



The Squeaky Wheel

March 2002

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

Volume XI, Number 3

From the Chair

Regional Bikeway Master Plan Needed

By Lea Brooks

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has committed to develop a regional bikeway master plan, an effort that is sorely needed to close existing gaps and improve regional connections between jurisdictions.

This exciting news was announced to members of SACOG's Bicycle and Pedestrian Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Subcommittee on Feb. 27 by Nancy

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spending for the next 23 years in Sacramento, El Dorado, Placer, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties and 18 cities.

SABA and the committee have criticized the draft plan for earmarking only 2 percent of funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects. The subcommittee's letter specifically requests that funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements be increased to at least 7 percent of the total for transportation. The plan is scheduled to be adopted by the SACOG Board of Directors in June.

The subcommittee also requested that development of the bikeway master plan be

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Collaborative Hears What Stakeholders Want

By Walt Seifert

The Environmental Caucus presented its "issues and interests" at the February meeting of the Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative. SABA is a member of the Environmental Caucus.

The issues and interests are what each of the stakeholder groups wants and the reasons why. They become the basis for the planned negotiated agreement.

The Environmental Caucus presented the following issues:

Clean The Air: Achieve and maintain clean air quality, as measured by the federal and state ambient air quality standards, to protect public health.

Increase Bicycling: Increase the mode split for bicycle use to 20 percent regionwide by 2020, with emphasis on improved safety, access and facilities.

Increase Walking: Increase the mode split for pedestrian trips to 20 percent

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SABA Proud Parent

by Chad Muilenburg

Finally, SABA will have a mile of the American River Parkway to call its very own! SABA has adopted Mile 8 of the north side of the Parkway; you may know that as



the section of the bike path between the Guy West Bridge at CSUS and the Howe Avenue Bridge. We're very pleased, because this is a heavily-trafficked part of the bike path, and it should be a good opportunity to raise our profile in the community.

Of course, fame doesn't come without a price. As mile stewards, SABA has to commit to about 20 work-hours every three

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This space reserved for a mailing label with your name on it. Join us. A membership application is available at www.sacbike.org and most bike shops.

SABA Mission

To make cycling in the Sacramento area safe, convenient and pleasant. To have more people cycling for transportation so we have healthy air, healthy citizens and healthy communities.

SABA meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, usually at noon, but once every three months at 6 p.m. For more information call (916) 444-6600, or e-mail us at bikesaba@pacbell.net.

SABA's Folsom Chapter, the Folsom Area Bicycle Advocates (FABA), meets at 7 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. For more information call Chapter Chair Tony Powers at (916) 353-1745 or e-mail faba@tomatoweb.com.

The Squeaky Wheel

The newsletter is produced and distributed once each month. If you have an idea, a compliment, a tale of woe or article for the newsletter, contact Lea Brooks, 2013 Roaring Camp Drive, Gold River, 95670, via email at lea2skip@aol.com, or call evenings at (916) 635-9332 by the third Thursday of each month.

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regionwide by 2020, with emphasis on improved safety, access and facilities.

Increase Transit: Increase the mode split for transit to 20 percent regionwide by 2020, with emphasis on improved personal safety, accessibility and service.

Reduce Auto Dependency: Reduce the over-reliance on automobile use.

Transportation/Land Use Linkage: Recognize that land-use patterns and transportation systems are so closely linked that public decisions on these issues need to reinforce each other for efficient and effective use of both land and transportation resources.

Compact Urban Forms: Promote compact urban form by investing in the existing urban footprint. New growth and related investment needs to be focused in the existing urban and suburban footprint, emphasizing infill development, a mix of uses and higher densities in locations accessible to transit and related infrastructure.

Open Space: Permanently preserve open space

Development Fees: Development permit fees should reflect the actual costs of new development.

Improve Transportation Models: Improve decision-making tools for land use, transportation and air quality that better reflect induced travel demand, modal sensitivities, externalities and total costs and benefits.

Social Equity: Develop land use patterns and a transportation system that promote equal opportunity to share in the region's quality of life, regardless of income, age and physical capabilities.

