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### Analysis of Touring Cyclists: Impacts, Needs and Opportunities for Montana

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TOURISM AND  
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## ANALYSIS OF TOURING CYCLISTS: IMPACTS, NEEDS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR MONTANA





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# **Analysis of Touring Cyclists: Impacts, Needs and Opportunities for Montana**

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand the niche market of touring cyclists and to examine the potential for cycle tourism in the state of Montana. Adventure Cycling Association, a non-profit bicycling organization, supplied the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research with 3200 emails of visiting cyclists and purchasers of maps from 2011 to 2013. This resulted in a web survey of 3,145 emails to which 718 (23% response rate) respondents completed the survey. Key results are presented below:

### General Cycle Touring

- Touring cyclists have a median age of 53 years old. 56% of cyclists have a median household income of \$75,000-150,000, with 10% earning over \$200,000. The top 5 residencies of respondents were Washington, California, Oregon, Montana, and Colorado. 18 countries were represented including the Netherlands, Australia, South Africa, Bangladesh, and Columbia.
- 86% of touring cyclists indicated they bring a form of wireless technology with them during their trip. The most common uses for their wireless technology is for weather reports, directions/maps, lodging availability, sharing trip experiences online, and finding hours of operations.
- 92% of respondents indicated they were planning a multi-day cycle trip in the next three years with only 1% stating they were not planning a trip.
- Cyclists engaged in other related activities during the past three years such as: day road rides (87%), taking bikes on vacation (85%), independent bike touring (82%), casual riding in town (80%), and road racing (76%). 46% of cyclists were spectators at a cycling-related event.

### Cyclists in Montana

- Cyclists touring in Montana spend on average \$75.75/person/day and stay 8 nights or more in the state on average.
- Other activities participated in during their Montana multi-day cycling trip included visiting historical sites (40%), visiting Lewis & Clark sites (38%), wildlife watching (37%), day hiking (33%), and experiencing local breweries (29%).
- Mean scores on a scale of 1-6 show that cyclists were most satisfied with: Hospitality of local people (5.10), historical sites (4.79), local breweries (4.77), signage on highways (4.49), signage in towns (4.44), and availability of camping areas (4.43).
- Mean scores on a scale of 1-6 show that cyclists were least satisfied with: cell phone coverage (3.75), width of shoulders (3.93), availability of cycling stores/equipment (4.15), availability of bike repair service (4.16), and quantity of debris on shoulders/road (4.17).
- The most memorable aspects of the Montana cycling experience were the scenic vistas, hospitality of locals, and the challenging aspects of the mountain passes/descents.
- While cycling in Montana, respondents commented on the need for better road conditions (shoulder width and a reduction of rumble strips) and more bicycle friendly campgrounds.

Results indicate a strong potential for cycle tourism in the state of Montana. Cyclists are generally satisfied, but improvements are needed to encourage more riders. Touring cyclists fit directly in line with Montana's geotourism marketing brand pillars.

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## Introduction

Marketing to segments of the travel industry rather than trying to ‘woo’ all people has become an important tool by which destinations can pique the interest of potential visitors or visitors who may already be there, but had not been highlighted as a niche market. Unlike mass tourism, niche tourism includes travelers who have identifiable and unique characteristics in their travel motivations and in activity participation. From ecotourism to cultural tourism to music tourism, new niche markets keep emerging. Therefore, identified niches can reinvigorate a tourism destination. Bicycle tourism in its many forms (mountain biking, road biking, multi-day cycling, etc.) is one of those possible market segments in Montana and fits right in as a tourism niche worth exploring.

The Montana Tourism Advisory Council has identified cycling as a possible niche within Montana, but little to no research on cycling in the state exists to verify or negate this assumption. If multi-day cyclists, identified as touring cyclists in this report, can positively impact the economy of local communities, and if Montana can provide the experience cyclists are looking for, multi-day cycling could be a new market. This market would fit within the geotourism theme Montana has branded and attract the type of geotourism visitors the state seeks. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand the characteristics of touring cyclists, what they look for in multi-day cycling trips, routes traveled in Montana, and how much they spend during their travels.

## Background

A review of the literature related to bicycling and tourism shows that North America is by far “behind the eight ball” when compared to other countries around the world. Bicycle tourism has been identified and studied in Denmark, New Zealand, the UK, Australia, and Taiwan to name a few. From identifying their economic impact to the naming of types of cyclist from “hard core” to “casual” the understanding of what cycling tourism is, and what it can do for a country or community, is an important step in developing and promoting this niche market.

As in all research, it is most important to first define the topic to avoid any confusion. According to Ritchie (1998, p. 568-569) cycle tourists have been defined as:

“A person who is away from their home town or country for a period not less than 24 hours or one night, for the purpose of a vacation or a holiday, and for whom using a bicycle as a mode of transport during this time away is an integral part of their holiday or vacation. This vacation may be independently organized or part of a commercial tour and may include the use of transport support services and any type of formal and/or informal accommodation.”

Ritchie et al. (2010, p.411) noted, “Although there appears to be a growing interest in bicycle tourism from the tourism industry and destinations, studies on this phenomenon are scarce.” Recently, however, in the US, there is a push by planners at the city and statewide level to research bicycle tourism. Wisconsin (Grabow, Hahn, & Whited, 2010), Oregon (Dean Runyan Assoc., 2013), Arizona (McClure Consulting LLC, Economic & Policy Resources, & Kimley-Horn Associates, 2013), and Iowa (Lankford et al., 2011) represent a number of states that have conducted studies related to bicycle tourism. While some cyclist characteristics are provided in the reports, economic impacts of cycling are usually the major thrust of those studies.



All of the aforementioned state cycling studies used different data collection methods to measure spending and the economic impact of touring cyclists. Therefore, a comparison between states is not possible. In addition, most of the studies were conducted by consulting firms and the methodology used to determine economic impacts and daily spending were not disclosed which causes even more difficulties in replicating other cycling studies conducted in the U.S. The range of economic impact figures from a variety of studies is \$30-400 million dependent on the methods and measurements used. The large differentiation in visitor expenditures makes it difficult to use any of this data to predict the spending and to understand the characteristic of touring cyclists in Montana.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand the characteristics of touring cyclists, what they look for in multi-day cycling trips, routes traveled in Montana, and how much they spend during their travels in Montana. Specifically, the objectives are to:

1. Identify cyclists' characteristics by group type, length of trip, information sources used, technology use during trips, and activities participated in and sites visited while in MT.
2. Estimate daily expenditures of touring cyclists in Montana.
3. Identify the popular routes in Montana based on trips in the past 3 years.
4. Calculate satisfaction of a Montana multi-day cycling trip and what makes a trip memorable.
5. Categorize the needs and challenges encountered for a successful multi-day cycling trip.
6. Determine what Montana and business owners would need to do for infrastructure development to encourage more cycle touring in the state.

## Methods

This study was undertaken with the assistance of the Adventure Cycling Association, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to inspire and empower people to travel by bicycle. Adventure Cycling is a membership organization who provides maps, tours and assistance to people interested in multi-day cycling trips in North America and promotes bicycle touring across the world through on-line resources and a professional magazine. The organization's office is located in Missoula, MT.

Adventure Cycling provided the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) with the email addresses of 3,200 people who purchased Montana route maps or who stopped into the Adventure Cycling headquarters in Missoula while biking in Montana during the past three years (2011, 2012, & 2013). An invitation to take an on-line survey was sent to the 3,200 email addresses in late October 2013. One week later, a reminder email was sent to those who had not responded to the first invitation.

Of the 3,200 emails sent, 47 came back as undeliverable and 8 came back twice as "out-of-office," (i.e. not replying to emails). This resulted in 3,145 surveys delivered. As in all on-line data collection, it is impossible to know the number of people who did not see the survey as it may have ended up in their "junk" box. This usually results in a smaller response rate. However, for this study, 718 surveys were completed resulting in a 23 percent response rate (718/3,145). This is an acceptable response rate for on-line methodology.

## Survey Design

The survey was designed after a thorough review of literature on cycling research. There is a scarcity of academic literature for touring cyclists and therefore few surveys were found to use as a

basis for this study. However, some studies provided useful survey questions and were included. In addition, questions used by ITRR over the years were included in the design where appropriate. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

## **Analysis**

The data was collected in the SNAP survey software program and exported into SPSS for much of the statistical analysis. In addition, GIS software and methods were used to create the route maps and overnight stays overlaid on a Montana map (Pages 5 and 21). Finally, qualitative data was exported into Excel worksheets, coded, and analyzed for common themes.

## **Section 1: Demographics and Needs of Touring Cyclists**

Results of the study are provided in two parts. In the first section, general characteristics of cyclists are presented. This includes demographics, biking activities, and technology use while biking. This section concludes with the analysis of an open-ended question asking about the needs of touring cyclists. The second section provides all the Montana-related cycling data including length of trip, routes, overnight locations, information used for planning and during their trip, spending, activities engaged in, attractions visited, and overall trip satisfaction. The second section concludes with an open-ended question analyzing the most memorable experience of tourists while cycling in Montana.

### **Demographic and Characteristics of Touring Cyclists**

Table 1 displays the demographics of the bicycle tour survey respondents. Survey respondents ranged in age from 18 to 79 years, with a mean of 52 years. Seventy-six percent of respondents were male and 24 percent were female. The majority of respondents were employed (44%) followed by retired (36%). Twenty percent of respondents represented business owners, students and homemakers or were unemployed.

Twenty-four percent of respondents make less than \$50,000, 37 percent make between \$50,000 and \$100,000 and 38 percent of respondents make over \$100,000, (Table 1).

