



MORC – THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP TO YIELD NEW TRAILS.

Note: The following is an announcement released by Jay Thompson of the Three Rivers Park District regarding the future of the biking trails at Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve. Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists is, to say the least, thrilled by the potential for new trails at this metro mountain biking landmark and grateful to the Park District for the opportunity to join forces with them on this project.

Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve Proposed Trail Development

As many of you know MORC has been developing a relationship with Three Rivers Park District over the past couple years. MORC's efforts has yielded two IMBA trail school's that have been great educational opportunities for Park District staff, other regional land managers, and area mountain bike enthusiasts. MORC's positive relationship with Three Rivers Park District continues to progress.

Park District staff has expressed support for the 2005 Federal Recreational Trails Grant application MORC submitted to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. If successful, this grant could contribute to the funding for the trail relocation and development of trails at Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve.

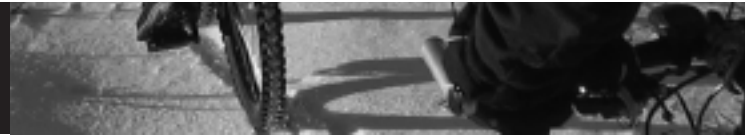
Park District staff and MORC volunteers have preliminarily identified a trail alignment of 12 miles. The proposed trail realignment expands the mountain bike season from spring through fall, conditions permitting, as compared to the current scenario where mountain biking is prohibited until August. More diversity in challenge levels are created with loops for beginner, intermediate and advanced bikers. The trail length would increase, the speed would be managed through design elements and the trails would be designed and constructed using sustainable design standards.

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SOUTHERN MINNESOTA IMBA UPDATE

Tim Wegner & Erik Gerrits, IMBA Representatives



IMBA Report: Spring 2005

This is the exciting time of the year for all of us that are devoted to mountain biking and improving trail access. All the trail seeds we planted last fall and winter are now ready to come forth as actual trail projects. We will write about each project that we have been working on and offer our best guess as far as a time line for start and finished trail projects.

IMBA Trail School:

We were fortunate enough to get another IMBA trail school this year. I think this is the 4th school in 4 years which is unheard of at IMBA. Erik Gerrits will be the contact person for this school. The school will be held at Steeple Chase Ski area North of Rochester MN. The dates for the school will be April 30th and May 1st. If you have any desire to learn how to build trails that are sustainable and fun to ride, you need to attend this class to learn the techniques. Contact Erik at 612-803-7941 to reserve a spot in the class for yourself. Erik told me today that he has about 30 people registered for the class so far.

Lebanon Hills:

This project took 3 years from start to finish. This trail system has been used as an example many times when we have discussions with land managers about what they can expect us to produce if they enter into a partnership for trails with MORC and IMBA.

Theo Wirth:

We are about to enter the evaluation phase of this project. The Minneapolis Park Board will allow us to continue to move forward with this tremendous project if several things occur on the trail that is already finished. The trail must be sustainable, riders must stay on the new constructed trail, the trail must be enjoyable and problem "encounters" with other users must be resolved quickly and in a manner that is acceptable.

Salem Hills:

This project will be completed by the end of the construction season. The portion of this trail that is completed has been used by mountain bikers and trail hikers all fall and winter. The parks department of Inver Grove Heights has determined that this project is a success. I just received notice that the city of Inver Grove Heights may be interested in having MORC work on some other trails in one of the other parks. We will keep everyone posted on this one.

Camden:

This state park in the Marshall, MN. area could become the first chance for MORC to partner with Minnesota DNR state parks to build sanctioned, legal trails in a Minnesota state park. We have done an initial visit to this park and it is quite beautiful. Camping facilities are in place, the Redwood River flows through it, and challenging terrain abounds within the park boundaries. I met with Minnesota State Parks director on March 7. We asked them to designate this park as the pilot project for the

DNR/MORC partnership. I will post the results of our meeting on the MORC website since this article is going to publication before a decision has been made.

Cuyuna:

This project will take more time than I had originally thought it would. The vision is still to build a 40+ mile trail system at this location but the limiting factor is once again—MONEY. MORC and the city of Brainerd have submitted a proposal to Congressman Oberstar's office for funding for this project. It is my estimate based upon past experience that this project will require funding in the neighborhood of \$750,000. I will be going to Washington DC in April to lobby to have funding for this project included in the next highway transportation budget. The funding of this project will not only be for trails but will cover trail head signage, improved campgrounds including showers and non-pit toilets. This is the most ambitious project for MORC to date but with the support of our membership and others I believe we can make this one happen. When it is complete, it will make Minnesota a destination for mountain bikers.

