



The Squeaky Wheel

Issue No. 53

Newsletter of the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates

August 2007

From the President Good News for Cyclists

By Lea Brooks

The long-awaited reopening of a half-mile section of the American River Parkway bike trail that was damaged during the spectacular March 15 trestle fire and the first phase of the transformation of 19th and 21st streets from bicycle nightmare to bicycle friendly (see related stories to right and on page 6) are among a number of projects that will improve cycling in the Sacramento area.

Other projects include resurfacing and consistent Class II bike lane striping on several stretches of Sacramento County roads, including:

- Bradshaw Road.
- Coloma Road between Sunrise Boulevard and Gold Meadow Way.
- Fair Oaks Boulevard from Munroe Street to Watt Avenue.
- Fair Oaks Boulevard from Sunset Avenue to Madison Avenue.
- Fair Oaks Boulevard from San Juan Avenue to Sunrise Boulevard.

Work may get under way on some of these projects this year, but the contractor has until next summer to complete them, according to Dan Klinker, the county's bicycle-pedestrian coordinator.

Environmental analysis is under way of the first phase of the Sacramento County Regional Parks' Dry Creek Parkway, which includes a three-mile Class I paved trail and parallel equestrian trail. The project is scheduled to be constructed next year.

President, page 3

ARP Bike Trail Back in Business

Four months after the trestle fire closed the American River Parkway bike trail, the trail reopened. The trail was damaged extensively during trestle reconstruction.



The American River Parkway bike trail is finally repaired! Photo by Lea Brooks

While the trestle was rebuilt in record-breaking time, fixing the trail took longer. It had to be preceded by soil remediation and getting permits. Permits were waived during the expedited trestle work.

Also replaced was the decomposed granite shoulder on both sides of the trail, which also has an improved alignment.⊗

Caltrans Sued on Highway Expansion Project

On July 25 the Environmental Council of Sacramento (ECOS) and Neighbors Advocating Sustainable Transportation (NAST) jointly challenged the adequacy of the Environmental Impact Report prepared by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on a major freeway expansion project.

Caltrans has proposed adding "carpool" lanes to Highway 50 from Sunrise Boulevard to Watt Avenue. The state agency has also proposed future continuation of the new lanes into downtown Sacramento. While recognizing that carpools are an important part of a sound transportation policy, ECOS and NAST question whether the proposed additional lanes will actually encourage more carpooling. The organizations note that there is evidence that expanding freeways increases the total number of vehicle miles traveled along the corridor and encourages sprawl, thereby exacerbating the region's traffic and air quality woes.

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that state agencies identify adverse environmental impacts of most projects they propose to undertake and explore ways of lessening those impacts. As mandated under CEQA, Caltrans prepared an Environmental Impact Report for its Highway 50 expansion project. However, the

Caltrans Suit, page 3

SABA Mission

*SABA represents bicyclists.
Our aim is more and safer trips by bike.*

SABA Vision

*Bicycling for everyday transportation is common
because it is safe, convenient and desirable.*

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

The Squeaky Wheel

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SABActions

Meetings

SABA members attended these meetings:

- Complete Streets ad hoc committee
- SACOG Bike/Ped Advisory Committee
- North Watt Corridor Plan charette
- 65th Street light rail station area bicycle and pedestrian plans
- Local Government Commission parking workshop
- Green waste task force
- Breathe California Policy Committee

Letters

SABA sent letters to:

- Sen. Dave Cox requesting co-sponsorship of AB 163 and support for Complete Streets bill.
- Sen. Tom Torlakson asking for support of AB 163
- City of Roseville on draft Bicycle Master Plan
- Adventure Cycling Association with comments on bike facilities at airports

Testimony

- To California Senate Governmental Organization Committee on AB 163
- To Sacramento City Council on north area Panhandle annexation.

Other Actions

- Provided valet bike parking at four Friday Night Concerts
- Interviews by *Sacramento News & Review*, *The Sacramento Bee* and writer Tim Holt and Active Living by Design study
- Draft issues and interests statements on trail signage and crossings

In 1865, pedals were applied directly to the front wheel of a two-wheeled riding machine known as the velocipede ("fast foot"). They also became a fad, and indoor riding academies, similar to roller rinks, could be found in large cities.