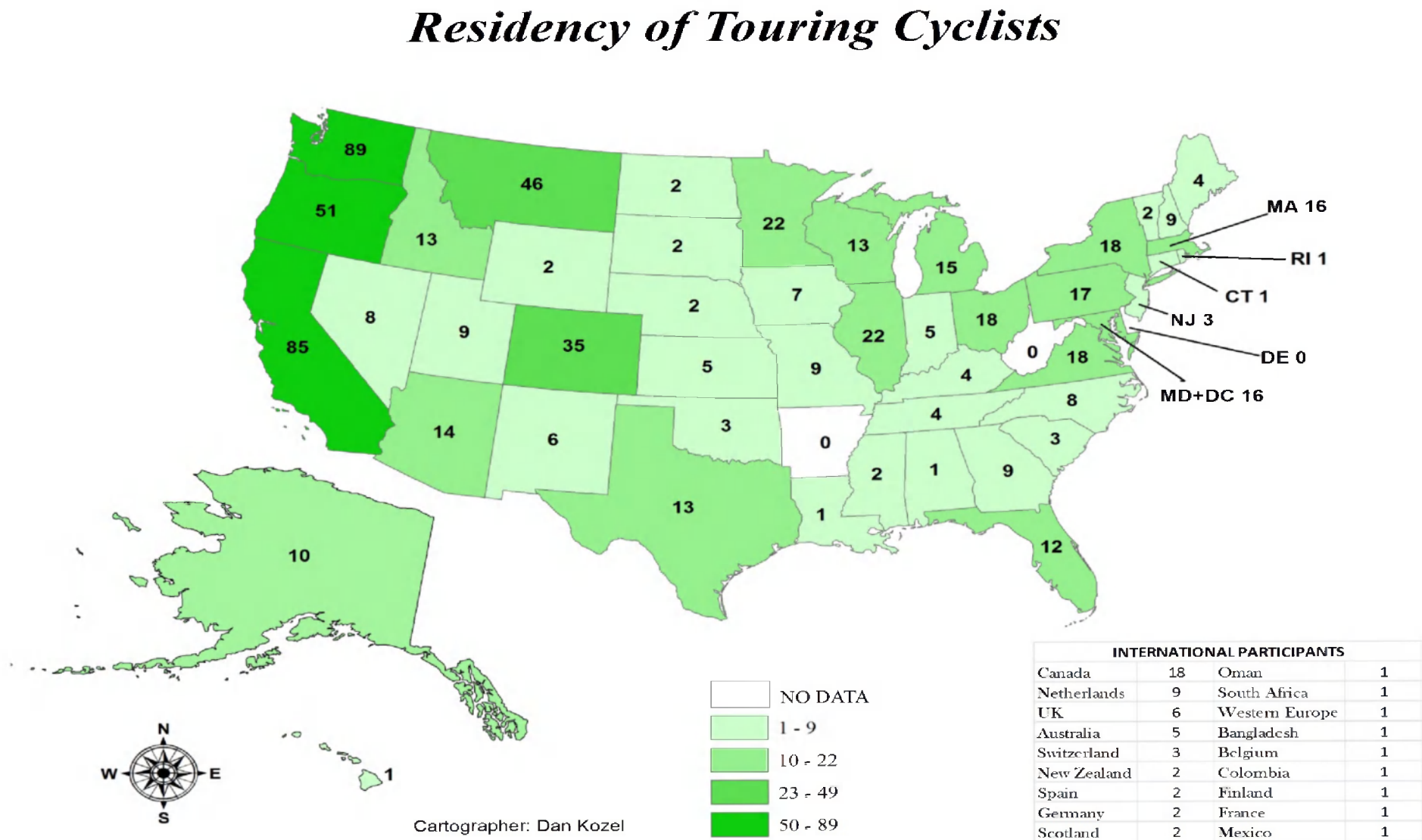
**Table 1: Demographics of touring cyclists**

Demographics			
Gender	Female: 24% (169)		Male: 76% (529)
Age	Age Range: 18-79		Age Mean: 52.39
Employment	Employed	44% (307)	
	Retired	36% (252)	
	Business Owner	11% (75)	
	Student	4% (31)	
	Unemployed	4% (27)	
	Homemaker	1% (9)	
Income	\$25,000 or less	11% (71)	
	\$25,000 to less than \$50,000	13% (86)	
	\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	17% (109)	
	\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	20% (129)	
	\$100,000 to less than \$150,000	19% (119)	
	\$150,000 to less than \$200,000	9% (60)	
	\$200,000 or greater	10% (67)	

Figure 1 displays the distribution of state residency among the individuals who completed the survey. The top three states nonresidents traveled from were California, Washington, and Oregon. Only three states (Arkansas, Delaware, and West Virginia) did not have at least one touring cyclist participant in our survey. Internationally, individuals from eighteen countries responded. Canada had the highest number of participants (18), followed by the Netherlands (9), and the United Kingdom (6).

It appears that the western states provide the greatest number of touring cyclists to Montana followed by the Great Lakes states and the northeastern part of the United States.

Figure 1: Distribution of permanent residency of touring cyclists



The majority of respondents (92%) are planning to take a multi-day bicycle trip in the next three years. Seven percent were not certain as to whether they were planning to take a multi-day bicycle trip in the next three years (Table 2).

**Table 2: Planned multi-day bicycle trips in the next three years**

Planning Multi-Day Trip	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	659	92%
No	6	1%
Maybe	51	7%

The numbers of multi-day cycling trips respondents have taken in the past three years ranged from zero to over ten trips. Within this range of trips, 15 percent of respondents had taken one trip, 20 percent had taken three trips and seven percent had taken over 10 multi-day trips (Table 3). This finding demonstrates that bicycle tourism is a niche of enthusiastic cyclists who take numerous trips a year.

**Table 3: Number of multi-day bicycle trips taken in past three years**

Number of Multi-Day Trips	Frequency	Percentage
0	25	4%
1	110	15%
2	123	17%
3	142	20%
4	89	12%
5	65	9%
6	49	7%
7	28	4%
8	18	3%
9	11	2%
10	7	1%
10+	49	7%

Seventy-three percent of survey respondents took a multi-day cycling trip in Montana sometime between 2011 and 2013 (Table 4). This fits with the population surveyed for this study which was sent only to people who had purchased Montana cycle route maps or had stopped at Adventure Cycling in Missoula on their trip.

**Table 4: Cyclists who have taken a multi-day trip in Montana in the past three years**

Multi-Day Trip in past 3 years	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	502	73%
No	189	27%

Table 5 shows that the vast majority of respondents have engaged in cycling-related activities in the past 3 years including day road rides (87%), taking their bike on vacations (85%), independent bike touring (82%), and casual cycling in town (80%).

**Table 5: Cycling related activities in the past three years**

Cycling Related Activities in Past 3 Years	Frequency	Percentage
Day road rides	526	87%
Take my bike on vacations	514	85%
Independent bike touring	495	82%
Casual cycling in town	486	80%
Commuting to work/school	360	60%
Mountain biking	264	44%
Fundraising rides	218	36%
Rent a bike on vacations	191	32%
Commercial bike tour	182	30%
Bicycle races	108	18%
Used 'bike share' on vacations	56	9%

\*114 missing responses.

Of the survey respondents, only 46 percent indicated being a spectator at cycling events. Of those who attend cycling events, viewing road racing events is the most popular event to watch (76%). Much lower in numbers is watching cyclo cross racing (33%), mountain bike racing (28%), bicycle tours (26%) and other bicycle events (22%)(Table 6).

**Table 6: Cycling related activities as a spectator**

Cycling Related Activities as Spectator	Frequency	Percentage
Road race	252	76%
Cyclo cross race	110	33%
Mountain bike race	93	28%
Bicycle tour	88	26%
Other bicycle events	74	22%

\*385 respondents or 54% do not watch cycling-related activities

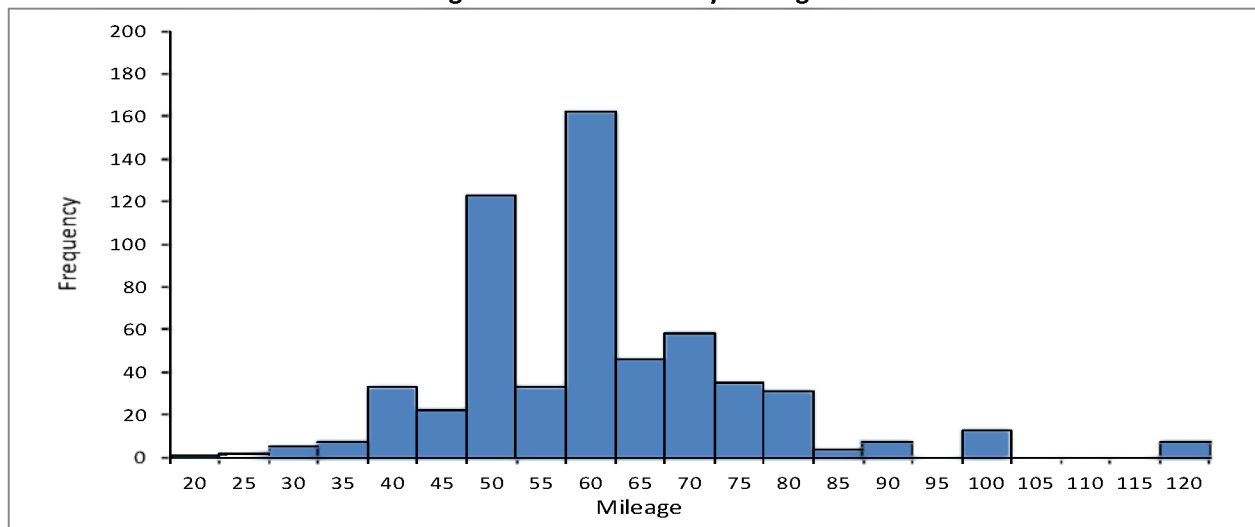
Table 7 shows that most respondents prefer either a 5-7 day bike trip (29%) or a trip lasting more than 30 days (28%). Ten to 14 days was also popular (23%), as was 15-29 days (15%). As shown by the low percentages of preference for shorter bicycle trips (14% for 1-2 days and 4% for 3-4 days), respondents tended to favor trips lasting longer than 4 days.

