



OFF-ROAD RIDER

The official publication of the Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists

**APRIL
2003**

The MORC MISSION:

The Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC) is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to safeguarding the future of mountain biking in Minnesota through the promotion of responsible mountain biking, the establishment and maintenance of mountain biking trails, and the preservation of Minnesota's natural resources.

Next Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 13th at
7:00 p.m. at QBP
Bloomington

Trail Conditions!

Always check trail conditions at morcmtnb.com before you ride!

President's Message

As a sure sign of our growing success, things are really busy for MORC this spring! I'd like to highlight a few key upcoming events, and encourage you to take advantage of the many volunteer opportunities available to help with MORC's ongoing efforts to protect, maintain and expand natural-surface trails for Minnesota mountain bikers.

Plans are progressing well for significant projects at the Minnesota River Trail, Battle Creek and Lebanon Hills. We will continue and expand the weeknight trail work sessions implemented last year at Lebanon Hills and Battle Creek. In addition, we will be conducting a number of large Work Day Events at several existing and new Twin Cities trails this summer. Expect to see a number of notices soon for trail work sessions!

Speaking of new trails, MORC needs additional Trail Stewards to coordinate our activities with Land Managers in a number of area parks. Please see Don Youngdahl's article for additional information.

Erik's Spring Cup at Buck is coming up May 10th. This event provides MORC with an excellent early-season opportunity to recruit new members and raise funds for trail work. I encourage you to attend this event as participant, volunteer or spectator. Please review the Spring Cup article for further details on volunteer opportunities. As an added incentive to attend, MORC will be raffling a Surly 1x1 bike frame at conclusion of the Spring Cup. Anyone who joins MORC or renews/extends their MORC membership at the Spring Cup is eligible to win.

MORC is pleased to be hosting IMBA HotSpots staff in the Twin Cities for 10 days, beginning May 28th. As part of HotSpots events, an IMBA Trail Care Crew will be conducting two Trail Schools and one Advanced Trail School (prior attendance at a Trail School required). Anyone wishing to learn more about sustainable trail designs or with aspirations of becoming a MORC Trail Steward or Crew Lead should plan to attend one of the Trail Schools. Please refer to Tim Wegner's HotSpots article for further details on how to reserve your spot.

The new & vastly improved morcmtnb.org is now online. I offer a special thanks to John Lundell for the many hours he has put into this major effort. Thanks also to those on MORC's IT Subcommittee and other Board Members, who have provided John with valuable input and assistance.

Affiliate representatives Bob Bryan (TCBC), Rick McFerrin (Two Wheel View/Trips for Kids) are already hard at work setting up group rides for this summer, in conjunction with local bike shops. We'll begin posting ride information soon on the MORC Calendar. Please contact Bob or Rick, if you're interested in helping organize or lead rides this year.

I encourage all members to find an area of interest and volunteer your time and energy to help keep MORC moving forward in 2003. As always, please contact myself or another MORC Board Member with your comments and questions.

Ride safe and ride often!

Steve Garnjobst, MORC President
Phone: 651-771-4971
Email: mnbiker@attbi.com

MORC Gains Access to Inver Grove Heights Park

Building on our past successes with other Cities and Counties, MORC was able to present a proposal to the City of Inver Grove Heights, for the development of a 5-mile singletrack mountain bike trail system in one of the City's parks. Curiously, MORC was originally contacted to assist with trail erosion issues surrounding a relatively new Frisbee golf course located in another City park.

MORC has subsequently gained full City approval for the project, and is partnering with the City in applying for an Outdoor Recreation Grant through the DNR. The \$21,000 grant, which is half of the projected mountain bike and hiking trail system cost, will help tremendously, and allow for an accelerated construction schedule. We plan to break ground mid-summer 2003, with completion scheduled for the summer of 2004. Plans call for 5 miles of mountain bike singletrack, 1 mile of hiking-only trail, and a one-half mile of interpretive nature trail.

This park will also be the site of one of the IMBA Hot Spots Trail Schools in early June. See the Hot Spots article for further information. For the latest information on Harmon Park, or to volunteer for trail work, please contact Dale Gundberg at dg@energyalternative.com. You can also check out the MORC Forums at morcmtb.org for recent informational status updates.

The Park is located north of 80th street and west of Babcock Trail. The entrance at the north end is off of 55th street and is called "Salem Hills Park". The Park is currently 75% Savannah grassland and 25% hardwood forest, however the City and DNR are beginning a major reforestation process this summer, which will transform much of the grassland into hardwood forest. The ultimate layout of the trail will be 75% forest and 25% grassland singletrack.