Assurances: Provide assurances that land use and alternative mode transportation plans agreed to in the Collaborative will be implemented.

The complete statement, including guiding principles, is available on the SABA Web site under Advocacy, then News. The statement is still a draft and subject to change. If you have comments, please let us know. ☎

SABA/Community Calendar

March

26 SABA General Membership Meeting, noon

April

5-7 SABA table, City Bicycle Works (K Street), SuperSale

11 SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party

18 SACOG Board adopts draft MTP, 9:00 a.m., 3000 S Street

18 FABA meeting, 7 p.m.

20 Earth Day, CSUS

20 Trail Clean-up, SABA mile 8, American River Parkway

23 SABA General Membership meeting, evening potluck

SABA General Membership Meeting

SABA General Membership Meeting Tuesday, March 26, noon. American Lung Association, 909 12th Street Sacramento.

11:45 I. Pre-meeting mingle, chat and eat.

12:00 II. Introductions (Lea Brooks).

12:05 III. Executive Director's Report (Walt Seifert).

12:20 IV. Central City Streets Project Status Report (Walt, Chris Morfas and/or Doug Thompson).

12:35 V. American River Parkway issues (Lea).

12:45 VI. Other business and announcements.

1:05 VII. Adjourn.

SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended the following meetings:

- Sacramento Transportation and Air Quality Collaborative caucus and plenary sessions
- SACOG Bike/Pedestrian MTP Subcommittee
- SACOG Regional Planning Partnership, Area 1 Neighborhood Advisory Group.

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- the city of Sacramento on the Sump 31 project (next to Hornet Crossing)
- the SACOG Board and Transportation Roundtable on the MTP.

Testimony

- SABA testified to the SACOG board on the MTP. ☎

Master Plan, from page 1

specifically included in the MTP. The bikeway plan should establish criteria for jurisdictions seeking funding for regional projects from SACOG based on the California Department of Transportation's Deputy Directive 64, which requires that the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians and individuals with disabilities be considered in all projects.

The American River Parkway bike trail is a sterling example of a regional facility. Stretching 32 miles from Discovery Park in downtown Sacramento to Beals Point in Placer County, the entire trail or sections of it can be used by cyclists and pedestrians traveling from one jurisdiction to the next. The bike trail is convenient, safe and pleasant.

The dire need for better links for bicyclists between jurisdictions is illustrated by Sacramento and El Dorado counties, where existing access can be best described as a nightmare. Bicyclists currently have two choices, both of which are dangerous and unacceptable, especially during commute hours.

Improving this access will require cooperation among Sacramento and El Dorado counties and the city of Folsom.

I'll describe the first choice from the perspective of an eastbound cyclist in Folsom along the Highway 50 corridor. The most popular route is Iron Point Road. Because eastbound access to Old Placerville Road from southbound East Bidwell has been blocked by the city of Folsom, cyclists must cross East Bidwell at Iron Point, ride the wrong way against multiple lanes of traffic that include a freeway offramp to turn left on Old Placerville Road, which is two lanes with no shoulder. From Old Placerville Road, cyclists turn east on White Rock Road toward El Dorado Hills. White Rock Road is two lanes with no shoulder and fast, heavy traffic avoiding Highway 50. This access is downright dangerous during commute hours and merely intimidating during non-peak hours. El Dorado County recently repaved White Rock Road between the county line and El Dorado Hills Boulevard and unfortunately did not add a shoulder.

Although shocking, bicyclists have no access between El Dorado Hills and Cameron Park along Highway 50 (they are prohibited from the freeway) and are forced to ride several miles east to Green Valley Road, which has inconsistent bike facilities.

The second access between Sacramento and El Dorado counties is Green Valley Road, which safely accommodates bicyclists to the Folsom city limits. At the El Dorado County line, conditions for cyclists dramatically deteriorate. For years, the shoulder has been inconsistent, in extremely poor condition and poorly maintained. Automobile traffic volume and speed have increased dramatically. The stretch roughly between the county line and Francisco Boulevard is currently being widened. It's unclear what kind of bicycle facilities the widened road will provide. Green Valley Road east of Francisco has inconsistent facilities for bicyclists.

