

MORCA MINUTES for Monday November 3, 2008 at 6:30 PM at English Ales, Marina.

Minutes submitted by Henrietta Stern, Secretary, on 11/8/08

Our website is: www.morcamb.org <<http://www.morcamb.org/>>

2008 OFFICERS are:

President- Peter Sherrill

VPs: Gary Courtright and Chris Mack

Secty: Henrietta Stern

Treasurer: Susan Brown

Webmistress: Shelley (Potts) Melchior

ATTENDANCE: 14 people attended including four officers (Pres; 1 VP, Secty and Treasurer). Welcome to new attendees Sabrina just arrived from Santa Barbara and Joel I think from around here (hope I got that right)

TREASURER'S REPORT - We have about \$1,800 in the coffers. This was not discussed, but an old item of business is pursuit of status as tax-exempt 501-C-3 organization.

ESCA/ FORT ORD "HAPPY TRAILS" CLOSURES-- See my separate e-mails on ESCA minutes and workshops. Trail closures will likely be by end of November as all paperwork is very close to signing :-(. ESCA folks have trail markers and kiosk posters in the waiting. Recall we volunteered to maintain the kiosk at 8th and Giggling purely for education. Runners will maintain the kiosk near Inter-Garrison. One positive aspect is ESCA manager Stan Cook is coordinating long-term trails effort and meeting with City/County staff to be sure to incorporate trails in any new subdivision plan to link developments with public trails, BLM etc. Henri (and potentially Chris?) will attend meeting on November 25 at 11:30 to represent MORCA in this discussion. There are also several documents to comment on in near future-ESCA folks are supposed to provide links-Henri is to follow up on this so individuals can comment, and will also comment on behalf of MORCA, with emphasis on re-access and re-opening of trails. At a previous community workshop, we had a good chat with a key Sacramento regulator, who understands our desire for trail access and habitat preservation as much as possible.

FORT ORD SIGNAGE IDEAS: Peter continues to pursue trail difficulty signage -- "easy" (green dot), "intermediate" (Blue square) or "expert" (Black diamond or two) on the BLM posts with the trail names or numbers. Recall Gary suggested signage regarding downhill bikes at the bottom of 82 and Goat so newcomers know that going up on those trails may not be the best idea. There is also the opportunity to help measure elevation

gain with some high-tech equipment, which may be a factor in rating the trails. Contact Peter if you would like to help do this. I do not recall who is sponsoring the elevation gain project.

FORT ORD TRAIL WORK-- Nov. 8 at 9 AM at base of Goat. As I write this, I heard that about 20 (!) riders came out to help smooth out Goat Trail after BLM machine went through. MORCans and Hwy68 Hillbillies came together, and both contributed sweat equity. "Yes We Can."

LATE FALL "TIME TRIAL" and BLM Fees-- Peter says that BLM has approved the concept of an organized Time Trail event with individual rides for time using their trails. The catch is they want a \$500 bond and it is \$5 per person each time you ride as part of this organized event. The \$500 bond is good for other events throughout the year, so the group voted unanimously to pay this fee to enable MORCA-sponsored events on BLM lands (see Night Riding below) in 2009. Peter will be posting the route and rules -which is roughly the farm equipment tractor sort of near the base of Blair Witch trail (59) to weather station at Little Moab and back to Travel Camp covered gazebo. Help me out Peter! We might have some sort of holiday party at the end of ride period.

NIGHT RIDING AT FORT ORD-- Gary and Peter have pursued legal riding with BLM staff with some promising results. BLM provided maps of California Tiger Salamander (CTS) habitat, which is to be avoided by 300 yards (esp. the ponds). The area out of Creekside is a better place for night riding as there is little CTS habitat on that drier hillier terrain. BLM wants to see some specific routes we would take as a sanctioned group ride on a specific night. They will want \$5 per rider for each ride, due to BLM staff needed to be available to respond in emergency plus monitor any damage etc. We discussed ideas like Tamarancho has for a "season pass" for MORCA members, a small fee for non-members who join our rides for the bookkeeping hassles etc. We believe 7-11 parking lot would be a safer parking area to start and end. We will also ask about permission for individuals to be on pavement at night to enable safe commute on bike from work or home to the ride

CLOSURE OF BURMESE TRAIL-Much discussion focused on this recent formal closure of a trail that has been regularly used for many years, and has been the site of special horse events as well as SeaOtter.