Source: Pedaling History Bicycle Museum, Rochester, NY

SABA Pizza Party — Pizza, Soda and Doin' Stuff

The monthly SABA Volunteer Work and Pizza Party will be Thursday, September 13 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at SABA Territorial HQ, 909 12th Street.

Like the Northwest Mounted, SABA always hunts down the best for cyclists.



President, from page 1

And the city of Sacramento took a welcome step toward fixing a major barrier to safe bicycling on H Street: the undercrossing of the railroad tracks between 57th Street and Carlson Drive. The city has hired a consultant to analyze traffic to determine the consequences of dropping one of two west-bound lanes for motor vehicles through the undercrossing so bike lanes can be added. The consultant's report is expected this fall, according to city bicycle-pedestrian coordinator Ed Cox.

In addition to the construction projects, bicycle enthusiasts should be delighted about the recent announcement that Sacramento will again host the finish of the second stage of the eight-day Amgen Tour of California bike race. Although the exact route for the Santa Rosa-to-Sacramento leg on Feb. 19 has not yet been finalized according to *The Sacramento Bee*, it most likely will include a crossing of the Tower Bridge and finish near the State Capitol.

Last year, thousands of fans lined up around the Capitol for a glimpse of some of the world's most famous bicycle racers, including overall winner Levi Leipheimer of Santa Rosa. Levi's popularity is soaring with his recent third-place finish in the Tour de France.

Last year, SABA provided free valet bike parking and staffed a booth at the tour's Lifestyle Festival. We will work with tour organizers for a more visible parking area in 2008. We parked more than 100 bicycles despite little publicity and an inconvenient location in the Convention Center. ☼

Caltrans Suit, from page 1

agency claimed that the project would result in a 20 percent to 25 percent increase in the number of vehicles that could travel on the freeway.

ECOS and NAST, along with the city of Sacramento and SABA, requested more in-depth analysis of potential impacts on air quality, global warming and neighborhood quality of life when Caltrans initially released the draft version of the report. Caltrans declined to conduct the more thorough investigation requested by the groups.

The complaint filed by ECOS and NAST cites numerous deficiencies in Caltrans' environmental impact analysis. Among these deficiencies is the failure of Caltrans to estimate the impacts of increased traffic volumes and total vehicle miles traveled that would result from adding lanes to Highway 50.

"Sacramento's elected officials, planners and the public at large need an honest and accurate assessment of the environmental costs of expanding freeways," commented Eric Davis, co-chair of the Transportation Committee for ECOS. "We also need an evaluation of the relative benefits of road expansion compared with light rail and other transportation alternatives. By fudging its environmental impact analysis, Caltrans is denying the public and the region's policy-makers the information they need to make good transportation planning decisions."

NAST representative Karen Jacques said, "Caltrans needs to be upfront about the impacts of freeway expansion on our environment—worse air quality, increased sprawl, increased traffic, and a reduction in quality of life for people in greater Sacramento. CEQA requires full disclosure of these impacts, and Caltrans has failed to make that disclosure."

Primary Modes of Travel

By William Appleby

After learning to crawl, infants learn to walk. Walking is a life-long primary skill. Walking and running have been the primary modes of travel since the beginning of the human race.

During childhood, most children learn to ride a bicycle. This too is a life-long primary skill.

Some, but not all, adults earn the privilege and bear the cost of operating a motor vehicle. This is an alternative mode of travel to walking and cycling. Automobiles are an alternate mode of travel to walking long distances, although many times those distances could be traveled by the primary mode of cycling.

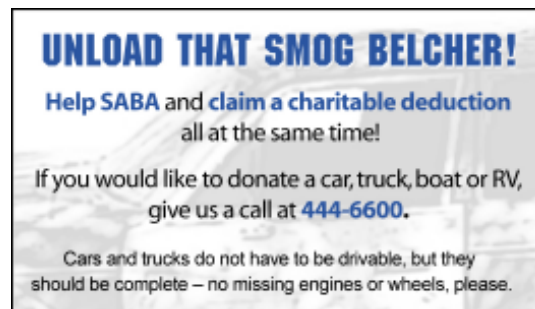
Holders of drivers' licenses operate motor vehicles only a small proportion of their day. Mostly they use the primary mode of walking.