Below are some excerpts from the grant application.

History of the Park

Harmon Park was formed by the life-trust donation of approximately 70 acres of land from the Harmon Family in the late 1980's. The trust stipulated that the land be zoned as a park and that the land remain in a natural state, without development, during the remaining life of the grantors. The donating members of the family passed away in 1998, and the land became the property of the City of Inver Grove Heights. With the exception of a paved parking lot, a children's play ground, and a tennis court at the north end of the property, no development has occurred within the park. There are no other buildings or facilities within the park.

Property owners adjacent to the park have, over the years, created a series of casual trails that traverse the park lands, and these trails are primarily used for hiking. Since these trails were formed by casual use, rather than as a planned trail system, the trails are not well coordinated, and contain sections that are subject to significant erosion.

Natural trails around the perimeter of the park were a major component of the Harmon Park Master Plan approved by the City Council in 1991. To date, none of the development proposed in the master plan has occurred.

Recreation Facilities Planned

The City and its residents desire to maintain the park as an open space, with minimal development or constructed facilities. The proposed trail system provides maximum access to the property, with a minimum of intrusion.

The planned recreational facilities are comprised of 6 miles of natural-surfaced trails, suitable for hiking, mountain biking, and snowshoeing.

An interpretive nature trail approximately 1/2 mile in length will be constructed adjacent to the elementary school on the eastern boarder of the park.

The trails are designed with an expected mixed summer use ratio of 40% hikers and 60% bicyclists. The average hiking distance per user is estimated at 1.5 miles, with a typical range of 1 to 2 miles. The average cycling distance per user is estimated at 6 miles, with a typical range of 4 to 10 miles. The weighted ratio based on miles covered per trail user is approximately 15% hiker and 85% mountain biker. The trails are designed primarily with this 15/85 use ratio in mind.

During the winter, the use will vary depending on snow depth, with hiking being the primary use with light to moderate snow cover, and snowshoeing use increasing as the snow depth increases.

The City has also been discussing with the DNR, the restoration of native plant communities and the hard-wood

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Erik's Spring Cup at Buck

Mountain bike racing season is almost here! The 9th Annual Erik's Spring Cup at Buck is scheduled for Saturday, May 10th. Last year, in cold & rainy weather, more than 500 racers turned out for what was the largest local race of the season. The 2003 edition of this outstanding event, held at Buck Hill in Burnsville, promises to be even bigger and better than ever. Racers can expect a newly re-configured course for 2003, designed to provide a fun and challenging race – and a few surprises!

This year, MORC is partnering with Erik's Bike Shop, to present the Spring Cup at Buck. Erik's is providing invaluable financial assistance and marketing expertise. MORC will provide course design and construction resources, as well as race-day volunteer workers. In return, MORC will receive proceeds from the event.

Does this mean MORC has become a race promoter? Only in a very limited way. The MORC Board has elected to take active support roles in two high profile and unique mountain biking events – Erik's Spring Cup at Buck and The 24 Hours of Afton. Participating in these events provides MORC with the opportunity to recruit new members and raise needed funds for trail projects.

MORC's most important commitment to the Spring Cup is volunteer workers. For this event to be successful, we need a wide assortment of volunteers:

Trail Work

Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM, through May 10. (the more volunteers, the better)

Race registration fees will be waived for volunteers who complete at least 5 hours of trail work!

Please contact Dale Gundberg, Trail Work Coordinator

phone: (651) 341-2241

email: dgundberg@energyalternative.com

Race-Day Workers

Volunteer/Food Coordination (4 people)

Registration (6 people)

MORC Membership Table (2 people)

Timing/Results Support (4 people)

Awards (2 people)

Post-Event Clean Up (8 people)

Floating Helpers (3 people)

Please contact Kristin Lohn, Volunteer Coordinator

email: lohn0005@hotmail.com

Thanks in advance for your support!

Dennis Porter, Race Director

phone: (952) 941-9391, ext 243

email: dporter@qbp.com



Boreal Bike Club

Boreal Bike Club/Team Novara is getting ready to kick off the 2003 ride season. Currently there are members of the club training for the century portion of TCBC's Ironman, which takes place on April 27th. The team is also involved in trying to assist Two Wheel View/Trips for Kids sponsor a kid and his bicycle for a trip to South America. Several efforts are underway to raise money through bike swaps and bike auctions. The club will also be participating (with MORC) in REI Trail Day (since REI is our sponsor) at Lebanon Hills again this year. The trail day is held in June, watch the MORC website for info! Hopefully members of the BBC will also be sighted at the Tuesday night trail building sessions as well.