Another concern of the subcommittee is the quality of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This issue is best illustrated by the tragic death of pedestrian Ralph Brady at the intersection of Sunrise Boulevard and Greenback Lane on Feb. 22. Brady was killed by a car that drove up on the sidewalk as he walked toward this intersection to catch a bus. The driver, 18-year-old Zachary Dickens, was arrested on suspicion of vehicular manslaughter and driving under the influence of a controlled substance.

An article in the Sacramento Bee quoted Brady's friend as saying Brady hated the traffic-clogged intersection. The lesson here for transportation planners and decision-makers is that bicycle and pedestrian facilities on heavily traveled, multiple lane roadways are intimidating. Yes, it's better to have sidewalks and bike lanes on these mammoth suburban roadways, but there is nothing pleasant about cycling or walking along them.

As Sacramento County supervisors consider heavy pressure by developers and other business interests to widen Hazel Avenue to six lanes, I hope they recognize that many bicyclists and pedestrians will use four-lane roads, but avoid six and more lanes because they are intimidating, unpleasant and dangerous.

In other news, congratulations to the city of Davis for the latest edition to its fabulous bikeway system: a bike and pedestrian crossing over Interstate 80 that was officially dedicated March 1. The \$3.5 million overcrossing connects an existing bicycle path in Mace Ranch to the south Davis Willow Creek neighborhood. The project was named the Dave Pelz Bicycle and Pedestrian Overcrossing after the city's former public works director who retired in 1999.

I hope that the city of Davis' longtime support for bicyclists and pedestrians somehow lights a spark in the Sacramento region. In Sacramento County, work proceeds on freeway interchanges for motor vehicles along Highway 80 at Greenback and Madison, which will make crossing these intersections by bicyclists and pedestrians even more dangerous than they already are. In the meantime, a bicycle-pedestrian overcrossing in the Madison Avenue area is on the back burner. Although Sacramento County supervisors have earmarked \$500,000 to study the feasibility of bicycle-pedestrian overcrossings along the Highway 80 corridor between Cal Expo and the county line, it's unclear when the money will actually be available. ☹

Bicyclists currently have two choices, both of which are dangerous and unacceptable, especially during commute hours.

**SABA members Pizza Party —
Pizza, Soda and doin' stuff**

The next SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, April 11 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the SABA Hemispheric HQ, 909 12th St. We'll be writing letters, stuffing envelopes, and talking bike stuff!



Opinion Excellence vs. Adequacy

By Walt Seifert

Cyclists have been at the bottom of the transportation totem pole for a long time. As a result, many of us, including me, have sometimes been inclined to accept virtually anything in the way of projects and programs if they make things better for cyclists. After all, isn't something better than nothing? Isn't simple acknowledgment better than being treated as second-class citizens?

I've come to the conclusion that adequate isn't good enough. We should be striving for excellence. It's true that dollars for transportation are always scarce and that there are competing interests and different views about what constitutes excellence. But that doesn't mean cyclists should settle for adequate.

Cyclists are much more affected by their surrounding environment than drivers. What others feel are inconsequential problems can have a big impact on cyclists. What others deem "adequate" frequently just doesn't work.

What happens when we settle for adequate? We get bike lanes on roads with six lanes of speeding cars and short signal times - conditions that are not just intimidating, but frighteningly dangerous. Such conditions may be considered "adequate," but most people absolutely fear riding bikes on these multiple-lane roadways. We get pavement that is bumpy, lumpy, pot-holed and strewn with broken glass, nails, staples and the 1,001 other things that cause irritating flats. These conditions may be adequate, but they frustrate novice and veteran cyclists alike and convince too many of them it's not worth the hassle. We get trips that are longer, roundabout, time-consuming and inconvenient because of barriers. Conditions are considered adequate because you can get there eventually by bike, but most people don't bother.

We get a world in which transit-riding employees have fares subsidized. Car drivers have thousands of dollars in parking costs subsidized. Meanwhile, the same cyclists who save their employers healthcare costs while keeping the environment clean get a mangled bike rack by the dumpster and, if they're lucky, a pat on the back.

