Fairbanks Cycle Club

2021 Annual Report

Members of the Tuesday Night MTB Ride cheer while on the Rosie Creek trails of the Tanana Valley State Forest. Find these trails on Trailforks: www.trailforks.com/

As the summer season comes to a close, now is a good time to reflect on what the Fairbanks Cycle Club has brought to our community. We've put together this report to outline our successes (and point out a few struggles). Here are some highlights.

- Provided support for the several weekly rides our volunteer leaders host
- Helped clean up after the Equinox Marathon (and raised some $ for the club)
- Held a successful Bike Swap, despite a change of venue
- Put on a virtual cycle coaching clinic by a professional coach
- Supported a youth mountain biking clinic put on by the Fairbanks borough
- Advocated for cycling several ways

Organized Rides

Several people (men and women) turned out for the Annual WOW Butterfly Ride, which – despite the name - includes several tough climbs. (This is the one WOW ride a year in which men are invited.)

WEEKLY RIDES

Several FCC organized weekly rides were held over the summer. The club provides these rides with insurance and publicity. Thank you to the volunteer ride leaders!

- WOW (Women on Wheels – women who like to ride road bikes fast)
- Tuesday Night MTB Rides
- SOW (SCUM on Wheels; SCUM being a ski training/social group)
- LOL (Ladies of Leisure – women who like to ride bikes more leisurely)
- Low-Key Wednesday Road Rides (this was new and added partway through the season)

We also promote other weekly rides in Fairbanks, including those by Goldstream Sports, Beaver Sports, and Black Spruce Brewing. We include them on our webpage and promote them through our Facebook page, listserv, and with occasional press releases to the local media. (Beaver Sports also has a free, fairly regular Bike Maintenance Clinic, that we also promote.)

ONE-TIME RIDES/RACES

Chena Hot Springs Ride

We discussed trying to resurrect this popular event, including holding it as a virtual event, but ran into several obstacles: the previous organizers have all stepped down, the COVID pandemic makes gathering in groups difficult, and a major road project is

underway at the beginning of Chena Hot Springs Road. The board will revisit this early next year.

Greg Kahoe demonstrates how to load up a bike rack with Equinox Marathon signs.

Equinox Marathon Clean Up Ride

As has been done for many years, this ride was held on Sunday, the day after the Equinox Marathon. This year seven people helped coordinator Eric Troyer. (Thanks to all!) They rode around and gathered the marathon directional signs, placing them at strategic points. Then Eric and Dave James collected the signs and delivered them to the Equinox organizers. This helps the marathon and for the past couple of years has been a fundraiser. This year the marathon gave the club $300 for helping.

Tour of Fairbanks

We tried to do this a virtual race, as it was done in 2020. Unfortunately, it didn't come together.

Black Spruce Brewing Nenana-Rama

This was a 50- and 100-mile race put on by Black Spruce Brewing. While we didn't put on this race, we helped by advertising it on our Facebook page and through our listserv. Black Spruce Brewing has gotten involved in promoting cycling in Fairbanks. They started the Black Spruce Bike Club with low-key road rides every Saturday (which we also advertise). All great news!

Bike Swap

The FCC Bike Swap was held this June at the Borealis Pavilion at the Tanana Valley State Fairgrounds. This was a new venue from the Pioneer Park parking lot, where the swap had been held for several years. (The swap was held at the pavilion at least once years ago.) The Pioneer Park parking lot was cheap but was also susceptible to rain or high winds. When costs increased for the parking lot, organizer Eric Troyer decided to move the swap to the protected fairground pavilion. The strategy worked. It was sunny and calm all day!

After all expenses are accounted for, we earned $1,421 for the club. We sold 20 adult bikes (of 46 put up for sale) and 7 children's bikes (of 9 put up for sale). We don't have an attendance count, but 64 people were in line at the opening.

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped!

Robbie Ventura Clinic

In June, we offered a free one-hour online coaching clinic by Robbie Ventura, a former professional cyclist. The workshop was open only to FCC members and was aimed at anyone at any level who was interested in improving their cycling. There were 18 people who signed up and eight attended the virtual clinic. Feedback was that the clinic was good for those who showed.

The clinic was put on with help from FCC member moreen fried, who knows Robbie from taking clinics with him. (Thanks, moreen!) There have been discussions with Joel Buth, owner of Goldstream Sports, about having a paid, in-person clinic next summer.