MTB rides will be starting up in May, every Monday night. Rides rotate between the River Bottoms, Lebanon, Terrance Oaks and Battle Creek so be sure to check the ride calendar at www.borealbike.com to get the most up-to-date schedule. Everyone is welcome on rides, if you have any questions about the club contact Kristin at lohn0005@hotmail.com.

Kristin Lohn

Gary Crandall MTB Hall of Fame Campaign

Gary Crandall, of Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival fame, has been nominated to the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame for 2003. We'd like to ask MORC members to help get him elected. No one has had more impact on the growth of mountain biking in the Midwest than Gary and his Fat Tire Festival. Here's why:

First, the sheer number of participants in his event, as it approaches its twenty-first anniversary, is significant. Nearly 40,000 racers of all ages (Gary recently had to add classes for riders over 70) have gleefully taken part during the past 21 years. Participation could be even greater, but hundreds are turned away each year to protect the facilities. Every September, some 3,500 people from all across America head to the Hayward/Cable area of Northern Wisconsin as racers, family members, volunteers, medical personnel, and support staff for this annual weekend rite of fall.

Second, Chequamegon is an event with significant physical and technical challenges for individual riders, but one that retains a family-friendly atmosphere. Kids can participate in parades and events specially tailored to their abilities. The Short and Fat, a milder version of the Chequamegon 40, was designed for beginning riders, kids, and spouses. This means little mountain bikers grow up in cycling families, having learned the fun of mountain biking during years of participation in the Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival. This is good for the sport, for the health of our children and adults, for the local economies next to trails, and for the bicycle industry.

Third, Chequamegon has been the launching pad for mountain bike advocacy efforts not only in the Hayward/ Cable area, but for the rest of the Midwest as well. Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists (MORC), Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycling Association (WORBA), and Cyclists of Gitchee Gumees Shores (COGGs) are all organizations that sprouted with the help of resources from Gary Crandall's Fat Tire Festival. With Gary's help, the Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association (CAMBA) turned an untamed network of trails and fire roads into one of the country's premier mountain bike destinations.

Fourth, Crandall's work with mountain biking has created a measurable economic impact for the region. In a study titled "Mountain Biking in the Chequamegon Area of Northern Wisconsin and Implications for Regional Development", a joint project of the University of Wisconsin, Sawyer County, and IMBA, the economic impact of mountain biking was found to be significant for area businesses. Completed in 1996, this study revealed that for the six community, two-county region of less than 10,000 residents in the Hayward/Cable area:

- * 63% of mountain biker riders were repeat visitors
- * Average length of stay was 3.6 days
- * 44% of riders came from Minneapolis/St. Paul, more than 3 hours away from Hayward/Cable
- * total economic impact of mountain biking to the area was \$1,174,100 per year

Finally, three of the largest bicycle retailers in the country (in cold weather states, no less) are located within a few hours drive of the Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival, as is one of the country's largest bicycle manufacturers (a faithful title sponsor for the event). Each of these industry members sell large quantities of mountain bikes, parts, and apparel, due in no small part to Crandall's Chequamegon Fat Tire Festival. There is, in fact, a measurable spike in the sale of mountain bikes and related accessories in the Twin Cities, prior to Chequamegon each year.

Here's how you can help.

First, join the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame. For a measly \$15, you can be a voting member. Go to www.mtnbikehalloffame.com and read about the organization and the recognition they provide for the pioneers who literally created mountain biking.

Second, once you've joined, please nominate Gary Crandall and write a short (250 word) piece about why Chequamegon has been significant to you or why it's enhanced your involvement in mountain biking. Thanks for your support of this worthwhile cause.

Gary Sjoquist
Bicycle Industry Advocate, Quality Bicycle Products
Director of Membership Development, Bikes Belong
Founder, Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists
Frequent Chequamegon Participant

Trail Stewards Needed

In response to new opportunities to build trails we now need additional individuals that are willing to take the position of trail steward. The trails that will need a steward in the next one to two years include:

Harmon Park in Inver Grove Heights
Murphy-Hanrehan
Lake Rebecca
Elm Creek Park

The trail stewards are a very important part of the sustainable trail program and will be very important to the success that we need to have in order to have the opportunity to build trail in other locations. I will include a short description of responsibilities and requirements and would encourage anyone interested to apply for the position.