Murphy-Hanrehan:

This project has been on our minds for the past 3 years. Recently there have been some wonderful developments. Three Rivers Parks District (3RPD) has been in the process of evaluating all of their natural surface trails. The evaluation showed some serious flaws in trail design. MORC and IMBA will be partnering with 3RPD to evaluate the trails in several of their parks with the intent of improving the mountain bike trails wherever possible. MORC and 3RPD applied for a grant from RTP funds to build a trail in Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park. The trail will have a beginner loop, an intermediate loop and an expert loop.

The beginner/intermediate loops will cover about 4 miles. The expert portion will be approximately 8 miles in length. There are still some more steps that need to be completed before this trail will become reality. The master plan has to be evaluated, the grant must be approved and Metropolitan Council has to approve our plan. (Same procedures we had to follow at Lebanon Hills.)

The funding for this project deserves extraordinary comment. Since this is a Regional Park all matching funds had to be in the form of CASH. So MORC and 3RPD had to come up with \$75,000 in cash in order to apply for the grant. MORC has committed \$10,000 to the project over the next 3 years, a private individual has given a check to MORC for \$20,000 and 3RPD will be contributing \$45,000 over the next 3 years to the project.

This need for cash came upon us abruptly and we had to scramble to find the cash to meet our side of this commitment. There are other projects on the horizon that may also require a cash match. Lack of cash on the part of MORC could delay implementation of some of these trail projects by several years or the lack of money may prevent them from happening entirely.

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TIME TO PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOU WANT YOUR KNOBBIES TO GO.

Charles Youel, MORC Board Member



Officially, this is the Spring 2005 MORC newsletter. But a casual observer could be forgiven for thinking of it as the "New Trails at Murphy Hanrehan and Theodore Wirth Park" issue.

This is not a coincidence. All-new, sustainable singletrack at Murphy Hanrehan is the biggest opportunity to enhance and expand mountain biking in the metro area since Lebanon Hills. And the new trails at Wirth represent the first crucial step in what could (and should) be an extensive network of off-road trails that wind throughout Minneapolis. I could empty my entire cookie jar of superlatives and still not overstate how cool this stuff is.

But with opportunity, there comes opportunity cost. MORC needs to raise some good, old-fashioned capital to help finish work at Wirth and start it at Murphy. Cash money. Legal tender. Moolah. Tha Benjamins. Et Cetera.

This puts us in an interesting position as an organization. Speaking for the MORC Board of Directors, I can tell you that none of us are in this for the money. There's a reason we're a NON-PROFIT organization. Heck, we're even shy about asking for your membership dollars. But these opportunities—and others throughout Minnesota—are just too freaking good to let our Northern European reticence get in the way.

For 2005, MORC is committed to raising \$15,000 to fund new trails at Murphy Hanrehan and finish work at Theo Wirth.

That's right. A fifteen, a comma and three zeroes. That's one heckuva bake sale, my friends. Ambitious? Yes. Impossible? Not by a long shot. If we got one dollar from every person who rides a mountain bike in the metro area, we'd raise that 10 times over.

And that's actually just the way we're going to go about it.

We'll be out at trailheads all over the Twin Cities every weekend this summer, talking to bikers about becoming members. We'll be selling a limited edition t-shirt with all of the proceeds going to fund the new trails. (A t-shirt that I expect to see on each and every person who read that last sentence, by the way.) We're going to hold the king of all bike schweg raffles, with prizes generously donated by area bike shops and other businesses. And yes, we're going to ask you to dig a little deeper in your wallets and pony up a few extra bucks to make the next great Twin Cities trail a reality.

By the same token, we're not going to turn into shameless hucksters who clog your mailbox with endless solicitations for jing (maybe one or two). But we will set aside our Minnesota manners for the sake of sweet singletrack. And we hope that you'll do the same.

So when you see us at the trailhead this summer, talking when we'd rather be riding, stop by and say hi. Better yet, introduce us to your riding buddies. Better still, buy a t-shirt and a few raffle tickets. Help us out, and we'll thank you with trails that'll put a big ol' sweaty perma-grin on your mug every time you ride them.