Ownership/management relationship between Army and BLM is complex. We discussed practical and philosophical issues. Peter and Jason will work to find out who is the decision-maker to convince him/her why re-opening is important and to take action to do so -and if that means Army or BLM preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) document, then get on it. One suggestion was a CSUMB student project to do the EA in coordination with regulators.

OTHER BUSINESS (looking ahead):

**The year is ending--think about renewing your MORCA dues! If registered as a MORCA member via the website, you will receive email notification when your dues renewal is nearing.

**Need to nominate 2009 officers in December;

**Keep an eye on proposed Horse Park as it is moving forward, as it could result in tremendous damage to local trails. We need to ensure fees are collected from event sponsors to repair trail damage.

**SeaOtter--we can have a free booth if 6 MORCA folks commit to racing in an event; they also asked if we would do the kids event again and potentially host an older kids race too. For future discussion

UPCOMING SPECIAL RIDES or Events--

Turkey Trot Thanksgiving morning 11/27 leaves from Creekside at 8 AM for bikes, 9 AM for hikers and dog walkers. BLM and Salinas Rural Fire are sponsoring. Bring an unwrapped new toy. Jason will coordinate our role with Ranger Tammy. MORCA will potentially help patrol for folks needing assistance and/or lead an easier, slower ride. Check website or e-mail group for details as we get closer.

Note the horse folks have big equestrian event Fri-Sun thanksgiving weekend. Watch for trail damage and report to BLM.

Turning Wheels bikes for kids Dec 13 in San Jose--put together bikes for kids--see Peter for details.

There was an e-mail about Dec 21, 5 PM, Critical Christmas fun ride along the waterfront-- lights and costumes for riders and bike-Lovers Point to Monterey and back. Fun stuff!

Other Late Fall ideas include:

Big Sur/Old Coast Road ride.

UCSC, Demo, Coe-- watch the website or e-mails for spontaneous fun Downieville (if you like snow!)

Marin County

Skeggs Point (Mountain View)

Cambria/San Luis Obispo

Kernville/Lake Isabella (upcountry southern Sierra near Bakersfield)

REGULAR RIDES--

* Quick-Step ride Tuesday evenings rolling at 6 PM from 8th and Giggling -- This is a faster paced ride for those who want a good workout with minimal stops, longer distances and likely lots of hills. You should be an experienced rider who knows the trail system because you may be dropped if you can't keep up (or form a subgroup, if needed).

* Wednesday eve "Carrot Ride" at 8th and Giggling, rolling

at 6:00 PM. This is a mellower, coed no-drop ride with tailgate socializing afterward. Night riding on ESCA land as long as it is allowed.

* Saturday morning 9 AM ride will leave from Creekside Terrace, not 8th and Giggling. Check website or e-mail. Social pace, no one dropped, possible A and B groups, if needed. Watch e-mails and website for potential changes! Sometimes this is Toro instead.

* MBOSC-- this group does Demo 2nd Sunday of the month.

OLD BUSINESS -Henri to research potential for access to lands owned and/or managed by Big Sur Land Trust/CountyParks (Marks Ranch), and Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District (Palo Corona). Key goal is that mountain biking be integrated into the management plans developed by these entities for lands slated for public recreational use, and that MORCA be recognized as a "stakeholder" group. I did speak with and exchange e-mails in September with head of County Parks about access to Marks Ranch and Toro link-ups.

NEXT MEETING-- Next MORCA meeting is Mon, Dec 1 at 6:30 PM at English Ales in Marina (Reindollar) -- all welcome.
That's all for now, folks! See you on the trails!