Worldwide, only a small number, perhaps 5 percent or 6 percent, of people own and operate the motor vehicles which impose suffering and harm upon the other 90-plus percent of the world's population. That suffering and harm comes through crash trauma and death, economic injustice, resource-caused war and pollution to the life support systems of this planet, including the altering of the global climate.

It is incorrect and confusing to label walking and cycling as alternates. They are clearly and logically the primary modes. It is motorcar travel that is the alternate.

The question now becomes, why does the overwhelming percentage of transportation planning and funding go to the alternate mode, while the proponents of the primary modes struggle to get accommodation in planning and more than a token share of funds?

Some distant day our descendants will walk past the rusting hunks of the last defunct, decomposing automobiles and wonder just what the heck we were thinking! ☼



ECOS is a coalition of individuals and environmental and civic organizations that supports land use and transportation planning that makes more efficient use of land, preserves open space and reduces pollution of air, water and land. NAST is an association of neighborhood advocates and community organizations supporting cheaper, cleaner, and more efficient transportation that allows all residents of the region to travel freely and easily, far into the future, wherever they want to go. SABA is a member of both ECOS and NAST.

For more information on the objectives of ECOS and NAST we encourage you to visit: <http://ecosair.blogspot.com/> or <http://nastsacramento.blogspot.com/> ☼

Wrap-up of Sacramento Bicycle Kitchen's First Year

By Jeffery Rosenhall

Sacramento's all-volunteer bike collective has been open a year now and as an organization the Bicycle Kitchen accomplished things we are pretty proud of (and you should be too). Located at 36th and Broadway, the Sacramento Bicycle Kitchen helps bicyclists fix their own bikes, provides low-cost refurbished bikes for transportation and promotes bicycle safety.



Volunteer at work at Sacramento Bike Kitchen. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Bike Kitchen volunteers

Here's a brief run-down of what happened last year. First, we expanded our hours of operation to four shifts a week and managed to stay open with regularity. We have had a team of dedicated volunteers who staffed the shop through the dead of winter—simply amazing! We have volunteers who drop in for one shift a month and others who show up every week. (By the way, we always need volunteers; it takes at least two to open). This year, volunteers tuned up and sold dozens of bikes in the \$40-\$70 range, providing low-cost transportation for Sacramento residents and putting forgotten bikes where they belong—back on the road. Volunteers taught dozens more Sacramento residents how to fix their own bikes—from flats to brake cable routing to bottom bracket rebuilds. And we participated in some great events, from neighborhood health fairs and street fairs to Earth Day celebrations. Our collaboration with Bike Safe Sacramento and Loaves and Fishes during the December light giveaway and bike tune-up day for the homeless was particularly memorable. Basic bike maintenance classes were held at the shop and at the Sacramento Foods Co-op. We hosted a cyclocross clinic with the help of John and Linda Elgart, a “Build Your Burning Man Bike” day and several free bike-in movie nights where cyclists rolled up with blankets and snacks to watch documentaries on bike messengers and cyclocross racing, as well as classics like *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*.

This next year we aim to maintain our level of customer service, continue helping others help themselves, and recondition more donated bikes and put them back under people. We'll produce more bike-themed T-shirts that promote bicycle transportation and the growing bike culture in our region: “We ARE traffic.” We will do more outreach and mobile events to bring

Canal Trail Crossing Gets Signal

The city of Rancho Cordova is installing a bicycle/pedestrian signal where the Folsom South Canal trail crosses Sunrise Boulevard. Although the trail appears closed, it is to remain open during construction.

The project includes the traffic signal, concrete work on the roadsides and median, and two new streetlights. The existing median fence will be removed. Push buttons for pedestrians and cyclists will be installed on both sides and in the median. The work, slated to be complete by this fall, will meet Americans for Disability Act (ADA) standards.

The Folsom South Canal trail at-grade crossings at both Sunrise and White Rock Road have long been problems for bicyclists. Plans for the Sunrise signal project have been in the works for some time. The project is funded with fees paid by AKT Development stemming from the Anatolia development.