Requirements:

1. Member of MORC and IMBA
2. Must attend a trail building school sponsored by IMBA
3. Minimum of 2 year commitment

Responsibilities:

1. Contact person for land managers and agency personnel
2. Officially represent MORC and the community using the trail system
3. Coordinate trail maintenance sessions ensuring IMBA trail standards are utilized
4. Supervise volunteer trail workers
5. Ride and monitor the trail system frequently, proactively offering solutions to the land managers for problems encountered on the trail system.
6. Enlist, recruit, train and develop a local group of trail users to assist in trail maintenance and corrections of problem areas.
7. Maintain records of your activities. Report these activities to the MORC board and to the land managers

Please contact Don Youngdahl, MORC's Volunteer Coordinator, to express your interest in becoming a trail steward.

Email: dmy@visi.com
 Phone: 651-633-2029

Late Breaking Trail News

Dale Gundberg and I met with the land managers from Three Rivers Parks Monday March 31st. Our goal was to start a dialogue about HotSpots as well as begin talking with them about building sustainable trails in the parks that they manage. Dale and I did a PowerPoint presentation that lasted about 30 minutes. Questions were asked throughout our presentation about costs, resources, and techniques. The meeting lasted for about 2 hours.

The results of the meeting were astounding! They want to send 5-6 people to the Trail Care School in June, Dale and I will be asked to present to the executive committee for Three Rivers Parks and eventually to the Parks Commissioners.

We have been given provisional approval to build new sustainable trails in 3 of the parks. We will also be expected to reclaim abandoned trails as well as advise with construction of trails for other park user groups.

The three parks that we will work in are:

Lake Rebecca
 Elm Creek

Murphy-Hanrehan –the goals here will be to route around where the endangered bird nests and to keep the **trail open throughout** the normal biking season!

This is a goal that we have been working towards for years. I realize that we may not turn any dirt in to trails this year but we have made a major step forward. Now more than ever it is important that we grow in numbers and train people to build sustainable trails.

Tim Wegner
 IMBA Representative
 Southern Minnesota

Midwest MTB Summit Recap

Sunny skies, dry dirt, free Fat Tire Ale, on trail demo bikes from the top companies, presentations by top trail builders, free 1554 Brussels Style Black Ale, on trail demos of Toro trail building equipment, night rides with 105 people, free Sunshine Wheat, guided rides of 12 miles of technical singletrack, burgers, pop and incredible tasting fries provided by the Boy Scouts, temps in the 70's in mid March, free Blue Paddle Pilsner, watching 105 slightly drunk riders attempt a 40 foot stream crossing in 41 degree water, at night.

The Midwest Mountain Bike Summit 2003 in Kansas City, MO had all of the above plus more this year. Held this year at the trailhead of Kansas City's best collection of singletrack in near perfect weather, the summit had something for everyone. Guided rides by the local Mountain Bike Patrol on Landahl's many miles of Limestone studied singletrack appealed to those there just to ride. Presentations by IMBA Staff, North Shore Trail Builders, and other Advocacy groups appealed to those there to learn how to build better trails. On trail demonstrations of Toro trail building equipment for those looking to build trails more efficiently. Demo bikes from the top companies for those looking for a new ride for 2003.

The guys down at EarthRiders know how to put on a good time for both dirt diggers and dirt riders and anybody else involved in Mountain Biking. Since we had 5 inches of snow on the ground when we left for the summit, I would encourage anyone who gets the itch for riding dirt in March to make plans to make it to next years event.

Look to the Website in the near future for some helmet-cam video of the social events and pictures from Summit.

James Ford
MORC 2nd Vice President

(Continued from page 2) Midwest Singletrack Users Rally - In Kansas City

forest and prairie within the park. The proposed trail system is a compatible use with the intended restoration goals.

Trail Surface

The trails will be natural-surface compacted dirt and turf trails. No fill material will be used. Sections of the trail that cross typically wet or damp ground will be traversed by boardwalks constructed of treated lumber.

Community Needs for These Facilities

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (www.imba.com) has identified the Minneapolis -St. Paul and suburban area as a metro area with a high demand for natural-surfaced off-road trails for cyclists. However, the supply of such facilities in the metro area is extremely limited. The City of Inver Grove Heights currently has no recreational trails for mountain bikes. In the 10 closest south-eastern St. Paul suburbs, only two other mountain bike trails exist, and these have become increasingly over-crowded.

Dakota County mounted an infra-red trail counter on a mountain bike trail in Lebanon Hills Regional Park in Eagan, MN in September, 2002. During a one-week period, the counter recorded 1,430 cyclists. In the last 8 years at this regional park, mountain bike riders have increased from under 2 percent of park visitors, to over 8% of park visitors in 2002, and that use is concentrated in a six-month riding season.