That's a promise. Help us keep it.

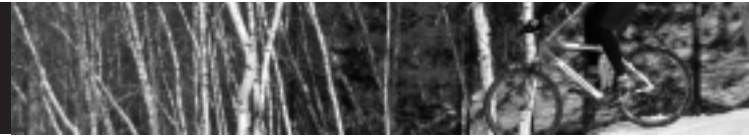
IN GOOD ENOUGH SHAPE TO RIDE?
HOW ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE TRAIL?

Check trail conditions at www.morcmtb.org



NEW MORC MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Scott Thayer, MORC President



During the off-season, the MORC Board of Directors revisited our membership levels. We've had the same membership cost structure for several years, and have dealt with significant increases in the expenses that are associated with building trails, communicating with members, and holding general membership events. Following IMBA's lead, we decided to adjust our membership rates to keep pace with rising expenses and help generate the capital we need to fund new trail projects.

Let me help shed some light on the thinking behind the new membership structure. First, we're trying to remove some of the barriers to joining. To help the younger mountain bikers join the fold, we've introduced a Youth level membership, which is open to anyone age 18 or under. This carries all the same benefits as our regular membership, but at a minimum wage-friendly \$15.

We've also added several levels of membership above our base membership (now \$25) that make contributing a little more to MORC that much easier.

Finally, we've added levels at and above the \$100 mark for those generous souls looking to take full advantage of MORC's nonprofit status and make a major contribution to gaining and maintaining trails.

Here's the complete list:

Youth (18 years of age and younger): \$15.00

Enthusiast (New base membership): \$25.00

Trailbuilder: \$35.00

Bike Family: \$50.00

MTB Advocate: \$65.00

Big Ring: \$100.00

Trailblazer: \$250.00

MTB Champion: \$500.00

MORC Leadership Circle: \$1,000.00

Our new membership levels are going into effect the first week of April. If you're currently a member, the new rates will take effect when you renew your membership. A reminder that MORC is a certified 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, so your membership contributions are tax-deductible.

UPDATE: MOCA-WIRTH PARK TRAIL

Chris Druckenmiller, MOCA Board Member



Big things are on the horizon for the Minneapolis Offroad Cycling Advocates (MOCA) in 2005. First and foremost, the official grand opening of the trail at Theodore Wirth Park is scheduled for Saturday, June 4 at the Northwest corner of Highway 55 and Theodore Wirth Parkway.

Tentatively starting at 10:30 a.m. and lasting until 2 p.m., the festivities are set to feature a chain cutting ceremony with Minneapolis mayor R.T. Rybak, demo bikes and guided trail tours. If weather doesn't cooperate the event will be pushed back to the following Saturday, June 11.

Peace Coffee will provide refreshments, and members of the Bent Crank Racing cycling team will lead trail tours. The MOCA board has no shortage of ideas for the grand opening and is currently working on finalizing the day's events. Everyone is encouraged to attend and bring friends of all types.

The grand opening will be a family-friendly introduction to the first official mountain bike trail in Minneapolis. Those unable to bike to the event are encouraged to park at the Wirth Lake lot on Glenwood Avenue two blocks East of Theodore Wirth Parkway.

MOCA members have been busy with building sustainable, environmentally friendly trails at Theodore Wirth Park since May of 2004. The physical labor started just one month after being granted unanimous approval for the pilot project by the Minneapolis Park Board on April 7 of that year. Before all that the hardest work, planning the trail, started in March of 2002.

Do your part to ensure the trail is ready for the grand opening by showing up for trail work, Wednesdays from 5 p.m. until sunset. No experience is necessary and MOCA members will gladly train you on-the-job. Trail work for the year will commence as soon as the weather allows. Check the MOCA website for detail.

For information on trail work locations, please consult the weekly updated posting with map at www.mocatrails.org.

WHAT MAKES GREAT SINGLETRACK? YOU AND A SHOVEL.

The majority of mountain bike trails in the Twin Cities are built and maintained by MORC volunteers. The more help we get, the more new trail we can build. See www.morcmtb.org for details.