The trail may be a little inconvenient to use during construction. Please exercise caution and have patience. When completed, this project will make crossing the busy six-lane boulevard safer and enhance the value of the Folsom South Canal trail. ☸



Construction is under way for a bicycle/pedestrian signal where the Folsom South Canal trail crosses Sunrise Boulevard. Photo by Lea Brooks

bike maintenance skills to the community and reduce the barriers that keep some from riding a bike. We also want more Sacramentans in the shop—it's YOUR shop. We plan to work with League Cycling Instructors and provide bike safety education for kids and adults. We will bring more bike lights to those who need them most. And we'll do it all with a smile, a greasy handshake and a few words of encouragement. Please take a moment to stop by the shop if you haven't already and come back if you've been. Visit our Web site for hours and other information at www.sacbikekitchen.org. ☸

A Pedaling Business

By Scott Yates

You know what they say: If you make your passion your business, you will never want again. If your passion is cycling, the pedicab business may be for you. But do not approach the opportunity on a whim because it can be an expensive and laborious endeavor.

Marc Christensen is the owner of Sacramento Valley Velocab, currently the only pedicab business operating in Sacramento. After selling a home in the Natomas area and moving to a residence downtown, Marc had some disposable income and a location ideal for a pedicab hub.

"I saw an article in the Christian Science Monitor about pedicabs operating in Europe," Marc said as he recounts the moment the pedicab idea surfaced. "I clipped the article to send to a friend of mine in Utah who is developing an electric vehicle. That is when I realized pedicabs could fill a need in Sacramento."



Sacramento Valley Velocab Driver Richard Reezes. Photo by Scott Yates

Sacramento has the makings for a successful pedicab venture: flat terrain, condensed urban environment, good weather and bad air. Pedicabs are powered by the legs of a cyclist and transport passengers from point A to point B. There are zero carbon emissions from a pedicab and the costs are reasonable.

Sacramento Valley Velocab operates three pedicabs in downtown and midtown, and charges by the block. The first block costs \$2 and each additional block is 50 cents. The price is agreed upon before the ride.

"Our passenger base is still developing," Marc said. "The business crowd has not embraced the idea of taking a pedicab to a meeting or to lunch. We are doing more business with tourists and travelers going back and forth from Old Sacramento to the Capitol and Downtown Plaza."

Marc estimated he has nearly \$40,000 invested in the business. The German-made tricycles cost \$10,000 each. When you figure in shipping and the expense of designing artwork and

paying for the application of the art to the vehicle, each bike costs about \$13,000. The artwork is the key to a successful pedicab business.

"The money for the business owner is in the advertising," said Neil Lubin, owner of Sacramento Rickshaw. "The drivers make their money with the passengers; we make our money from the real estate on our vehicles."

Neil was instrumental in bringing pedicabs to Sacramento. He worked with the Sacramento City Council to build the necessary regulations to legitimize the pedicab business. His company, Sacramento Rickshaw, currently owns four pedicabs. They all sit unused as Neil plans to sell his business and retire to Arizona.

If the costs of owning a pedicab business are unrealistic, you can test your legs and customer-service skills as a driver. Sacramento Valley Velocab is currently hiring drivers for all shifts, including part-time opportunities.

"Recruiting dedicated and capable drivers is very important," said Marc of Sacramento Valley Velocab. "The city dictates that I do a background check and driving record check for every driver; that gets expensive when drivers don't show up for work the second day."

Drivers must have a valid driver's license, strong legs and lungs, and a creative sense of adventure. Richard Reeves is a regular driver with Sacramento Valley Velocab. He recently found a passenger base at the downtown train depot.

"A passenger got on near the Capitol and asked me to take them to the train depot," Richard said. "When I got there, people were standing around waiting for cabs and shuttles. Now, I check the train schedule daily and if I have a break in action I'll go over there and pick up a fare."

All Sacramento Valley Velocab drivers are independent operators. They pay a \$10 fee to rent the pedicab for a

day while they keep all fares and gratuities.

If you are interested in driving a pedicab a few days a week or month, visit Sacramento Valley Velocab at www.ridevelocab.com. If you are interested in owning a pedicab business, call Neil Lubin of Sacramento Rickshaw (916) 801-4780. ☎

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City Adds Bike Lanes to 19th Street

In late July, the city of Sacramento added bike lanes on 19th Street from R to X streets by reducing the number of lanes and restriping. The project was the first phase of converting both 19th and 21st streets in midtown from three to two lanes and adding bike lanes. More phases will be completed this year.