We get adequate transportation funding - enough to keep a small number of people cycling, but the money is a pittance compared to the funding other forms of transportation receive. The funding amounts to chump change, not nearly enough to fulfill the glowing promises in plans to make cycling a real transportation choice.

Cyclists need, and deserve, excellence. We don't want our sports teams, our kids, or even our desserts to be merely adequate. Why should we accept adequate for the way we get around? ☼

SABA Volunteer Service Opportunities

By Ken Murray

In addition to the ongoing service opportunities on the SABA Web site, www.sacbike.org, volunteers who may want to work on an occasional basis are needed for two other events. The first is to staff a shift at the SABA table for the City Bicycle Works SuperSale (25th and K streets) and the other is to volunteer for Bike to Work Day in Sacramento.

Volunteers are needed for any three-hour shift on any day of the City Bicycle Works SuperSale on: Friday, April 5: noon to 7 p.m. Saturday, April 6: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, April 7: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Bike to Work Day is a one-day event on Thursday, May 16.

We will need volunteers for:

- Setup: 11 a.m. to noon Event
- Operations: noon to 1 p.m.
- Cleanup: 12:45 to 1:30 p.m.

You can reach me at home at (916) 451-1351 or via e-mail at k.murray@attbi.com regarding SABA Web site opportunities or the above events. ☼

SABA Volunteer Recognition

By Ken Murray

SABA would like to recognize its outstanding members for their contributions for several years of service to help our organization with some of its key and organizational development activities. Please join us at SABA's next evening potluck meeting on Tuesday, April 23 to shine the spotlight on these members for outstanding service:

Special award: Stu Gluckman, for faithful service as Squeaky Wheel editor for several years.

Marie Schelling, Dennis King and Dwight Oda, for organizing and being stalwart participants at the SABA monthly work and pizza parties. Getting the newsletter out, doing direct mail to increase membership and eating pizza without complaint.

Greg Rogalski, for setting up and greatly expanding the SABA Web site, including the innovative hazard reporting system.

Tony Powers, for organizing the Folsom Chapter and devoting attention and time to bike issues in Folsom. ☼



Roseville Kicks Off Creek Week April 6

In recognition of Creek Week, the city of Roseville and the Dry Creek Conservancy are co-sponsoring a bike-related event on Saturday, April 6 to showcase Miners Ravine Trail in northeast Roseville. The trail has recently been extended by one mile.

The celebration includes a nature walk-bike ride along Miners Ravine Trail from 9 a.m. to noon. Enjoy nature and learn about Miners Ravine ecology and how creeks and natural systems can be preserved and protected. The city's Transportation Division will have an exhibit at the event promoting the use of alternative transportation, including bicycling, and free bike reflectors will be distributed. Other exhibits will feature plant identification, birding, Native American culture, fly-tying and water quality testing.

The Miners Ravine trailhead is at the north end of the United Artists Theatre parking lot, 520 N. Sunrise Avenue in Roseville. For more information call Lisa Ferrari in Roseville at (916) 774-5365. ☼

Celebrate Earth Day 2002 on April 20

The theme of Earth Day this year is "Small Steps Along A Journey." SABA members, of course, generally make every day Earth Day by making "Small Revolutions Along a Journey."

For this special event, a mellow good time and to teach the children well, stop by Saturday, April 20, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the Main Quad at California State University, Sacramento. There will be crafts, environmental and organic food carts, children's activities, and stage and interactive displays. Free valet bike parking will be available. ☼



Guest Column

by Ed Cox

In February, I completed my second year working for the city as the Alternative Modes Coordinator. Since starting, I have accomplished a number of bikeway milestones. While not all are as high profile as the opening of Hornet Crossing at CSUS, they are nonetheless important. Sometimes just being at the right place at the right time and asking what can be done for bicyclists has made getting bike-related improvements a simple matter.

Most recently, we added new bike lanes on Folsom Boulevard between 48th and 59th Streets. Previously, there were four travel lanes with on-street parking. Working with the traffic engineers, I helped establish converting the four lanes to one lane each way with a center lane and bike lanes.