UPDATE: METRO AREA TRAILS

MORC Trail Stewards



Terrace Oaks

Terrace Oaks has a great season of trail work and riding in store. As you might have noticed last fall, we've made some much needed trail improvements and also added a bit more length to the trail. These re-routes are 100% rideable as-is, but our trail crews will be doing the finishing work on them as soon as the trails open up. Along with the finishing work, we will also need to reclaim those sections that are no longer in use. We'll seed the soil and use ground cover to prevent further erosion and let the nature take over from there. After the current re-routes are finished we will dig in and get to some of the other re-routes, including a reworking of the expert section in Hebel Hollow and the exit of the trail. Again, please as always stay off the trail until it is officially open for the year, and even then take caution if the trail is wet. We'd much rather spend time working on new trail than fixing ruts and other damage. (Douglas Holtz, Trail Steward)

Salem Hills

Salem Hills has been open all winter for riding and has probably seen more laps than it did all last summer. The trail has been in great shape but will be closed in the spring until the ground has had a chance to thaw and dry out. Please keep an eye on the forums and the trail condition page on the website for current conditions. Starting as soon as the weather allows this spring, we plan to complete the trail building in the park and hook up the completed loop. Keep an eye on the forums for dates and times of the trail work. (James Ford, Trail Steward)

Bloomington River Trail

2004 was a significant year for MORC in our relationship with the land managers of the Bloomington River Trail. We received permission and funding to make substantive improvements to the multi-use trail which many of us enjoy. With the support and assistance of MORC members, we have successfully re-routed two fall line hill climbs on the eastern portion of the trail (roughly South of Portland Ave). The reroute included the construction of two bridges and one boardwalk. In 2005 we plan to complete the work on this area of the trail by working with the land managers to shut down and reclaim the old trail. We will continue with regular maintenance on the entire trail (mowing & trimming) and are exploring additional trail improvement projects. If you would like to get involved with this trail we can always use the help. Keep an eye on the website or feel free to contact me (seberly@att.net, 952 201 6294) at any time. In closing, I know I'm preaching to the converted but we need to stay off the trail—especially the new areas—during the spring thaw as it is the most sensitive time of the year. (Steve Eberly, Trail Steward)

Battle Creek

The 12th Annual Battle Creek Regional Park 2005 Earth Day Clean-Up was held Saturday, April 16, 2005. This effort began in 1993 when a group of Battle Creek area residents coordinated a small clean-up effort in the park areas adjacent to their neighborhood. Since that time, the Battle Creek clean-up has grown to over 300 volunteers who collect several tons of trash and

debris each year! For the last several years, MORC volunteers have used this fine event as a kickoff for trail maintenance activities at Battle Creek. Our crew was responsible for removing debris and obstacles from the bike trails. Thanks to everyone who came out and helped this year.

As far as trail work for this season, the theme is rock. We will focus on armoring a number of trail sections with rock. Some rock obstacle construction is also in the works. Look for dates and times for trail work sessions on morcmtb.org. (Steve Garnjobst, Trail Steward)



FIRST-EVER MINNESOTA MTB SUMMIT

James Ford, MORC Vice President

In past years, MORC has traditionally held an annual meeting and party for members at the end of the summer. This year, we're combining the annual meeting and party with the first-ever Minnesota Mountain Biking Summit.

Our vision for the summit is to bring together mountain bikers from around the state to celebrate our sport and lay the groundwork for future successes. Currently on the agenda: mountain biking, advocacy, grilling, socializing, camping, MTB video contest, MORC Annual Meeting. And more mountain biking.

A lot of the details are still in the works, including the location and a specific schedule of events. But the date has been set for the weekend of September 9th - 11th. More info to come as things are nailed down.

Mark your calendar, and check morcmtb.org for updates.

LANTERNE ROUGE KEEPS MORC ROLLING

Charles Youel, MORC Board Member

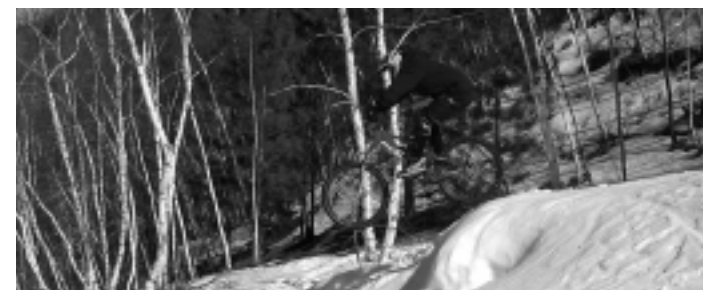


As an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists depends upon the support of riders who value access to trails and new riding opportunities enough to put their hard-earned money behind us.