**Table 7: Optimum length of a multi-day bike trip**

Optimum Length of Trip	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 days	6	1%
3-4 days	24	4%
5-7 days	172	29%
10-14 days	137	23%
15-29 days	91	15%
30+ days	171	28%

Preferred daily mileage of bicyclists is shown in Figure 2. The average preferred daily mileage was 60.26 miles. More cyclists preferred to ride 50 or 60 miles per day (123 and 162 respondents respectively).

**Figure 2: Preferred daily mileage**



The vast majority of cyclists bring wireless technology (86%) on their trip (Table 8). Table 9 shows the percentage of cyclists using wireless technology in several categories with the mean presented in the far right column. More cyclists use their wireless technology to find out about weather (mean = 3.03), directions (mean=2.82), and lodging availability (mean=2.52) than any other use. Sharing trip experiences online, finding hours of operation, camping availability, finding restaurants and finding bike retail/service shops are areas in which cyclists also use their technology frequently. Cyclists are less likely to use their wireless technology to find out about shopping opportunities, road opening/closing, or road conditions.

**Table 8: Do cyclists bring wireless technology with them on their trip?**

Bring Wireless Technology	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	615	86%
No	100	14%

**Table 9: Use of wireless technology while cycling**

How often do you use your technology for...	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always	Mean
	1	2	3	4	
Weather	42 (7%)	119 (20%)	203 (35%)	222 (38%)	3.03
Directions/maps	44 (8%)	174 (30%)	207 (36%)	158 (27%)	2.82
Lodging availability	100 (17%)	187 (32%)	191 (33%)	105 (18%)	2.52
Sharing trip experiences online	157 (28%)	141 (25%)	127 (23%)	134 (24%)	2.43
Finding hours of operation	91 (16%)	229 (41%)	172 (30%)	73 (13%)	2.40
Camping availability	134 (24%)	189 (34%)	151 (27%)	87 (16%)	2.34
Bike retail/service shops	77 (13%)	299 (52%)	142 (25%)	54 (9%)	2.30
Finding Restaurants	103 (18%)	255 (44%)	170 (29%)	55 (9%)	2.30
Attractions to visit	147 (26%)	272 (48%)	106 (19%)	38 (7%)	2.06
Ratings and reviews	188 (34%)	202 (36%)	118 (21%)	49 (9%)	2.05
Activities to do	202 (37%)	237 (43%)	82 (15%)	30 (5%)	1.89
Price comparison	252 (46%)	167 (30%)	95 (17%)	38 (7%)	1.85
Road conditions	237 (43%)	212 (39%)	74 (13%)	27 (5%)	1.80
Road opening/closing	231 (42%)	223 (41%)	64 (12%)	27 (5%)	1.79
Shopping Opportunities	246 (45%)	213 (39%)	58 (11%)	29 (5%)	1.76

### Comments Related to Cycling Needs, Challenges, Expectations, and Requirements for a Successful Trip

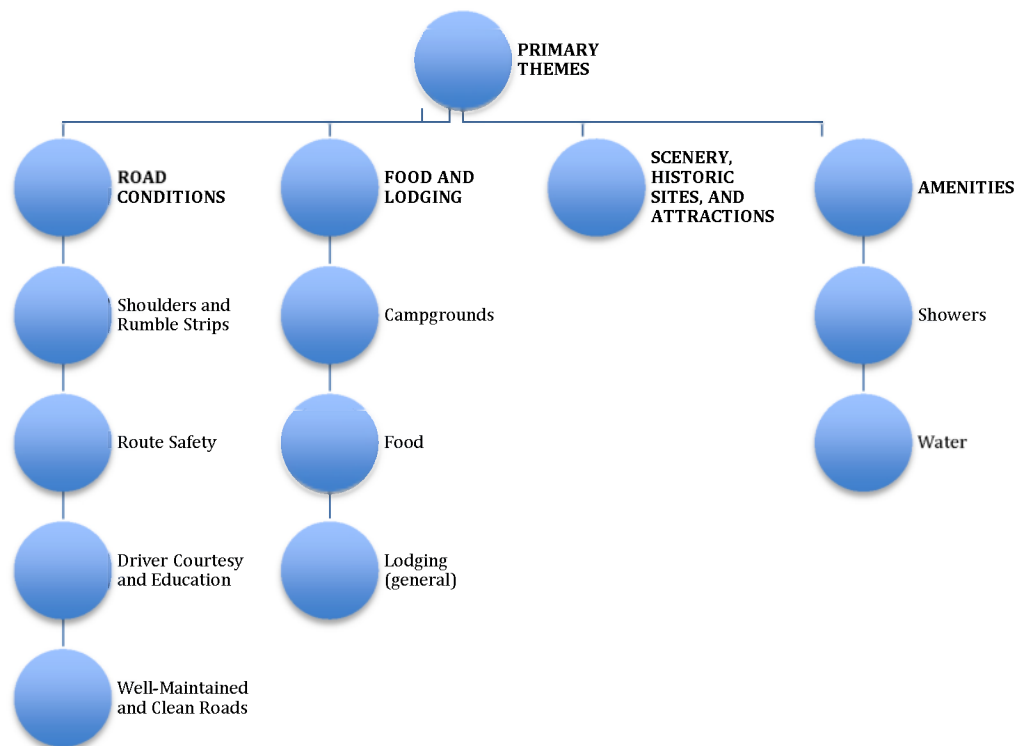
One open-ended question on the survey asked respondents to provide any additional information related to their needs, challenges, expectations, and requirements for a successful and comfortable multi-day cycling trip. For the most part, the question gave respondents the chance to elaborate on why they gave particular ratings to attributes under the question, “While cycling in Montana, how satisfied were you with the following attributes?” While the question was meant to be generic and refer to all multi-day cycling trips, respondents felt compelled to talk about what would make Montana a better cycling destination. Overall, the comments were critical about Montana’s cycling infrastructure and state consideration for the sport. However, these negative responses are not to say that they did not enjoy their trip and that they will not return. Instead it is a reminder that cyclists face different challenges and have a different set of needs than the traditional auto tourist. Thus, the answers to this question should be taken seriously as they provide insight into how met or unmet needs, expectations, and requirements contribute to a cycling experience, and how Montana can become a



more cyclist-friendly state. Responses to this question also supplement the question that asked respondents to describe their most memorable moment or day while cycling in Montana.

In this section, a series of quotes and descriptions highlight the most commonly mentioned themes that emerged from the 330 responses to this question (46% of respondents wrote comments). The most frequently mentioned theme was related to road conditions. Forty-five percent of the 330 respondents mentioned road conditions. The other most common themes related to food and lodging, amenities, and scenery, historic sites, and attractions. The primary themes are organized in the following way:

**Figure 3: Primary themes related to needs and challenges of cyclists**



All other themes are included at the end of this section in the “other themes” category. The most commonly mentioned themes listed from the highest mentions to the lowest mentions were:

1. Road shoulders
2. Route safety
3. Campgrounds
4. Driver courtesy and education
5. Food
6. Well-maintained and clean roads
7. Rumble strips
8. Scenery, historic sites, and attractions
9. Showers
10. Lodging (general)
11. Water

## ROAD CONDITIONS

### *Shoulders and rumble strips*

Over one-third of respondents suggested that highways should not have such large rumble strips and that there is a need for appropriate shoulder width on roadways. This was by far the top suggestion for improving their trip. A lack of these considerations was also the number one complaint of cycling in Montana. Rumble strips and shoulders are discussed together because the presence of rumble strips often contributed to the lack of shoulders or interfered with cyclist ability to use the shoulders. Often the most difficult part of a cyclist's trip was dealing with being forced to bike in the road to the left of the white line, many times with high-speed traffic. While people commented on their love of cycling in Montana due to scenery and friendliness of locals, shoulders and rumble strips caused some to fear for their safety and for a few this means they will not return. Adequate shoulders are considered essential for both a successful and safe trip.

A number of respondents included examples of the roads that were particularly troublesome. The most commonly mentioned routes were:

- Highway 93 into Whitefish (and south of Missoula to Lolo).
- U.S. Route 2 across the state.
- East and West entrance to Glacier National Park.

Provided here are select quotes:

"The State of Montana needs to focus in on adopting a standard for road shoulders that takes into account the state's desire to be a "mecca" for cyclists."

"Get rid of those "rumble strips" on the edge of some roads! They [usually] do not leave enough room to cycle to the right of the rumble strips, thus forcing cyclists to be in the main part of the road. PLEASE, get rid of the strips. Or, at least allow 2 feet of paved shoulder to the right of the rumble strips. The traffic engineers (I'm guessing most do not ride bikes) think they are making it safe for the car drivers. But, in fact, they have created a very dangerous traffic hazard for bicyclists!"

### *Route safety*

A safe route with little traffic or designated cycle paths was a commonly expressed need. For some, little traffic is the reason they enjoyed cycling in Montana. But for others, who assumedly took the more populated routes with an increased availability of food, lodging, and other necessities, the lack of shoulders and overabundance of rumble strips forced many to cycle in the road, which greatly reduced their safety. Comments also included concern over the high speed limits as well as encounters with commercial semi-trucks, RVs, and cars pulling boats or trailers. Designated cycle paths also stood out as a necessity and were suggested as a solution to the shoulder/rumble strip problem and to make for a safer cycling experience.

Provided here are select quotes:

"Safety on the road is issue #1. I appreciated the bike paths in MT e.g. south of Missoula. Shoulders at least 4 ft. wide are also good. Some roads were busy with traffic and had little or

no shoulder e.g. the highway into Whitefish from the west. These roads were often scary. Overall I enjoyed cycling through W. MT."