The existing casual hiking trails in the park are used by many residents of the City. A formal hiking trail system would enhance the experience for existing users, and would bring additional users to the park.

A formal trail system, with increased traffic focused in the proper areas of the park would also have a positive effect on the existing less desirable uses of the park. The remote character of the park attracts teen drinking parties, and illegal motorized use. Both the neighbors of the park and the City's police department expect a significant reduction or elimination of the current illegal uses of the park, as more users visit the park and the illegal uses are thereby discouraged.

The interpretive nature trail is a park feature that is considered highly desirable by the elementary school staff and administrators, and the trail would be used in outside-the-classroom education. The Principal of Salem Hills Elementary has provided a letter of support for the project.

This is going to be a really fun trail. Stay tuned, and watch the MORC web site for the latest updates.

Argentine Adventure

Four youth and three adult volunteers have been selected to participate on a two-week bike and camping trip in Argentina this summer. The trip is being coordinated by Two Wheel View / Trips for Kids Twin Cities, a nonprofit organization that was founded on the vision that all youth should have access to experiences that offer different social, cultural, and environmental points of view.

Two youth are from Minnesota, Colin Lynch from St. Paul and Jimmy Jansen from the rural town of Paynesville; and the other two are from New Mexico, Kyle Tsosie from the Navajo community near Shiprock and Pedro Rivera from Albuquerque. Volunteer mentors, Matt Axling from Albuquerque and Lanier Nabahe from Shiprock, will also be on the trip lead by Rick McFerrin, founder and director of Two Wheel View.

Two Wheel View exposes young people to communities around the world through bike and camping trips abroad, and action-oriented peer education in their own communities. "Day-to-day exposure to "real world" issues can make a lasting impression on youth and can be experienced in a very real way from the seat of a bike -- a "**Two Wheel View**," says Rick McFerrin.

All participants will be involved in pre-trip fundraising and post-trip activities that support the ongoing success of the International Bike Trip program and further the mission of Two Wheel View. Upon their return, all participants will be challenged to impact the lives of 100 others in their community through presentations and other "sharing the experience" events- called the "Bicycle Ambassador Plan."

Participants on this trip will be traveling by bicycle and camping for two weeks in the Andean northwest region of Argentina. Its pre-Columbian and colonial past makes the trip to the Argentine heartland a journey though time as well as space. In Argentina, they will be met by an Argentine local who will assist with in-country orientation and logistics. The bikers will be carrying all of their camping equipment and supplies in panniers (bicycle saddle bags) and rely on local services for all of their daily needs: food, water, and accommodation.

Participants must meet a minimum fundraising goal. A tax-deductible contribution to Two Wheel View would enable these young people to travel to Argentina. To contribute to the International Bike Trip Fund, please contact Two Wheel View at (612) 874-1895 or info@twowheelview.org.

For more information, contact: **Two Wheel View**
2731 Emerson Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55408
(612) 874-1895, rick.mcferrin@twowheelview.org

Minneapolis Off-road Cycling Advocates (MOCA)

On March 19th, we did a presentation for the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board planning committee which went well. Four of the nine commissioners expressed support for establishing an official trail system from Cedar Lake park to Wirth, and nobody spoke against the project. The result of that meeting is that we are now officially working with parks staff to iron out the details before there is a formal vote. Our first meeting with the parks staff to start working out the trail system details went well and we have an all day session planned to look at all the trails and plot out the route for a loop in April. We are also working on getting our web page up to speed - check it out at www.mocatrails.org!

Miriam Taylor

MOCA - Minneapolis Off-road Cycling Advocates
 A Minnesota Off Road Cyclists (MORC) Affiliate
miriam@mocatrails.org

www.morcmtb.org

**Minnesota Off-Road
Cyclists-MORC**

1905 Woods Lane
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Webmaster Message

There have been even more exciting changes to the MORC web site: www.morcmtb.org. The entire site has been revised once again, combining a number of web sites into one larger online resource. Our goal is to become your one-stop location for everything mountain bike related in the Minnesota and surrounding areas. Some of the sites we are merging together with the MORC site are: www.mtbmn.com, www.minnesotamtb.com, and parts of www.bikemn.com. In the coming weeks we hope to continue improvements to the site including a quick-view trail conditions page, multimedia trail video using our new helmet camera, additional and improved trail reviews and more!

Just as we are always looking for help with things like trail work, we could also use some help with trail reviews, regular trail condition updates, and forum moderation to name a few. We hope you will make www.morcmtb.org a regular stop when browsing the Internet.

John Lundell
IT Committee Leader
webmaster