While we never take a single member for granted, we're fortunate to draw our membership base from one of the nation's most active and enthusiastic cycling communities. Recently, MORC received one of the most generous donations in our history from a group of riders whose dedication to our sport and our local trails is equal parts inspiring and humbling.

Lanterne Rouge is a bicycle club started up in 1995 by a loose confederation of Cat 4-5 racers who also rode cyclocross and off-road. Sort of the opposite of the "maillot jaune," the name "lanterne rouge" is a moniker given to the racer who's running in last place. For this cycling club, it represents the spirit of the underdog, of perseverance in the face of having no hope of victory, but carrying on because it's a good thing to do.

Lanterne Rouge competed regionally and promoted their own cyclocross race for seven years. After 2003, the focus of the team shifted to touring and brevet promotion. With the reduced focus on competition, the team found itself with a healthy treasury funded by committed members and competitive success.



It would've been easy enough to divide the funds among the team members and call it a day. Instead, they decided to give something back to cycling - specifically, to mountain biking in Minnesota.

On Tuesday, March 8, Lanterne Rouge Vice President and Treasurer Mark Alexander presented the MORC Board of Directors with donation of \$1,193.00 - half of the group's account balance. In presenting the check, Alexander said Lanterne Rouge riders had put it a lot of miles on the metro area mountain bike trails (Battle Creek in particular), and wanted to express their appreciation for MORC's efforts in maintaining and building those trails.

"Our intention is for the money to expand the good works of MORC in trail development, particularly for the upcoming Murphy Hanrehan project," said Alexander. The team's asked only that MORC consider naming a trail after Lanterne Rouge, a request that we will be proud to honor.

In closing, it should be noted that Lanterne Rouge riders have maintained the team name and web site, and continue to host rides on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings.

See www.lanternerouge.org for details.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Scott Thayer, MORC President



Spring has finally arrived and it's time to get back on the bike! This winter, MORC has been working hard to make sure that this is going to be the best year to date for mountain biking in Minnesota. Here are some of the things that we've been up to.

One of our major supporters, Quality Bicycle Products (QBP), graciously flew in Philip Keyes, the executive director of the New England Mountain Biking Association (NEMBA) to speak to MORC about mountain bike advocacy. NEMBA is the nation's largest bicycle advocacy club, with around 4,500 members.

Philip spoke to a group of MORC members at REI on February 20, about building a successful statewide organization, and about how to move MORC to the next level of effectiveness. Philip's message was a good one, and it got us fired up to expand this year on the successes of previous years. Thanks, QBP, for flying in Philip!

In his presentation, Philip pointed out that over 700,000 people in Minnesota own mountain bikes (*Outdoor Industry Association study*). MORC's membership, currently just over 500, is a drop in the bucket. Our goal for membership this year was to grow by another 25%, which would put us at 625 members. Seeing this statistic makes us think that we should be setting our sights higher. In order to help increase our membership base, you can expect to see a more visible MORC presence at the local trails this year.

That said, we can't build our base without your help. If you ride with friends that aren't MORC members, do something about it. Let them know what MORC is doing for them. Let them know that it's MORC that's working with land managers on their behalf to better their riding locations, and to develop new ones.

Speaking of new riding opportunities, another exciting off-season is the work we've been doing in the Marshall area. In the fall, we were contacted by a dedicated group of riders that wanted to develop the trail system in Camden State Park. They wanted to take the next step, but weren't sure what that entailed. A few of us from the board of directors drove out and visited with them, and we were quite impressed with what we saw. The Camden State Park has quite a lot of potential, and the group there is motivated and has great leadership. We look forward to working with them this coming year to help them develop sustainable, challenging and enjoyable trails in Camden.

And lastly, I wanted to say a quick word about some of the changes you'll see in MORC in the coming year and beyond. For the first time in our history, we've got more trail projects lined up than we're able to effectively handle. Rather than lose these opportunities, we've committed to increasing our capacity to address them. One way to accomplish this goal is to get more people involved as members (remember those 700,000 mountain bike owners I talked about?).

Another way is to raise funds above and beyond membership dollars to help with purchasing tools, tool trailers, and time on trail building machinery to transform new opportunities into new trails. To meet our goals, we need to pursue both of these directions. You'll read a lot about them in this newsletter, and see evidence of our commitment throughout this year.