"[I]t seems there are a number of unnecessarily dangerous narrow roads with high speed traffic with drivers who are in a hurry and not always careful. If you can survive those sections of road there are also many gorgeous back roads with considerate drivers and plenty of space for everyone. What is difficult is finding a route from point "a" to point "b" which avoids these dangerous roadways. It often seems that there are no alternatives . . . A common feature of these dangerous roads is a gully or ditch immediately off the fog line . . . If there were some way to fix this problem I imagine that the roads would be safer and more comfortable for everyone. . . As someone who drives on rural roads I can also understand the nervousness of interacting with cyclists on a narrow and high speed roadway and I would like to avoid giving our MT hosts a heart attack!!"

### *Driver courtesy and education*

While a number of respondents commented on the courteous attitude of drivers around the state, others commented on their aggressiveness. In particular, respondents mentioned that trucks passed too close and in some cases drove the cyclist off the road. We assume this happens because cyclists are sometimes forced into the road to the left of the white line due to a lack of shoulders and presence of rumble strips and debris. Additionally, drivers may not understand the appropriate passing distance, which respondents also noted as a concern. To have an enjoyable and safe experience, cyclists need courteous and educated drivers. Respondents advocated for bicycle-friendly signs, such as "Bicyclists may use full lane" or pictures of bicycles on signs, around the state and increased driver education on cycling safety and consideration, particularly about how to pass and the "three-foot rule".

Provided here are select quotes:

"Generally local drivers were good and provided plenty of room while passing us. Commercial semi-truck drivers were dangerous, passed way to close, in a couple places actually knocked us off the road from their wind disturbance."

"I enjoyed my bicycle trip. I did find that Montana drivers overall could have used a bit of bicycle awareness with the three-foot rule . . . On empty roads without any oncoming traffic, I had more pick-ups/SUVs come shockingly close to me than elsewhere on the trip. . . As a commercial driver, I feel fair in saying that these drivers did not have any valid reason to require them to select a lane position that compromised my ability to ride safely. I did not encounter these close encounters in Colorado, Wyoming or Washington (drivers would generally give me three feet, and often the whole lane). If you are thinking of signage for the border areas (i.e. Lolo Pass), Idaho drivers could use some bicycle awareness too!"

"Residents MUST be educated that bikes ARE legal on the roads and dangerous attitudes toward bicyclists must change. They need to understand we have every right to be on the road as they do, and running people off the road (literally, I'm not kidding) is the WRONG way to improve the bicycle-touring situation in your state. Honking and other rude behavior, which we experienced a LOT in Montana, made it by far the worst state I've ever ridden in and will never, ever ride in again, sorry."

### *Well-maintained and clean roads*

Cyclists require well-maintained and clean roads free from potholes and debris. One cyclist said they got three flat tires in one day due to debris. This was another reason cyclists were forced into the road on occasion. Some respondents noted the challenge of cycling in construction zones due to narrower roads and loose gravel as well.

Provided here is a select quote:

“I did experience more flats on the highways due to the road litter on the shoulders. The flats were mostly caused by steel particles from blowouts.”

### *Supplemental quotes*

Provided here are supplemental quotes that include multiple road condition themes:

“Some of MT was great in terms of shoulders and road conditions, but other areas are terrible. I entered on I-90 and the shoulders are narrow and covered in debris. I got the majority of my flat tires in MT. Missoula was an exception, so was the Pintler Hwy, but not having an alternate route to I-90 in some of the western areas of the state was not enjoyable. Central and Eastern MT had better and more frequent frontage routes and alternate roads to stay off the interstate. MT had really nice people but also the worst person on my trip who smoked me out with his diesel exhaust while driving by in his big-boy truck. But by and large I met many very friendly people and many willing to help me out when I got stuck.”

“More important than anything are road and riding conditions. I LOVE Montana but frankly many of the roads were terrible for cycling. U.S. 93 south from Missoula, other than the bike trail section, was scary, especially south of Hamilton. Narrow shoulders, rough surfaces. We got hassled/threatened by a local in a diesel pick-up truck in the Big Hole Valley near Wise River who took great umbrage to our cycling on the highway. The road there is narrow and rough with zero shoulder. A wide, clean shoulder really makes a day on the bike. Wyoming and Kansas, for example have way better state highways in that regard for cycling.”

## **FOOD & LODGING**

### *Campgrounds*

While some cyclists stay in hotels, most stay in campsites due to affordability and a greater chance of late night check-in. Cyclists commented that campsites in Montana were often expensive (typically between \$20 and \$40 a night) and expressed the need for lower rates. Additionally, cyclists expressed the need for cyclist/hiker only campsites. Cyclists are not always able to plan their lodging ahead of time because plans “can get off schedule very easily” due to weather, technical problems, or physical condition for a particular day. Campgrounds typically offer the most flexibility for a late night or unexpected arrival. Respondents praised other states and regions where cyclist/hiker only campsites are prevalent. In cyclist/hiker only campsites (such as in Yellowstone) cyclists are charged a small fee and put onto a site with multiple other parties. This is possible because cyclists have no need for an entire site due to little gear and small tents. A lack of campsites sometimes caused cyclists to camp illegally or solicit businesses asking if they could stay in their yard. Respondents expressed concern about camping in unsafe (non-campground) locations and do not desire to camp illegally.

Provided here are select quotes:

"I wish that parks would reserve (as does Oregon) some spots for biker/hikers. We frequently ride most of the day and cannot be "first come". I have missed out on many campsites because I arrived after 3 p.m. and there were no spots left."

"The bicycle infrastructure in Montana really has to be improved if you want to attract cyclists to the state. There is a woeful lack of ... reasonably priced places to stay overnight. Even campgrounds can be expensive. Also, there just doesn't seem to be any reasonably priced campgrounds in or near major cities such as Missoula, Helena, Bozeman or Billings. . . Subsequently, we avoid spending much time in the cities except to pass through."

### **Food**

Respondents said that certain stretches of Montana lacked the availability of food, be it grocery stores, local cafes, or restaurants. Some respondents said they need access to food every three or four days while one respondent said they need access to food every day because they cannot carry ice on their bicycle. A common statement was the need for fresh and healthy foods at regular intervals.

Provided here are select quotes:

"[The] biggest challenge for us was to get something decent to eat; we relied a lot on Cenex stations: ain't many good restaurants on that [Adventure Cycling Northern Tier] route except in Whitefish (and of course Point of Rocks)."

"Of course I need good food. Not fast food or deep fried food. Wholesome food. Or as much in that direction as possible."

"We used the [Adventure Cycling] TransAmerica route from West Yellowstone to Hamilton and then jumped on the Lewis and Clark route... More opportunities to buy food and drinks are needed!!"

### **Lodging (general)**

More generally speaking, "lodging" was noted as a priority, whether it is hotels, B&Bs, or campgrounds. Lodging comments were typically about campsite experiences or cycle/hiker only sites (discussed above), but others commented on the lack of lodging infrastructure in general.

Twin Bridges campground was the only named lodging facility (and was also mentioned four times!) as a particularly good spot for cyclists. Respondents said "Twin Bridges was a wonderful example of a way to meet our cycling needs" and that it "is a perfect example of what I look for on a cycling trip". One respondent said, "The Twin Bridges bike "hostel" at the city park was FIRST RATE. One of the best of my 59 day ride across the USA."

Provided here are select quotes regarding lodging infrastructure difficulties:

"I thought it was a long desolate stretch from Lewiston to Glendive. Would have appreciated more motels and/or a state park."

"I found that the infrastructure to support cycling in eastern Montana, along U.S. route 2, was quite poor. I had expected to camp a few nights, but the campgrounds were rudimentary at

best, seldom had showers, and were often right next to the railroad tracks with trains going by all night long. The motels were few and far between and of exceptionally poor quality, and high price generally.”

“[W]e were unable to locate any campground . . . and while the owner of the local grocery store offered to let us pitch our tents in the parking lot, the county government officials were unwilling to let us camp on the lawn outside their offices. The folks at the library suggested that we could camp at the county fairgrounds, but there was apparently no specific authority allowing us to do that, and just the previous week, the town council had disapproved camping on the library's lawn, hoping to steer camping to the private campgrounds.”

## SCENERY, HISTORIC SITES, AND ATTRACTIONS

Part of bicycle touring is enjoying the scenery and stopping to see historic sites and attractions, when respondents said was a need to make their trip interesting. Unsurprisingly, cyclists gave praise for how Montana’s scenery made their trip memorable. (More discussion on this can be found under responses to the open-ended “memorable experiences” question.) Sometimes, the scenery even made up for other trip challenges such as road conditions and finding affordable campgrounds.

Provided here are select quotes:

“My favorite rides are along rivers and across mountains of the West. [I] Prefer scenic and historic routes like the Lewis and Clark trail where I stopped at each and every sign.”

“Trips that have interesting places to explore are an important factor for me when investigating future trips.”

## AMENITIES

### *Showers*

Free hot showers were an often-mentioned expectation of campgrounds and other lodging facilities. It was also a requested need at public areas such as pools or truck stops.

Provided here are select quotes:

“Showers open and accessible need to be created so that travelers do not need to find homeless shelters as the only, advertised option for staying [affordably] in Montana.”

“We camped a lot in city parks - would have been nice to have more showers - maybe at the public pools.”

### *Water*

Water was a top need and finding it was a concern and challenge. Respondents sometimes mentioned the lack of, and need for, water along rural routes. One respondent suggested the installation of water fountains. The lack of water may go hand-in-hand with a lack of stores or other facilities.

Provided here are select quotes:

“The long stretches of road in Montana can be fatal if you run out of water in the summer.”

“Finding water and restrooms on long days with few services is sometimes a challenge. U.S. 12 was very well catered for and a very pleasant surprise to find a visitors center at the top of Lolo Pass!”

“Very hard to find shade or water in Southeast Montana!”