The city was recently awarded a grant to build a bike trail in the southern portion. It will connect to an existing trail at North Laguna Creek Park between Center Parkway and Bruceville Road. When built, this trail will provide access from six cul-de-sacs in an existing neighborhood.

Soon this year, we will be working on getting bike lanes on Franklin Boulevard between Fruitridge Road and the southern city limits. Work on re-stripping Alhambra Boulevard between J and L Streets is also planned this year, including a unique bike left turn lane at Granada.

In April, Sutter's Landing Park is scheduled to open. A bike trail there will open up access to the American River from midtown near 28th and C Streets. In time this park will be one of the stops for the future Two Rivers Bike Trail that will run along the south bank of the American River to the confluence with the Sacramento River.

The city is updating the bikeway master plan in developing areas. This is an important step, since the planned bikeways, in areas that have been open fields all these years, don't come close to the emerging land use patterns. It's an opportunity to do things right the first time in areas like North Natomas and south Sacramento. As a result, these communities will have a good system of bikeways built-in at the outset.

In the near future, I am seeking funding for the Ninos Parkway bike trail in South Natomas, which would run under the WAPA transmission lines. I am also seeking funding for converting the R Street railroad bridge that would provide a connection for bikes and pedestrians from R Street to the waterfront. ☼

Ed Cox is the city of Sacramento's Alternative Modes Coordinator.

Welcome new members!

Randy Beckwith
Rebecca Green
Jane Inouye
Julie Williams



American River Parkway Safety Coalition Meeting

By Skip Amerine

The American River Parkway Safety Coalition is offering a \$1,000 reward for the arrest and conviction of the individual or individuals responsible for the murder of a homeless man and the wounding of another Feb. 15 on the American River Parkway. The murder victim has been identified as Ken Massie. The injured man, Victor Mullin, was taken to UC Davis Medical Center in critical condition, but is expected to recover.

The Coalition voted to offer the reward during its Feb. 27 meeting.

Massie was shot and killed in his sleeping bag at approximately 3 a.m. Feb. 15. The crime scene is just upstream of Del Paso Boulevard on top of the levee under Highway 160. A bicyclist heard gunshots and calls for help and waved down a CHP officer in the downtown area who alerted Sacramento police. Mullin rode to a city fire station at "C" Street and was transported to the hospital. The only suspect information that we have is a male wearing a black trench coat. The suspect was last seen running northbound from the scene. Any further updates from city police on the suspect will be passed along to you.

The American River Parkway Safety Coalition is comprised of SABA, Save the American River Association (SARA), Sacramento Wheelmen, River City Paddlers, Buffalo Chips Running Club, Lake Natoma Community Task Force and any legitimate recreational organization or business which, or individual who, promotes, aids or supports activities compatible with recreational activities within the American River Parkway. The Coalition is concerned with safety of recreational Parkway users on the bicycle trails, waterways and adjacent land within the jurisdiction of Sacramento County Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space and the Folsom Lake State Recreational Area from Discovery Park to Granite Bay.

The Coalition was formed in part to provide and share information among law enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction within the American River Parkway and American River from Discovery Park to Granite Bay, including some 32 miles of bike trail and river. The shared law enforcement information is passed along to the member groups of the coalition. Telephone numbers of law enforcement agencies and their respective jurisdictions:

County Park Rangers (Discovery Park to Hazel Avenue): 875-6672 .

State Park Rangers (Hazel Avenue East to Lake Folsom/ Granite Bay): Emergencies only 358-1310 or 911; non-emergencies 358-1300; general information 988-0205.

Sacramento County Sheriff's Department: Emergencies only 911; non-emergencies 874-5115 (For all community-based offices. A menu allows a caller to select one of eight community-based offices.)

Sacramento City Police Department: Emergencies only 911; Non-emergencies 264-5471. ☎



Parent, from page 1

months in cleanup and parkway enhancement efforts on our adopted mile. We'll need as many people as possible to come out for each of our four annual cleanup days to make this possible.

Our first opportunity to earn our place on the milepost will come on Saturday, April 20 (Earth Day) at 10:00 a.m., at the Mile 8 milepost on the bike path on the north side of the river. Mark your calendars and come on down!