Photo montage by Eric Engman

Youth MTB program

We tried to restart last year's successful program, which was started and run by Hilary Saucy. And while we had several people willing to co-lead, none could take on the full coordinator role and their scheduled didn't mesh well enough to make it work.

Fortunately, Eric Engman, a new recreation specialist with the FNSB Parks and Recreation Department, put on a one-day clinic on Saturday, September 11. We were able to help with this by getting a few volunteers and by advertising it on our Facebook page and through our listserv. Nearly 50 kids turned out for the event! Thank you to all who volunteered!

Eric E. is hoping to offer something similar next year, this time throughout the summer. We will definitely help with that again!

Ice Cream Bike Ride

The borough also held an ice cream bike ride in August, which we promoted.

Smart Cycling

A few people in Fairbanks are certified as Smart Cycling instructors by the League of American Bicyclists. They can teach people some basic cycling skills, including how to ride in traffic. Nathan Belz expressed an interest in trying to organize some classes. Both Alyssa and Eric tried to touch base with him, but we weren't able to get anything started. Nathan is a really busy guy. Alyssa and Eric decided to try again next year and maybe choose somebody else to do the coordinating if Nathan is too busy.

Advocacy

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

BPAC is part of FAST (Fairbanks Area Surface Transportation). It has been doing a lot of try to improve cycling and pedestrian infrastructure in Fairbanks. FCC Vice President Travis Naibert started attending meetings and was eventually selected as a BPAC Representative, so he now has a vote on the committee. (Thanks, Travis!)

AAC changes

The BPAC has started a process of changing some state laws regarding bicycling and roads. The changes would include:

- New provisions to improve safety of vehicles passing bicyclists in the roadway (i.e., safe passing law)
- New provisions for bicycle lane and shared lane use markings (i.e., sharrows) for riding bicycles on roadways
- New provisions to improve safety and reduce conflicts for bicyclists and pedestrians with off-highway vehicles traveling on sidewalks and other locations officially designated for non-motorized use only

Travis, wrote a letter for the board in support of the proposed changes, and it was submitted. We also advertised the comment period and encouraged cyclists to comment.

FAST Non-motorized Plan Update

FAST is updating its non-motorized plan. We promoted the public comment period, encouraging people to add their insights.

FNSB Comprehensive Roads Plan

The Fairbanks North Star Borough is updating the FNSB Comprehensive Roads Plan. It distributed links to a survey and an interactive map. We publicized both on our Facebook page and our listserv, encouraging people to speak up for cycling.

FNSB Trails Plan Update

The Fairbanks Borough is also updating its Comprehensive Recreational Trails Plan. We have helped encourage mountain bikers, fatbikers, and any other cyclists who use trails to comment on the plan.

National legislation

Several pieces of legislation have recently been introduced at the federal level, including tax breaks that would encourage cycling and more funding for cycling infrastructure. We publicized these and encouraged people to speak up if they felt strongly about the issue. When possible, we supplied links to sign-on letters or other ways to act.

Bike accident post

We shared a post on the FCC Facebook page about a cyclist struck by a motorcyclist driving on a local bike path. Two people, Stan Justice and Joel Buth, responded to that post. Joel contacted Lorna Illingworth from Volunteers in Policing (Fairbanks Police Department) to let her know. She runs the bike rodeos for kids. Stan printed the post and mailed it to the Alaska State Troopers and the FPD. The issue has also come up in Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee meetings, where Troopers commented on the case.

Misc Advertising

Whenever we see something local happening that helps promote cycling, we make sure to give it some publicity. That has included a fatbike class being put on this November by the Fairbanks Folk School. It will be taught by former FCC President Rachael Kvapil. We also publicized a Bikepacking How-To Presentation put on by Beaver Sports.

FCC Misc

Membership

Currently the FCC has 33 Family memberships (68 total people) and 82 Individual memberships for a total of 150 people.

FCC Board

President – Alyssa Enriquez
Vice President – Travis Naibert
Secretary – Jenny Campbell
Treasurer – (vacant)
Members-at-Large
- Geoff Orth
- Eric Betts

Resources

We maintain several Resources page on our website including

- Maps Archive
- Winter Riding Tips
- Tanana Valley State Forest roads
- Ways to advocate for cycling, locally, nationally, and internationally

Address

P.O. Box 80183
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Website

www.fairbankscycleclub.org/

Facebook

www.facebook.com/fairbankscycleclub/