## OTHER THEMES

Because of the immense number of responses to the question of cycling needs, challenges, expectations, and requirements, the entirety of comment themes could not be included in this report. Other themes, listed from most to least commonly mentioned, include: 1) Better signage, 2) availability of bike shops, 3) reliable maps, 4) attitude of locals, 5) access to electricity, 5) rest stops, 6) bike trails, 7) cell phone coverage, 8) laundry facilities, 9) up to date information on store hours, locations, and ratings, 10) breweries, 11) locating services, 12) weather and fire information, 13) signs to libraries, 14) mountain bike networks, and 15) need for cyclist public relations campaign.

Provided here are select quotes from a variety of themes:

“I wish for more . . . public relations with the trucking industry, the RV driving community; and the general public. People are fascinated with us bike tourists. When I stop to eat, crowds form around me to ask me questions. It happens to all of us bike tourists. We need a public relations effort that captures this interest and results in safer driving around bikes.”

“Also there was not one single place to pull off of HWY 2 to take a break if you were not in a town. How about adding a few rest areas. It only has to be a turnoff with a picnic table.”

“Most of the people I met or interacted with in Montana, including the drivers, were wonderful - friendly and hospitable. However, 2 towns were notable in their poor attitude and sometimes-outright hostility to bike tourists: Cameron and Jefferson City. I don't understand it: bike tourists have got to generate a significant portion of their income, but it was obvious that we were barely tolerated in a couple of cases.” (Another town mentioned for its poor attitude was Lincoln.)

## SUMMARY

Nearly half of the respondents provided input to cyclists' needs, challenges and expectations. As expected, a variety of themes were mentioned numerous times such as road conditions and campgrounds while others were mentioned less but are still important, such as better signage and more rest stops. As is evident, there is a lot of room for improvement, particularly as it relates to road conditions, which cyclists tended to find the most difficult and worst part of their trip. One respondent gave a particularly informative opinion:

“You have a fantastic resource and I understand how people there can be put off by what they may see as a bunch of people from out-of-state bothering them. However I also think you have a full industry of people relying on income from tourism and bad behavior sure makes us think

twice about returning. For example I had planned a Montana trip this summer and I typically spend 2k to 3k on these trips most of which would have gone into your economy. Due to my experience out there with roadside harassment I elected to go out east where they are developing a beautiful set of interconnected off-road trails, which I found must more enjoyable. I think you might benefit by looking at what was done in Wisconsin. I had a beautiful ride across Wisconsin on my trip and I think you might be able to do some of that in MT. Hope this is of some assistance."

Many cyclists enjoyed their experience biking in Montana. One respondent said Montana is "One of the best states to cycle though!" This was a shared sentiment among a number of respondents. However, some cyclists gave particularly negative reviews of their experience in Montana that are worth highlighting here:

"Bicycling in eastern Montana on U.S. 2 was the worst experience of my life. I will never cycle in Montana again. The number of drunk drivers, animosity of sober drivers, non-existent cycle infrastructure, high speed limits and overall hostility toward cyclists was unbearable. Then you add in forest fires. I don't ever plan to return to Montana. Please note, I have cycled across the entire U.S., down the Pacific Coast, and in much of Western Europe, and Montana stands out in a different category of abhorrent for cycling."

"The quality, condition and adequacy of cycling infrastructure is of utmost importance to a rewarding experience. While the scenery and experience of cycling in Montana was overall positive, the varying road conditions, quality and adequacy took away from what could have been an outstanding experience."

In order to better meet cyclist needs, expectations, and requirements so they have a safe and enjoyable trip in Montana, and become a repeat visitor, Montana needs to improve its cycling infrastructure. Montana also needs to recognize that cyclists face a number of challenges that the average tourist does not face. The state has a great resource but the difficulties cyclists face need to be decreased and concerns that they have for facilities and safety need to be assuaged in order to create a viable, successful industry.

## Section 2: Touring Cyclists in Montana

This section is all about cycle touring in Montana. Fifty-one percent of respondents took their most recent multi-day trip in 2013, 30 percent and 19 percent of respondents took their trips in 2012 and 2011 respectively (Table 10).

**Table 10: Year of most recent multi-day cycle trip in Montana**

Most recent Multi-Day Trip	Frequency	Percentage
2013	250	51%
2012	149	30%
2011	94	19%



Twenty-nine percent of respondents traveled solo as well as in pairs in Montana. Twenty-one percent of respondents traveled in groups of over ten cyclists (Table 11). Nineteen percent of respondents traveled in travel parties ranging from three to six cyclists. This finding provides useful insights on the diversity of travel parties who participate in cycling tours in Montana.

**Table 11: Number of cyclists in travel party while in Montana**

Number of Cyclists in Party	Frequency	Percentage
1	144	29%
2	143	29%
3	41	8%
4	23	5%
5	18	4%
6	9	2%
7	3	1%
9	1	< 1%
10	7	1%
10+	105	21%

The type of travel group varied widely, but the highest percent traveled solo (28%) followed by 24 percent who traveled with friends (Table 12). These two travel group categories represented slightly over half of the respondents. The remaining forty-eight percent of respondents represented group parties that traveled as couples, tour groups, family and friends, immediate family, organized events, fund raisers and extended families.

**Table 12: Categorization of travel group**

Travel Group Category	Frequency	Percentage
Solo	137	28%
Friends	117	24%
Couple	67	14%
Tour group	80	16%
Family and friends	30	6%
Immediate family	24	5%
Organized event	22	4%
Fund raiser	10	2%
Extended family	6	1%

Fifty-four percent of respondents traveled in groups with ages ranging from 55 to 64, (Table 13). Travel parties with age groups ranging between 45 to 54 and 65 to 74 represented 28 percent and 37 percent of respondents respectively.

**Table 13: Ages represented in travel groups**

Age Groups in Party	Frequency	Percentage
0-5 years	1	< 1%
6-10 years	3	1%
11-17 years	24	5%
18-24 years	66	13%
25-34 years	159	32%
35-44 years	120	24%
45-54 years	183	37%
55-64 years	267	54%
65-74 years	141	28%
75 +	20	4%

The highest majority of respondents traveled on paved roads (91%) compared to only 11 percent who did off-road biking (a few cyclists did both types of surfaces) (Table 14).

**Table 14: Main surface type used**

Surface Type	Frequency	Percentage
Road	449	91%
Off-road	53	11%

Seventy-four percent of touring cyclists spend six or more nights in Montana, including 33 percent who stayed for 10 or more nights (Table 15). These data show that once drawn to Montana for a bicycle trip, cyclists stay a fair amount of time and longer than the typical 'vacationer' in Montana.

**Table 15: Number of nights spent in Montana on this bicycle trip**

Number of Nights in MT	Frequency	Percentage
0	2	< 1%
1	4	1%
2	14	3%
3	27	5%
4	34	7%
5	47	9%
6	50	10%
7	65	13%
8	48	10%
9	42	8%
10 +	164	33%

Table 16 displays the percentage of nights spent in various types of lodging. The vast majority of nights were spent in either a motel (39%), or a private (22%) or public (19%) campground. Fewer nights were spent in dispersed camping along the bicycle route (6%) or with a friend or relative (5%).

**Table 16: Type of overnight lodging used**

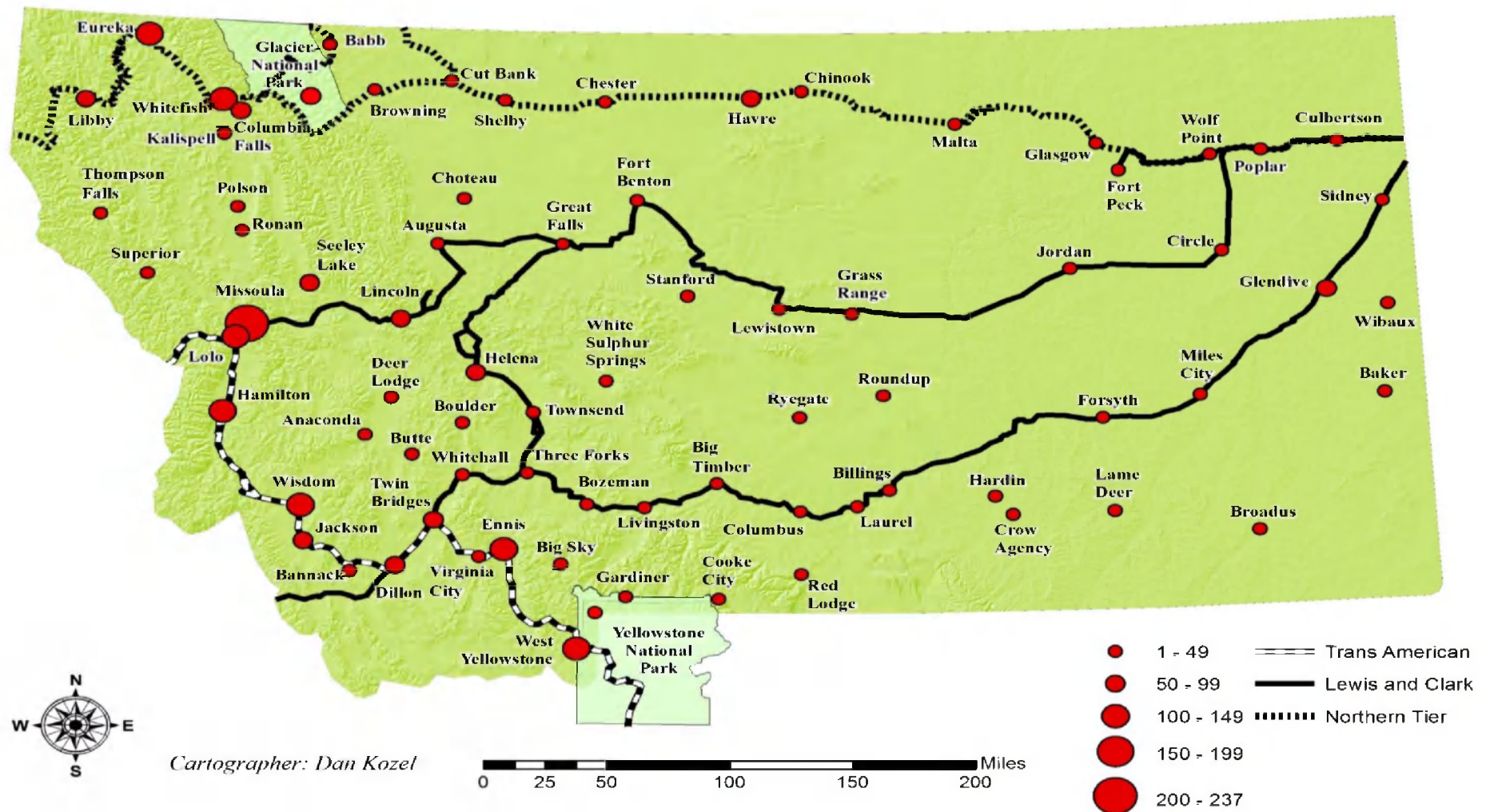
Overnight Stay	Percentage
Motel	39%
Private campground	22%
Public land campgrounds	19%
Dispersed camping along route	6%
Home of friend/relative	5%
Warm Showers.com	3%
B&B	2%