I'm really excited about this coming year. It's a great time to be a mountain biker in Minnesota. See you on the trails!



SPRING CUP AT BUCK HILL

Scott Thayer, MORC President



The kick-off of the 2005 Minnesota State Championship Series is just around the corner. Once again this year, Erik's Bike Shop and MORC have teamed up to bring you Erik's Spring Cup at Buck Hill. The classic will take place rain or shine on Saturday, May 7. The Spring Cup has traditionally been the largest of the MNSCS series, typically drawing between 400 and 550 racers. It has also been one of the largest single-day fundraising events for MORC.

Whether you're new to racing or a seasoned veteran, you'll find this to be one of the most entertaining and enjoyable mountain biking events out there. There are four categories for racers to choose from: Citizen, Sport, Comp and Expert. For more details about the classes, start times, and registration information, check out www.mnscs.com.



THE 24 HOURS OF AFTON

Steve Eberly, MORC Board Member



This MORC fundraiser will be back again August 26-27 at Afton Alps, in Hastings, MN. The course is likely to be much improved in 2005 as MORC held an IMBA trail school at Afton Alps this past year where knowledge was freely dispensed and new trail was built in the area of the Bridge loop.

Of course, after 24 hours of riding, it won't seem quite so new any more.

For those of you who might not be familiar with the 24 Hours of Afton, it's a bit quirky by nature. First of all, it takes a very special team of riders to throw themselves at a racecourse for 24 consecutive hours. Some teams are more special than others.

And if doing the full Monty all by your lonesome is your idea of fun, you're either clinically insane or Tinker Juarez. In either case, you'll fit right in.

Basically, The 24 Hours of Afton is a race that is stuck in time. A time when racing was fun, racers were friendly, and people thought bike racing was a cool hobby, not a job. The race is not about the prizes and never will be.

As mentioned earlier, MORC is helping put on the Spring Cup this year, and once again, we need your help to pull off this event.

Help is needed on Friday evening stuffing racer packets, and on the day of the event helping with last minute set-up and racer registration. If you're looking for a way to lend a hand to MORC beyond trail building sessions, or if you just want a behind-the-scenes look at mountain bike racing, this is your opportunity.

For more information on helping out with the Spring Cup, contact Scott Thayer via email at president@morcmtnb.org, or by phone at (612) 308-4056.

All of our prizes are donated by generous companies and people who love the race and cycling in general. Most are distributed in a random drawing. And no one has ever complained. But maybe that's just because they were too tired.

Still sound like fun? Thought so. You'll find everything you need to register at www.24hoursofafton.org.

In keeping with its quirky roots and philosophy, The 24 Hours of Afton is an all-volunteer event. As with most volunteer efforts we can always use additional support. Planning, organizing, lining up sponsors—you name it, we can use help with it.

If you'd like to help make a truly unique event all the more cool, we could use your help. Give me a call or shoot me an email. Especially if you know, work for or are someone whose company would be interested in sponsoring The 24 of A for 2005.

Steve Eberly
Habanero Bicycle Club
seberly@att.net
952-201-6294

UPDATE: TWO-WHEEL VIEW/TRIPS FOR KIDS TWIN CITIES

Rick McFerrin, Two Wheel View

Two Wheel View rolls into 2005 with young people leading the way. Our programs have expanded to the present scope and vision of young people leading environmental action on a local, regional and international scale.

Environmental education will be incorporated into every aspect of the program to foster awareness of environmental problems and issues, as well as to advance opportunities to improve the environmental well being of our community. It's not just about the bike anymore.

Thanks to the generous support of Janet Watson and the Frederick O. Watson Foundation, we now have office and a bike repair space for the year. Our office is at 2100 Stevens Avenue South in Minneapolis. Stop by to wrench on any of our 28 bikes and learn more about our summer rides and international mountain bike adventures.

