ROMP President, Paul Nam, broke through the ribbon at the opening ceremony.

# Big Bike Bic Pic Story

By Paul Nam

Bike locks that use cylindrical keys may be easily picked using a simple Bic pen. This story made the rounds of cycling group email lists and international television news. This popular style of lock with a cylindrical key-way, known as the U-Lock, is vulnerable.

This is not another devious exploit by Shimano. Shimano will not be coming out with a new splined bike lock.

The company has begun a replacement program. According to their website [kryptonitelock.com](http://kryptonitelock.com)

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Chris Brennan, a San Francisco cyclist posted a Quick-time movie of a Kryptonite U-Lock being picked with an ordinary Bic pen in mid-September 04' to the internet. The lock is opened lickety-split by jamming the body of the pen, which flexibly fits into the keyhole, and twisted like a key. An interview was recently aired on National Public Radio's Fresh Air program with New York cyclist Benjamin Running describing the process. Newspapers around the world have run this story.

While this came as news to many of us, as far back as in 1992, UK journalist John Stuart Clark demonstrated with the aid of a Nottingham England bike thief various techniques of foiling ordinary bike locks. Among them; the Bic pen technique.

The owner of City Bikes, in Washington DC said, "At first I didn't believe it. Then I tried it - wow - there it is - easier

*(Continued on page 10)*

(Continued from page 9)

than a lock pick. The Bic thing has shaken my faith in any of the tubular cylinder locks, and we are pulling all of them from the shelves until we can figure out which tubular cylinder u-locks can't be defeated with a pen, if any."

Now that our old Kryptonites are nothing more than playthings for the amateur Houdini's in the community swimming pool (chain me underwater with a bic pen, I'm the Underwater Bike Thief) what are we going to do with them?

How about using U-locks for rousing games of "U-Lock Toss"? This game is a sort of frisbee golf course where the holes are worn-out obsolete old abandoned suspension forks hammered upside down, steerer first, into the dirt. Obsolete U-locks are tossed underhand at the forks with zeal from a distance in feet computed from the mountain bikers age minus number broken bones multiplied by bikes stolen divided by number of citations. Old chainrings can also be violently flicked like Ninja darts at mannequins made out of discarded bike clothes. In the Voodoo fashion we target our worst enemies.

But surely you ask, what can we do with all those half worn tires and yards of innertube and boxes full of wasted bike parts, now fortified with a new

collection of U-Locks, laying about in every cyclists lair? Make camp chairs? Decorate your kitchen and bathroom? Weave mountain bike baskets and panniers, sofas, and clothes hampers? Glue or weld them to pick up truck fenders and bumpers? A giant trampoline perhaps? No all of these ideas are ridiculous. Maybe someone will fabricate the world's first suspended mountainbiker hammock from such collections of junk and sell'em the at the next Sea Otter.

The magic of the bic pen technique of picking a U-lock is the ultimate disappearing bike trick. This can have some application in getting rid of unwanted junk you may have lying around the house. You may have seen forlorn and shabby sofas and the like left out in front yards with imbecilic hand written signs that say "free". Well now that we all have useless bike locks we can now simply dispense with the hassle of getting out the cardboard and marking pen. When you lock something up

## Igor Kotterkrank's Dream: Multi-Use Trails



with a U-lock, it is now essentially free. Yet since it is locked it is somehow desirable. So now you can just simply U-lock up your unwanted bikes or whatever on your front lawn or sidewalk or whatever, and watch it walk away.

And now we approach the hub of the matter. Free wheeling cycling is all about freedom isn't it? The free-ness of mountain biking is why I cherish it so much. You've heard that lyric by Sting right? You know, "If you love someone, set them free" well that explains nothing about what I'm talking about. I love my bike and I lock it up. Now that it is common knowledge that these locks have been useless, and I still have my bike, I feel like an honorary Bhuddist.

I'm looking for the right combination to lock up my free ride. Remember U-Brakes? Now it's U-Locks. History repeats itself. I fully expect the next James Bond episode to feature his escape on a mountain bike in the opening chase scene that he frees with a Bic pen and rides like he stole it.

## Romp Directory

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Ride Coordinator	Julie Barott	650-814-8271	ride@romp.org
Sponsor Coordinator	John Morgan	408-224-6879	sponsor@romp.org
National Mtn Bike Patrol	Dave Wieland	408-371-2729	nmbp@romp.org
Web Master	Josh Moore	408-420-7342	webmaster@romp.org





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## Inside this issue:

<b>Access For All</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Blue Blossom</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Beginner's Curve</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Donner Lake Trail</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Calendar</b>	<b>6-7</b>
<b>Bic Pic</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Igor's Dream</b>	<b>10</b>

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Broken Spoke 782 Laurel Street, San Carlos 650-594-9210  
brokenspoke.com



Calmar Cycles 2236 El Camino Real, Santa Clara 408-249-6907 calmarcycles.com



Palo Alto Bicycles 170 University Ave. Palo Alto 650-328-7411  
paloaltobicycles.com



The Bicycle Outfitter 963 Fremont Avenue, Los Altos 650-948-8092  
bicycleoutfitter.com

Cupertino Bike Shop 10493 S. De Anza Blvd, Cupertino 408-255-2217 cupertinobike.com



**SUNSHINE BICYCLES** Sunshine Bicycles. 309 First St. Gilroy 408-842-4889

Zanotti Cycles 4396 Enterprise Place, Suite A; Fremont, CA 94538. 510-490-4030. info@zanotticycles.com



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**Walt's Cycle and Fitness** Walt's Cycle and Fitness. 116 Carroll Ave, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 408-736-2630

Calabazas Cyclery 6140 Bollinger Rd., San Jose 408-366-2453  
calabazas.com



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