Figure 4 displays the three Adventure Cycling bike routes which pass through the state of Montana and the quantity of nights spent in the cities of Montana. The map shows that the Trans American route has the highest number of overnight stays with cycling tourist within the past 3 years. Missoula (237 overnight stays) and Lolo (146 overnight stays) experienced the highest bicycle touring traffic in the state of Montana. Geographically, both cities are located within a close proximity to the intersection of the Trans American and the Lewis and Clark trails. Additionally, cities considered to be “gateways” to Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks experienced high volumes of overnight stays.

Looking at Figure 4, however, portrays an interesting view of cycling in Montana. It is obvious that not all riders ‘stick’ to the main routes portrayed by the Adventure Cycling maps. Communities throughout the state benefit from touring cyclists. This map could provide incentive to communities and regions within the state to collaborate on route maps, road improvements, and infrastructure development needed for a successful cycle trip in Montana.

Figure 4: Overnight location of touring cyclists in Montana

## Overnight Location of Touring Cyclists in Montana



Ninety-one percent of respondents used Adventure Cycling as an information source prior to their Montana cycling tour (Table 17). This finding is intuitive in that we used the Adventure Cycling’s email list as its study population. Fifty-four percent of respondents used search engines (i.e. Google) as information sources prior to their trip. Cycling blogs and national park brochures/book/websites were used by thirty-nine and twenty-three percent of respondents respectively. Other information sources represented between 8% and 18% of respondents.

**Table 17: Information sources used prior to Montana cycling tour**

Information Sources Used Prior	Frequency	Percentage
Adventure Cycling	459	92%
Search engine	271	54%
Cycling blogs	196	39%
National Park brochure/book/website	113	23%
Bicycle guide books	90	18%
Other	75	15%
Other travel websites	68	14%
National Forest Service offices	53	11%
rec.gov (for campsite reservation)	48	10%
State Park brochure/website	48	10%
Official MT website (VisitMT.com)	46	9%
Magazine/newspaper articles	45	9%
Mobile Apps	43	9%
Chamber/visitor bureau	40	8%
Information from private business	38	8%
On-line video	34	7%
Social media	27	5%
Guide book	19	4%
Official MT guidebook magazine	18	4%
Consumer online reviews	17	3%
BLM offices	12	2%
Information from special events	11	2%
Used no information sources	8	2%

Not surprisingly, 79 percent of respondents found Adventure Cycling as the most useful information source prior to the cycling tour (Table 18) (due in part to the study population used in the study). Search engines (i.e. Google) and cycling blogs were found to be useful information sources by seven percent of respondents. All other information sources were not at the top of cyclist’s list for most useful source of information.

**Table 18: Most useful information sources used prior to cycling tour**

Most Useful Information Sources	Frequency	Percentage
Adventure Cycling	393	79%
Search engine (i.e., Google)	35	7%
Other	31	6%
Cycling blogs	17	3%
Used no sources	5	1%
National Park brochure/book/website	4	1%
Bicycle guide books	3	1%
Social media (i.e., Facebook)	2	< 1%
Guide book	2	< 1%
On-line video (i.e., YouTube)	1	< 1%
Other travel websites	1	< 1%
Consumer online reviews	1	< 1%
Chamber/visitor bureau	1	<1%
Official MT website (VisitMT.com)	1	< 1%
Official MT Guidebook Magazine	1	< 1%
Information from private business	1	< 1%
Information from special events	1	< 1%

Table 19 displays information sources used *during* the cyclists trip. The vast majority of respondents used Adventure Cycling maps during their trip (84%). Many also used local advice to plan their trip while in Montana (57%). Fewer than 10% of cyclists used brochures, bicycle guidebooks, social media, online reviews, the official MT Guidebook Magazine or billboards during their trip.

As presented in Table 20, the most useful information source while traveling was Adventure Cycling maps (74%). Friendly locals were also reported as useful sources (11%). All other sources were not as useful, with fewer than 10% of respondents, in total, reporting other sources as being the most useful during their multi-day cycling trip in Montana.

**Table 19: Information sources used while traveling**

Information Sources while Traveling	Frequency	Percentage
Adventure Cycling maps	414	84%
Friendly locals	279	57%
Map applications	173	35%
Bicycle shop employee	155	32%
Motel/restaurant/gas station employee	134	27%
Campground staff	126	26%
Official highway information signs	113	23%
Visitor information center staff	111	23%
Mobile Apps	57	12%
Other	56	11%
Brochure information rack	45	9%
Bicycle guide books	42	9%
Social media	40	8%
Consumer online reviews	28	6%
Official MT Guidebook Magazine	16	3%
Billboards	12	2%

**Table 20: Most useful information sources used while traveling**

Most Useful Information Sources while Traveling	Frequency	Percentage
Adventure Cycling maps	353	74%
Friendly locals	51	11%
Map applications (i.e., Google Maps)	27	6%
Bicycle shop employee	10	2%
Visitor information center staff	8	2%
Motel/restaurant/gas station employee	5	1%
Mobile Apps	3	1%
Consumer online reviews (i.e., Trip Advisor)	3	1%
Social media (i.e., Facebook, blogs)	3	1%
Official MT Guidebook Magazine	3	1%
Bicycle guidebook	3	1%
Brochure information rack	3	1%
Official highway information signs	3	1%
Campground staff	1	< 1%

Table 21 displays the percent of respondents who engaged in various activities in Montana while on their trip. Ninety-two percent went road biking (indicating that 8% did mountain biking only) and 40% visited other historical sites. About a third of respondents visited Lewis and Clark sites (38%), watched wildlife (37%), went day hiking (33%), engaged in nature photography, experienced local breweries (29%), or visited a museum (28%). These data reveal that while in Montana, cyclists are participating in a wide range of activities.

**Table 21: Activities participated in while in Montana**

Activities in MT	Frequency	Percentage
Road biking	443	92%
Visited other historical sites	196	40%
Visited Lewis & Clark sites	186	38%
Wildlife watching	181	37%
Day hiking	162	33%
Nature photography	144	30%
Experience local Breweries	142	29%
Visited museums	137	28%
Recreational shopping	86	18%
Visited Indian reservations	83	17%
Mountain biking	82	17%
Visited farmers market	75	15%
Attended festivals or special events	56	12%
Birding	31	6%
Viewed art exhibits	30	6%
River rafting/floating	18	4%
Fishing/fly fishing	17	4%
Canoeing/kayaking	16	3%
Attended performing arts	14	3%
Backpacking	12	2%
Sporting event	11	2%
Followed dinosaur trail	10	2%
Rockhounding	6	1%
Golfing	5	1%
Geocaching	4	1%
Motor boating	4	1%
Horseback riding	3	1%
Attended wedding	3	1%
Gambling	2	< 1%
Hunting	1	< 1%



Table 22 shows that a large percentage of cyclists visited Glacier National Park (41%), and Yellowstone National Park (37%) while in Montana. Many also went to the Lolo Pass Interpretive Center (36%), hot springs (24%), and the Big Hole Battlefield (23%).

**Table 22: Sites visited while in Montana**

Sites Visited in MT	Frequency	Percentage
Glacier National Park	194	41%
Yellowstone National Park	173	37%
Lolo Pass Interpretive Center	168	36%
Hot springs	114	24%
Big Hole Battlefield	108	23%
Virginia City/Nevada City	87	18%
Other Montana state parks	73	15%
Ghost towns	56	12%
Flathead Lake State Parks	52	11%
Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, Great Falls	35	7%
None of these sites visited	35	7%
Little Bighorn Battlefield	25	5%
Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex	24	5%
Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center	24	5%
National Bison Range	18	4%
Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park	15	3%
Missouri Headwaters State Park	15	3%
Pompey's Pillar	14	3%
Missouri River Breaks Nat'l Monument	9	2%
C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls	8	2%
Montana Historical Museum, Helena	8	2%
Fort Peck Lake	8	2%
Ft. Peck Interpretive Center & Museum	8	2%
Clark Canyon Reservoir	6	1%
Bighorn Canyon Nat'l Recreation Area	3	1%
Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman	2	< 1%
C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge	1	< 1%

Table 23 displays the level of satisfaction for various services during the cyclist's trip in Montana. The mean is displayed in the far right column. Higher means indicate higher satisfaction. Overall, cyclists were most satisfied with the hospitality of local people (mean=5.10), the availability of camping areas

(mean=4.43), and the availability of grocery/convenience stores (mean=4.40). Compared to the other variables, cell phone coverage (mean=3.75) had the lowest service related satisfaction.