On 19th Street, bike lanes will be added all the way from H Street to Broadway. On 21st Street, bike lanes are planned from I Street to W Street.

Like N, P and Q streets are now, the streets will remain one way and one-way bike lanes will be added on both sides.

According to the city, the lane conversions and other components of the more extensive two-way conversion project will enhance neighborhood livability, reduce speeds and volumes, improve the pedestrian environment, improve neighborhood and customer access, and provide bike lanes on key streets.

In addition, the contract for restoring Freeport Boulevard and 21st Street to two-way traffic south of Broadway has been awarded and work will start this month. ☼



Cyclist enjoys new 19th Street bike lane near Safeway. Photo by Walt Seifert

Comments Sought

SABA recently completed two draft “issues and interests” papers on trail signage and bicycle crossings of rivers, freeways, railroads and other barriers. The papers detail features cyclists want and the reasons why. They will be used as we make our desires known to government officials.

Please take a look at the papers at <http://sacbike.org/advocacy/>. Send any comments with suggested changes or additions to saba@sacbike.org. ☼

Roseville Activists Making Progress

While Roseville bicyclists continue to face big obstacles, the city is becoming more bicycle-friendly, according to David Allen, new director of BikingRoseville.

David, who took over as director after BikingRoseville founder Bjorn Haake recently moved to Belgium, gave a progress report about the group’s efforts at the SABA July 25 general membership meeting. (For those of you who never had the pleasure of meeting the charismatic and car-free Bjorn, his article in the April 2006 issue of *The Squeaky Wheel* described how he moved from an apartment to a house using a bike trailer designed to carry up to 300 pounds.)

David, who recently became a League of American Bicyclists’ League Cycling Instructor, reported that the group’s primary purpose is to provide safe bicycling classes and to help with the annual Roseville Bikefest celebration. The group also holds quarterly meetings with Roseville’s bicycle/pedestrian coordinator and will participate in the update of the city’s bikeway master plan.

Two primary challenges facing Roseville cyclists are the need for safe and convenient crossings of Interstate 80 and better bicycle accommodations on high-speed arterials. Anyone interested in helping make Roseville a safer and more pleasant place to cycle should check out the group’s Web site at www.BikingRoseville.org.

In other Roseville news, which was announced at the July 26 Sacramento Area County of Governments’ Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee, a one-mile section of the Antelope Creek bike trail has been completed. It runs from the intersection of Galleria Boulevard and Berry Street to the Rocklin city limits. The trail provides an alternative to crossing Roseville Parkway and Highway 65.

The Miners’ Ravine trail has been extended from Harding Boulevard to Sierra College Boulevard.

The draft Roseville Bicycle Master Plan is available for comment at: <http://www.roseville.ca.us/news/displaynews.asp?NewsID=986>. ☼

SABA’s Legislation in Senate

SABA’s bill, AB 163, to establish minimum standards for bike facilities at state buildings is still on a roll. The Green and Healthy Workplace Bicycle Facilities Act of 2007 would put California on the path to providing bike parking, showers and clothing lockers for state office workers and bike parking for visitors to state buildings.

The bill passed the Senate Governmental Organization Committee on July 10 by a 5-3 vote and has been referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for an August hearing.

The bill continues to pick up organizational support and has been written about in the *Sacramento News & Review* and *The Sacramento Bee* several times. Caltrans wants to get a head start on meeting the spirit, if not the letter, of the bill now.

Find the latest on bill status and actions you can take at www.sacbike.org. If the bill is still in the Senate, please write your Senator and urge that they vote for AB 163. ☼

Tip of the Month Cross with Care!

By David Takemoto-Weerts

Last month I wrote about sidewalk riding. While walkway wheeling is not generally advised, most of us find ourselves doing it on occasion. What's more common is bike path riding, and if you're in an area with side paths, you are likely to find yourself entering a crosswalk where the side path crosses a roadway. Is it legal to bike in a crosswalk? My experience is that if you ask most police officers, they will tell you that it's not legal. Ask them what vehicle code section would be violated and you may hear something like, "I'll get back to you on that!"