Contact me at cmuilenburg@graycary.com or via telephone at 930-3255 if you're interested. Feel free to just show up as well. ☎



Help Needed to Save Corridor

By Bob Smart

Apparently the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the city of Placerville are going to continue to pursue paving over a critical segment of a bicycle/pedestrian trail corridor stretching from the American River Parkway bike trail to the town of Camino and beyond. Regional support from bicycle groups is needed.

More than 200 comments from individuals/clubs/committees asking Caltrans and Placerville not to pave over the old Southern Pacific right of way through Placerville are apparently going to be ignored. Jointly, Caltrans and Placerville have decided to establish a third eastbound lane for Highway 50 as it passes through the city. This action will sever a critical link in a significant regional bike trail extending from Sacramento to Camino and eventually to Lake Tahoe.

Bicyclists/pedestrians in the Placerville area have found the financing to launch a lawsuit to force Caltrans and the city to

Caltrans purchased the right of way years before a joint powers authority acquired the remainder of the corridor. The authority is made up of Sacramento and El Dorado counties, the city of Folsom and the Sacramento Regional Transit District. This particular section was identified in the 1989 Placerville General Plan and the 1997 El Dorado County Bicycle Master Plan as being a future bike trail through Placerville. The trail, known as the El Dorado Trail, is part of the National Pony Express Trail. Portions of the trail have been designated as a New Millennium Trail, and it has regional and national importance.

Caltrans currently is planning to file its Initial Study/Environmental Assessment for Highway 50 Operational Improvements at the State Clearinghouse, which forces legal action within 30 days or the project proceeds as planned. The document does not mention that to the east and west of Placerville

More than 200 comments from individuals/clubs/committees ... are apparently going to be ignored.

are publicly acquired easements along old railroad alignments. It ignores the existence

64, follow the goals and policies of the Placerville General Plan, adhere to the 1997 El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan and comply with California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)/National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) requirements. What is needed now is for cycling/pedestrian groups to be prepared to sign on the suit as friends of the appellants to ensure the court recognizes the regional interest in a project that is solely within the city limits of Placerville. A "win" in Placerville could result in major changes in how cyclists/pedestrians are viewed.

If you have ever dreamed of riding from San Francisco or Sacramento over the Sierra Nevada, you will be adversely affected by the project. Caltrans proposes to pave one-half mile of the old Southern Pacific right of way, effectively cutting the heart out of a 63-mile multimodal corridor. Users of the corridor will be forced to use Main Street through Placerville, which has no bike lanes and is currently operating at Level of Service "F."

are publicly acquired easements along old railroad alignments. It ignores the existence of the 1997 El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan. Token efforts were made to address Caltrans DD-64 and the Placerville General Plan was selectively reviewed, with many of the trail friendly goals and policies ignored. Most trail users would disagree with Caltrans conclusion that "the proposed project would not result in cumulative impacts."

The Caltrans project does not remove any of the stoplights on Highway 50 and will only provide short-term eastbound traffic relief (three to seven years).

We hope SABA will support the bicyclists/pedestrians in Placerville by signing on the lawsuit. The suit will not cost anything, but your support could be critical in establishing the regional impact of the project. If you have any questions, please call Bob Smart at (530) 622-6340. ☎



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| • City Bicycle Works | • Judith Lamare, PHD | • Sacramento Air Quality Management District | • & Parking Services |

Check SABA on the Web: www.sacbike.org

Letters to the Editor

Two-way conversion

I'm a member of SABA, and I'm usually in support of the positions that SABA takes.

I'm very puzzled by the fact that SABA is supporting the conversion of downtown streets from one-way to two-way. Here's why:

1. I can bicycle just fine on the one-way, three-lane streets. I just assert my position in an outside lane and go. With the progressively timed traffic signals, I can generally travel a good dozen or more blocks with green lights. It's also easier to make left turns from one-way streets, because you have more time to get into the left lane. On K Street, on the other hand, even with its nice bike lanes, I progress much more slowly. It's almost impossible to get green lights on both 19th and 21st, especially with the killer railroad tracks in between.