**Table 23: Satisfaction of services while in Montana**

How satisfied were you with the following?	Completely Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Completely Satisfied	Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Hospitality of local people	3 (1%)	1 (0%)	6 (1%)	114 (25%)	151 (33%)	188 (41%)	5.10
Availability of camping areas	3 (1%)	7 (2%)	32 (8%)	180 (46%)	118 (30%)	54 (14%)	4.43
Availability of grocery/convenience stores	1 (0%)	2 (0%)	33 (7%)	248 (55%)	119 (26%)	52 (11%)	4.40
Availability of motels/B&B/hostels	1 (0%)	2 (1%)	22 (6%)	228 (58%)	91 (23%)	47 (12%)	4.40
Availability of Restaurants	0 (0%)	3 (1%)	36 (8%)	253 (57%)	105 (24%)	49 (11%)	4.36
Laundry services	1 (0%)	2 (1%)	20 (6%)	224 (68%)	54 (16%)	30 (9%)	4.26
Availability of restrooms	1 (0%)	11 (2%)	42 (10%)	263 (60%)	75 (17%)	49 (11%)	4.24
Availability of showers	2 (1%)	10 (3%)	60 (16%)	202 (53%)	70 (18%)	40 (10%)	4.17
Availability of bike repair services	3 (1%)	8 (2%)	54 (14%)	207 (55%)	67 (18%)	35 (9%)	4.16
Availability of cycling stores/equipment	2 (1%)	12 (3%)	49 (12%)	229 (57%)	75 (19%)	32 (8%)	4.15
Cell phone coverage	12 (3%)	29 (7%)	112 (76%)	205 (48%)	48 (11%)	25 (6%)	3.75

Table 24 displays satisfaction with various activities within Montana. Satisfaction was relatively high for historical sites (mean=4.79) and local breweries (mean=4.77).

Table 26 displays satisfaction with the road conditions while in Montana. Satisfaction with the signage on the highways (mean=4.49) and in towns (mean=4.4) was high. However, satisfaction regarding the width of shoulders in Montana (mean=3.93) was lower and represents an area to be improved upon in order to better the cyclist experience while in Montana.

Based on these results, it is quite clear that cyclists are satisfied with their experiences in Montana. However, as seen from the open ended responses to what makes a multi-day cycling trip successful, cyclists do have concerns that the state should look into if cycling becomes one of Montana's tourism marketing niches.

**Table 24: Satisfaction of activities while in Montana**

How satisfied were you with the following?	Completely Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Completely Satisfied	Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Historical Sites	1 (0%)	2 (1%)	8 (2%)	157 (39%)	131 (33%)	99 (25%)	4.79
Local breweries	2 (1%)	1 (0%)	19 (6%)	106 (36%)	84 (28%)	86 (29%)	4.77
Cultural events	1 (0%)	1 (0%)	20 (8%)	141 (56%)	55 (22%)	33 (13%)	4.38
Night life	2 (1%)	1 (0%)	13 (6%)	130 (63%)	41 (20%)	20 (10%)	4.29

**Table 25: Satisfaction of road conditions while in Montana**

How satisfied were you with the following?	Completely Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Completely Satisfied	Mean
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Signage on Highways	0 (0%)	4 (1%)	14 (3%)	248 (55%)	133 (29%)	56 (12%)	4.49
Signage in Towns	0 (0%)	2 (0%)	21 (5%)	262 (57%)	125 (27%)	52 (11%)	4.44
Courtesy of motor vehicle drivers	8 (2%)	6 (1%)	53 (11%)	208 (45%)	137 (29%)	55 (12%)	4.34
Amount of vehicle traffic	2 (0%)	9 (2%)	41 (9%)	256 (55%)	120 (26%)	37 (8%)	4.28
Quality of pavement	4 (1%)	11 (2%)	52 (11%)	259 (59%)	110 (24%)	27 (6%)	4.17
Lack of debris on shoulders/road	7 (2%)	15 (3%)	62 (13%)	233 (50%)	106 (23%)	42 (9%)	4.17
Width of shoulders	8 (2%)	21 (4%)	91 (19%)	249 (53%)	73 (16%)	25 (5%)	3.93

## Expenditures for Touring Cyclists

In this section, expenditures of cyclists who traveled through Montana between 2011 and 2013 are displayed. Before delving into results, the process of calculating spending figures is addressed. A number of steps to “clean” the data and calculating daily spending from overall trip spending occur before results are presented. This process is detailed below.

First, answers from those who chose not to fill out the expenditure sections were replaced with “\$0” as it was assumed that they did not spend money in that category. This is commonly done in lieu of respondents typically not placing a “0” in the response column even if they did not spend money.

One question prior to the expenditure categories asked, “How many people do these expenditures represent?” Thus, each original expenditure category was divided by the “number of people the expenditures represent” to obtain full trip expenditure amounts at an individual scale. The individual expenditure categories were then divided by the number of nights spent in Montana indicated by the respondent to reach a daily average. An example of the equation is provided below:

**OE = Original Expenditures**

**GS = Group Size**

**NMT = Number of Nights Spent in Montana**

**1. Individual Trip Spending (ITS) = (OE / GS)**

**2. Daily Individual Average = (ITS / NMT)**

Finally, daily individual spending categories were delimited, which is the process of eliminating expenditure outliers that are more than 3 standard deviations away from the mean. A maximum “cutoff” spending total was first calculated for each category. Then, each spending category’s mean and standard deviation was determined. The standard deviation for each spending category was multiplied by three and added to its mean. Thus, any value above the cutoff value was deemed an outlier in that spending category. Each outlier was replaced with our “cutoff” value that was determined earlier, which still captures the spending that took place, but more accurately represents the distribution of all respondents. This provides our delimited daily individual average of bicyclists’ spending while in Montana. While this process may seem cumbersome, it ensures that an inflated spending amount is not reported because of large, unusual expenditures.

Table 26 displays the daily individual average expenditures of touring cyclists in Montana by spending category. The table is separated into two categories: all MT cyclists, and those who spent some amount of money while in MT. Economic spending data inherently contains assumptions. In this case, almost 100 respondents either 1) did not spend any money while in Montana, or 2) did not answer questions related to expenditures in Montana. Because of the uncertainty of knowing whether the respondent did not answer the question or did not spend, the daily spending is substantially less when all cyclists are used. In the second category of “only cyclists who spent money in Montana”, the respondent must have had to spend some amount of money in at least one category to be included in the analysis. This produces a much higher average daily spending because respondents who had expenditure data replaced with 0’s are taken out of the mean. Both calculations are included because while it is unlikely that cyclists did not spend any money in Montana, we cannot assume that the respondent simply chose to not answer the questions.

For all cyclists, accommodations (\$23.23 per day), restaurants and bars (\$15.66 per day), and Adventure Cycling Association Guided Trips (\$12.01 per day) comprise the highest spending categories. The lowest spending categories are “other” expenditures (\$0.22 per day), other guided outfitting trips such as rafting/fishing (\$0.59 per day), and services that include massages, showers, and medical expenses, etc. (\$0.64 per day). Figure 5 displays the distribution of average daily spending by all cyclists. A total of \$75.75/day/person is spent on average by individuals who traveled across Montana on their bike trip.

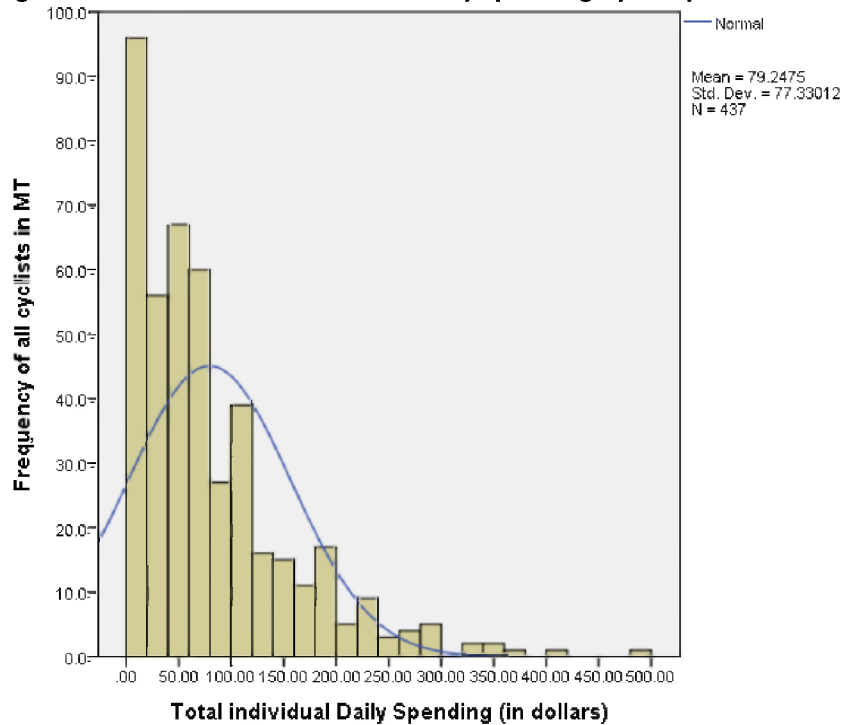
Comparing all cyclists with only those who spent while in Montana, accommodations (\$28.23 per day), restaurants and bars (\$19.03 per day), and Adventure Cycling Assoc. guided trips (\$17.47 per

day) comprise the top three spending categories. The primary difference between all cyclists and only those who spent are the total daily spending averages. Cyclists who spent some amount of money tend to spend over \$27 more per day than when all cyclists are included. Figure 6 displays the spending distribution of only those cyclists who spent while in Montana. It appears that the average daily spending would be between \$75.75 and \$102.92 since it is unknown whether the respondent truly did not spend while in Montana or simply did not answer those questions.