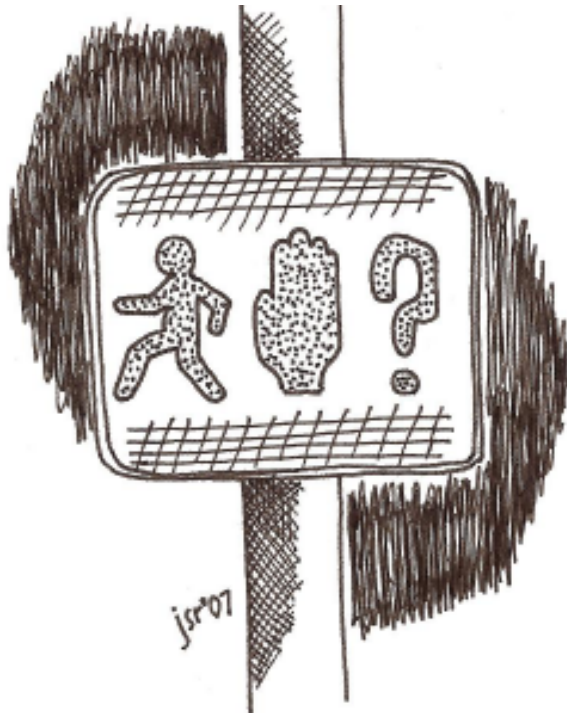


Illustration by Jeffery Rosenhall

Several years ago, this question came before the California Bicycle Advisory Committee. A Caltrans attorney wrote that it was illegal to pedal in a crosswalk owing to the CVC section (§275) that defines a crosswalk as "any portion of a roadway distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by lines or other markings on the surface." In short, it's unlawful because a crosswalk is defined as a facility intended for pedestrian use (see <http://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/vctop/vc/vc.htm> for all CVC sections).

This isn't much different from the CVC definition (section 555) of a sidewalk as "that portion of a highway... set apart...for pedestrian travel." We know that sidewalk cycling is legal statewide unless proscribed by local ordinance. Because a crosswalk is, essentially, an extension of a sidewalk across a road, doesn't it seem logical that if sidewalk riding is allowed, crosswalk riding should be as well?

The city of Los Angeles has been developing draft language to submit to the state Legislature to clarify the law and, presumably, ensure that cyclists aren't unjustly penalized when entering a crosswalk, especially from a side path. I haven't seen the draft text, but one possible model would be Oregon's law that

Join the Great American River Clean Up

The annual American River Parkway Foundation's Great American River Clean Up will be Sept. 15, from 9 a.m. to noon. Participating in the clean up is a great way for SABA members to show their appreciation for the Parkway. Please volunteer at either of SABA's adopted sites: Mile 8 or the Sacramento Northern Bikeway trailhead, which is on C Street between 19th and 20th streets.

For more information and to register for the event go to <http://www.arpf.org/>. List SABA as your organization when you register. Or you can let SABA Volunteer Coordinator Larry Robinson know you'll be there by calling 444-6600 or e-mailing volunteer@sacbike.org.



Unsightly trash has accumulated and awaits the Great American River Clean Up crew. Please do your part to improve the Parkway. Photo by Lea Brooks

allows cyclists to ride through crosswalks at speeds no greater than an ordinary pedestrian's pace. The complete code at www.leg.state.or.us/ors/814.html should be read to better understand how this works.

In Davis, we have many side paths that empty cyclists directly into crosswalks, and everyone rides through them. I've never heard of a cyclist being cited for such an "infraction," but have been told by police officers that it is "illegal." Until this ambiguity is clarified, I'd advise cyclists to use their best judgment in such situations. Even better advice is to avoid side paths and their inherent hazards altogether.⊗

David Takemoto-Weerts is the University of California, Davis, bike coordinator and a League of American Bicyclists' League Cycling Instructor.

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Just in time for Great American River Clean Up Page 7*

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909 12th Street, Suite 114
Sacramento, CA 95814**

I want to be a part of an organization that is doing things for cyclists and the community.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (home): (____) _____ - _____

Phone (work): (____) _____ - _____

E-mail address: _____

Membership level:

- \$1000 Legacy Club*
- \$500 Leadership Circle*
- \$100 Century*
- \$75 Business/Group
- \$75 Sustaining*
- \$50 Sponsoring
- \$40 Family
- \$30 Individual

* Free T-shirt – indicate size below

Money's not enough! Contact me about volunteering.

I must have a SABA T-shirt! Shirts are \$15 each.

Size: S M L XL

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