Upcoming Adventures and Opportunities:

- > FREE Bike Trip to Maah Daah Hey with St. Paul Public School, May 16-22. We need at least two more adults to join us for the biking and camping trip. TWV will provide transportation and support for the trip. First come first serve for this great opportunity to ride the Maah Daah Hey trail and be a part of a unique experience for some St. Paul kids.
- > Bike northern Argentina July 12-26. Young people 14-19 years old invited to apply for this summer's international mountain bike adventure. Scholarships available.
- > Basic bike mechanic and ride leaders needed to get the bikes ready for the summer and help lead local rides. Internship position also available. Check out www.twowheelview.org for details.
- > Ready to help a kid get out of town? TWV and Bolder Options are in the planning stage of a Spring 2006 International Mountain Bike Adventure for adults. As with the MS 150 and other rides to support a particular cause, you can help support our program by joining us on a trip somewhere south of the equator. Sound like fun? Contact Rick McFerrin of Two Wheel View at (612) 874-1895 or rick.mcferrin@twowheelview.org for more information. Dates and location to be determined soon.

Join the ride. For more information on any of these opportunities, please contact Rick or Liz at (612) 874-1895 or via email at info@twowheelview.org.



THERE IS NO "FUN" IN "ENVIRONMENTALIST."

Charles Youel, MORC Board Member



Quick, what's a 16-letter word for "buzzkill?"

Lately, I've been getting the idea that initiates into all things green undergo some nefarious Clockwork-Orangish procedure by which they're stripped of the ability to experience joy.

Sure, you always hear granolaphiles talking about having spiritual experiences in nature. But you get the idea that it's the sort of spirituality that would've received the Spanish Inquisition's Good Soulkeeping Seal of Approval. Feel like smiling? Give yourself 100 papercuts on the tongue so you won't be likewise tempted again.

I find this especially disturbing because I'm one of them.

Just a few days ago, I was having what felt like a spirited post exchange with some fellow board members on the MORC site. The topic was a community meeting in northern Minnesota about ATV access to national forests. When I went back a day later to revisit the thread, I was horrified to find that I'd lapsed into exactly the same sort of hand-wringing, soul-sucking rhetoric that makes me want to string painfully earnest treehuggers up by their Birkenstocks.

I'm not saying that it's wrong to want to protect natural resources. I've been supporting Clean Water Action, MPIRG and a host of other environmental causes a lot longer than I've been paying MORC membership dues. I'm a card-carrying public radio member. No one who's heard me weigh in on anything vaguely political would mistake me for a neocon. And to be truthful, I believe that there are places that mountain bikes (and horses, ATVs, motorcycles and snowmobiles) probably shouldn't go.

What concerns me is that both environmentalism and mountain biking seem to be devolving into all-or-nothing propositions: if you're one, you can't be the other. And this is seriously bad news for both sides.

Perhaps it's just a reflection of the increasingly polarized political climate in this country: you're either red or blue, and anyone who tries to occupy the middle ground gets pummeled purple by both sides. Maybe it's just what we get for being the country founded by Puritans instead of convicts. My Aussie and Kiwi pals tell me you don't find this kind of polarization crap on the other side of world. But maybe it just manifests itself in different ways.

Anyway, I had a point, and I think it was this: Being a mountain biker doesn't mean that planet is mine to pillage by divine right. And being an environmentalist doesn't mean the only way to save the earth is to make it illegal to enjoy it. Call me naïve, but I think MORC is proof that "mountain biking environmentalist" isn't an oxymoron. We can protect the planet and ride it.

So when you've been waiting all winter to ride but the trail's still waterlogged, be an environmentalist and wait until it firms up. When you feel the tractor beam in the couch kick in on a sunny Saturday morning, be a mountain biker and go throw down on the trail. And when you see that post about the trail work session coming up at the trail you love to ride, be a mountain biking environmentalist and show up with both a shovel and a bike.

So that's my opinion. Give me yours: cyouel@mn.rr.com



PRESSREADY
CONNECTING THROUGH CREATION

Special thanks to MORC member Douglas Larsen and his company, PressReady, for helping us with printing and mailing the MORC Spring 2005 Newsletter.

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MORC MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNTS

Save a little coin on those spring upgrades



The following MORC sponsors generously offer in-store discounts to MORC members. To receive the discount, present your MORC membership card at time of purchase.

Erik's Bike Shop

Erik's Bike Shop will provide a 10% discount to current MORC members. This 10% discount is good toward the purchase of any non-sale, in-stock accessories, parts, and clothing for bicycling and snowboarding. Primary items such as snowboards, snowshoes, bikes, child trailers, skateboards, and repair service are not included.

Valley Bike & Ski

Valley Bike & Ski will provide a 15% discount to current MORC members. This discount is good toward the purchase of any non-sale, in-stock accessories, parts, and clothing for bicycling.