2. Sacramento's one-way, three-lane streets strike me as exceptionally efficient ways to move traffic. Reducing traffic lanes from three to two will reduce the carrying capacity of those streets by far more than one-third, given the delays caused by turning vehicles and the inability to have progressively timed signals. That will cause more congestion for bicycles, buses, and cars.

3. Increased congestion and the inability to have progressively timed traffic signals will undoubtedly cause a significant increase in exhaust emissions in the city. We already have some of the worst air in the country. This will affect Sacramento and areas to the east, up into the foothills. More children will grow up with asthma, and more elderly will suffer respiratory distress. It will be less healthy to bicycle!

If we want to improve the bicycle-friendliness of the central city, then we should support more bike facilities, including bike lanes where appropriate, bike lockers and racks, showers, and other accommodations. But we shouldn't figure that we're going to reduce auto traffic significantly by making it harder to drive.

I'm sure SABA has some good reasons for supporting this proposal, but I haven't read them yet in "The Squeaky Wheel." I'm wondering if my concerns have been considered.

Joe Ossmann

Editor's note: Chris Morfas' June 2001 article on two-way conversion was a complete discussion on this issue. SABA favors restoration of two-way streets because, among other reasons, they will decrease traffic speeds, eliminate crossing three lanes of traffic to make left turns and curb the inducement to wrong-way riding.

We want to hear from you! Letters may be edited for length or clarity.

Send to:

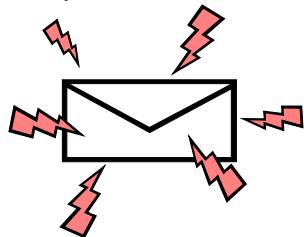
SABA

P.O. Box 1295

Sacramento, CA 95812-1295

or preferably email it to:

bikesaba@pacbell.net



Mountain biking in American River Parkway

As long-time SABA members, we've been enthusiastic about SABA's efforts to make this area more bicycle friendly. However, recent comments from SABA members have raised concerns about just how bicycle friendly SABA really is. Some of you may know that Jim & I have not only been bike commuters for over 10 years we've been active in the mountain bike community, having helped form FATRAC, and now are the State Reps for IMBA. The soon-to-be-updated management plan for the American River Parkway will be looking at many things – among them, mountain bike access on single track in the parkway.

Certain SABA members are adamantly opposed to mountain bicycling in the Parkway. Currently, mountain bicyclists are not allowed off pavement, thus, we understand why folks would care that bicyclists ride the paved path only, and not the trails. But that does not mean SABA should oppose opportunities for enhanced trail riding in the future.

More children (future SABA members) and their parents (possible SABA members) buy and ride mountain bikes, than road bikes. Jim and I believe we shouldn't have to re-visit the Ann Seeley's powerful PowerPoint presentation, which shows the ever-growing class of obese children across this country. The California Bicycle Coalition receives DHS grant funding and spends dollars on efforts to educate folks on the benefits of bicycling, not only on-road, but on trails.

With the major concerns about getting people out of doors, bicycle organizations like SABA are working across the country to develop bike friendly scenarios in their neighborhoods. Currently, mountain bicyclists in Sacramento must drive to trailheads at Folsom Lake and Auburn to ride trails. For children, this means parents must drive them in pick-up trucks or large vehicles that can transport bikes. In the spirit of getting children outdoors and reducing vehicle trips, we would certainly hope SABA would support changes in the management plan of the American River Parkway to allow these SABA members and potential members to ride trails within their Sacramento neighborhoods.

It has been that suggested we erode trails and disrupt wild life. However, studies show mountain biking is like hiking on foot regarding such impacts. Some concerns involve the problem of mountain bikers swinging quickly onto the paved trail without looking both ways. Proper trail design and education can solve this.

Other SABA members have expressed concerns about safety on the bikeway. It was offered that increasing users and having more of a presence in the Parkway, would be a low cost way to enhance safety.

Finally, SABA may feel its mission is to address commuter needs only. If that's the case, there are mountain bikers who live along the parkway who would love to commute to work or run errands on trails.

Cathy Haagen-Smit, Jim Haagen-Smit

Editor's note: SABA has taken no position on mountain biking in the parkway.