Penn Cycle

MORC Members with a current Membership Card will receive a 10% discount on regular priced Cycling Accessories and Clothing purchased from any Penn Cycle location. This offer is not valid on other items such as bikes, strollers or child trailers. Not valid with other offers or on previous purchases.

Bokoo Bikes

Bokoo Bikes will provide a 10% discount on regularly priced cycling parts, accessories and clothing to current MORC members presenting a valid MORC Membership Card. This offer is not valid on other items such as bikes, strollers or repair service. Not valid with any other offers or on previous purchases.



IMBA MINNESOTA UPDATE...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Those funds must come from the members of MORC and from anyone else who wants to more and better places to ride.

I would like to challenge you to contribute to MORC at a higher level than just basic membership. I believe I spend more on inner tubes and tires each year than what the basic membership in MORC costs. So I always try to contribute one level higher to MORC than I did in the previous year. There is a distinct difference between paying your membership and contributing additional funds to the organization that is a strong advocate for your sport!

Conclusion:

There are several other projects out there that although important are not as far along as the ones I mentioned earlier. They are: Belle Plaine trails, Roseville trails, Steeple Chase and some I just can't mention at this time. Thanks for yoursupport. The past four years have been awesome. We are proud of the support we IMBA reps have received from the mountain biking community.

THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

At the same time, current trails that are restricted due to wildlife and sensitive resource protection would not be open to mountain biking and only used seasonally. The proposed trail could be designated for off-season use as a snowshoe trail and winter hiking.

Conceptual ideas for this trail are being considered as part of the Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve's master plan update and will require approval by the Three Rivers Park District Board of Commissioners and the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission prior to development; however, these activities are scheduled within the next year and could be accomplished in sufficient time to pursue trail construction within the timeframe of the grant award. If offered, all grants applied for on behalf of or by the Park District are subject to Board approval.

MORC will continue to work with the Park District through the planning process in hopes that a better, more sustainable trail design could be developed in Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve.

IMBA RULES OF THE TRAIL

Read 'em and ride 'em



The way we ride today shapes mountain bike trail access tomorrow. Do your part to preserve and enhance our sport's access and image by observing the following rules of the trail, formulated by IMBA, the International Mountain Bicycling Association. These rules are recognized around the world as the standard code of conduct for mountain bikers. IMBA's mission is to promote mountain bicycling that is environmentally sound and socially responsible.

1. Ride On Open Trails Only.

Respect trail and road closures (ask if uncertain); avoid trespassing on private land; obtain permits or other authorization as may be required. Federal and state Wilderness areas are closed to cycling. The way you ride will influence trail management decisions and policies.

2. Leave No Trace.

Be sensitive to the dirt beneath you. Recognize different types of soils and trail construction; practice low-impact cycling. Wet and muddy trails are more vulnerable to damage. When the trailbed is soft, consider other riding options. This also means staying on existing trails and not creating new ones. Don't cut switchbacks. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you pack in.

3. Control Your Bicycle.

Inattention for even a second can cause problems. Obey all bicycle speed regulations and recommendations.

4. Always Yield Trail.

Let your fellow trail users know you're coming. A friendly greeting or bell is considerate and works well; don't startle others. Show your respect when passing by slowing to a walking pace or even stopping. Anticipate other trail users around corners or in blind spots. Yielding means slow down, establish communication, be prepared to stop if necessary and pass safely.

5. Never Scare Animals.

All animals are startled by an unannounced approach, a sudden movement, or a loud noise. This can be dangerous for you, others, and the animals. Give animals extra room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses use special care and follow directions from the horseback riders (ask if uncertain). Running cattle and disturbing wildlife is a serious offense. Leave gates as you found them, or as marked.

6. Plan Ahead.

Know your equipment, your ability, and the area in which you are riding -- and prepare accordingly. Be self-sufficient at all times, keep your equipment in good repair, and carry necessary supplies for changes in weather or other conditions. A well-executed trip is a satisfaction to you and not a burden to others. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

Keep trails open by setting a good example of environmentally sound and socially responsible off-road cycling.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

Local bike shops and other companies we love



MORC appreciates the generous donations of these sponsors, who help support our ongoing efforts to protect and expand trail access for off-road cyclists in Minnesota.

Go to <http://www.morcmtb.org/morcpages/sponsors.htm> for more information on sponsorship opportunities.