**Table 26: Average Daily Expenditures of all cyclists and only those who spent money in Montana**

Spending Categories	All Cyclists (n= 468)	Only cyclists who spent money in Montana (n=373)
Accommodations (hotel/motel, B&B, hostel, etc.)	\$22.23	\$28.23
Restaurants and Bars	\$15.66	\$19.03
Adventure Cycling Association Guided Trip	\$12.01	\$17.47
Groceries and Snacks	\$7.53	\$9.08
Bike Related Retail Purchases	\$3.31	\$5.52
Camping (Private & Public)	\$4.00	\$5.40
Other Retail Purchases	\$3.32	\$4.71
Transportation Fares (e.g. bus, plane)	\$2.09	\$3.73
Fuel/Gasoline	\$2.02	\$2.99
Bike Repairs/Service	\$1.35	\$2.03
Other Guided or Outfitted Trip (e.g. rafting/fishing)	\$0.59	\$1.70
Services (e.g. rentals, massage, showers, medical)	\$0.64	\$1.33
Fees/Licenses/Admittances (e.g. park fees, movies)	\$0.78	\$1.14
Other Expenditures	\$0.22	\$0.55
	<b>TOTAL = \$75.75</b>	<b>TOTAL = \$102.92</b>

**Figure 5: Distribution of individual daily spending by all cyclists in Montana**



**Figure 6: Distribution of individual daily spending by cyclists who spent while in Montana**

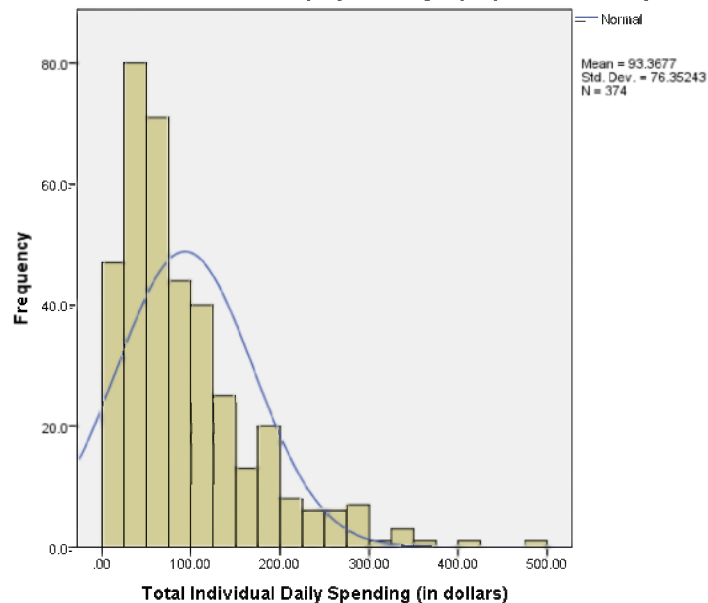
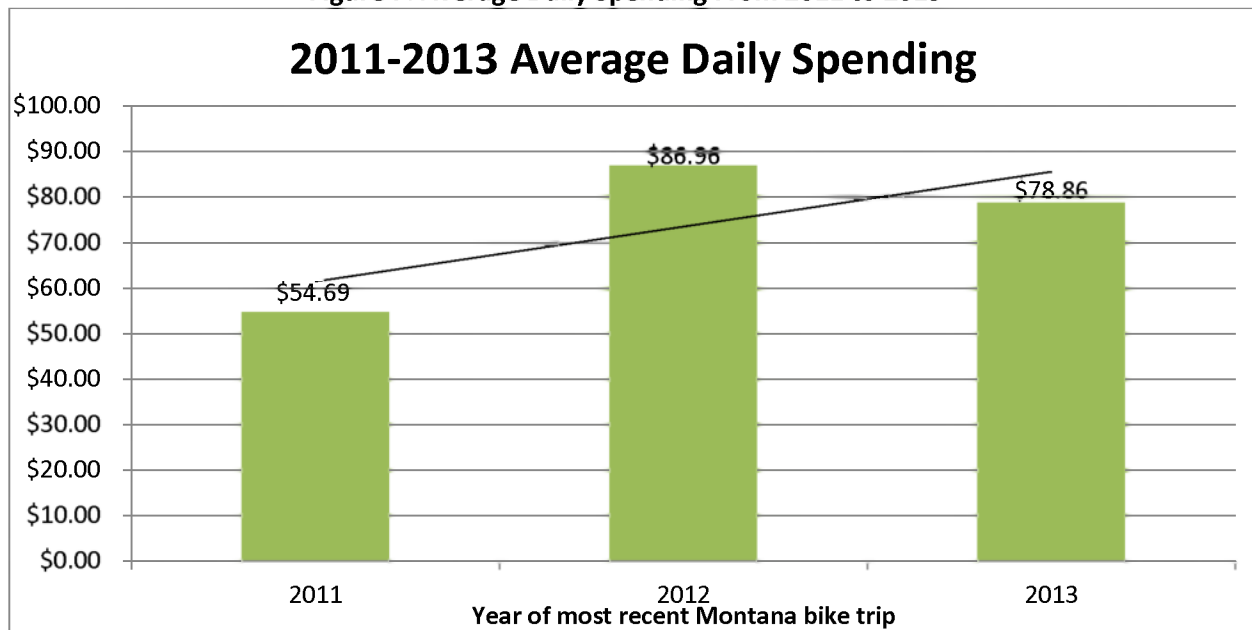


Figure 7 presents the average daily spending per person based on which year the respondent traveled through Montana. In 2012 cyclists spent \$86.96/person/day on average, which is \$8 higher than 2013 and \$32 higher than 2011. Sample size did vary for each year: 2013 had the highest sample size with over 220 respondents. Nearly 150 respondents stated they bicycled in Montana during 2012 and 92 respondents traveled during 2011. Because of the low expenditure amounts in 2011, there may be some recall bias with visitors. Respondents may not be able to remember all expenditures that far in

the past which may lead to lower average spending. However, there may be other factors contributing to this lower spending amount.

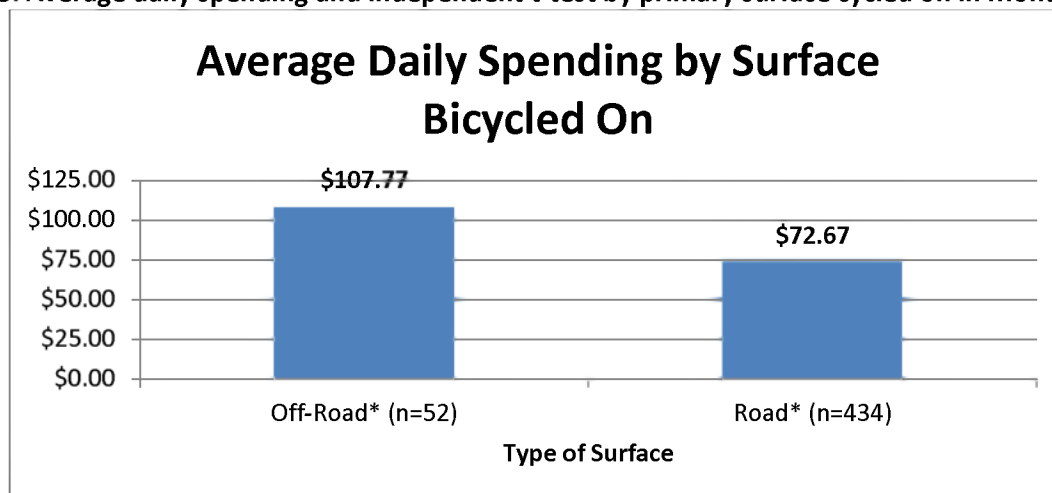
**Figure 7: Average Daily Spending From 2011 to 2013\***



\*2011 and 2012 were inflated to 2013 dollars

Figure 8 compares the average daily spending between riders who were primarily off-road riders (mountain biking) and those who were primarily road cyclists. While sample sizes differ substantially ( $n = 50$  for off-road,  $n > 400$  for road), mountain bikers tend to spend around \$35 more per day than road bicyclists. Using an independent samples t-test, significant differences between means were found at the .05 level. Thus, mountain bikers tend to spend significantly more per day than road bicyclists.

**Figure 8: Average daily spending and independent t-test by primary surface cycled on in Montana**



\*Independent sample t-Test: Mountain bikers mean daily spending is greater than mean road bikers spending at  $\alpha = .05$  level.

## Expenditure Summary

Results indicate that bicyclists in 2013 spent almost \$79/person/day while traveling in Montana. Small and large communities alike can benefit from the economic gains of touring cyclists in the state. On average, cyclists are spending around \$25/person/day on accommodations and \$16/person/day on restaurants/bars. Thus if local communities can make their accommodations and restaurants attractive to cyclists, they may be able to draw in travelers and encourage increased spending at their destination. Furthermore, touring cyclists do tend to spend in multiple categories each day. Each type of tourism-related business has the opportunity to gain some economic benefits from touring cyclists. Furthermore of those who spent, the mean spending per day is \$102. This suggests that there may be a number of cyclists that either did not fill out the expenditure portion of the survey or did not spend any money while in Montana. An overall increase in the awareness of services and amenities in towns may entice touring cyclists to stop in their community to restock on a variety of items.

Mountain bikers tend to spend a significant amount of money per day more than road cyclists. This may be because mountain bikers possibly have to purchase more gear, groceries, or stay more nights than road cyclists because of the intensity of the activity. Road cyclists can cover more miles in a given day than mountain bikers typically. Thus, enticing mountain bikers using the Continental Divide Trail to spend time in a community may accrue economic benefits to local residents.

## Memorable experiences while cycling in Montana

In an attempt to grasp a deeper understanding of the cycle trip, respondents were asked to state their “most memorable” experience or day they had while cycling in Montana. Montana memorable experience comments were provided by 445 of the 502 respondents (89%) who cycled in Montana between 2011 and 2013.

The open-ended question format allows us to examine the types of experiences or aspects that are lasting in the minds of the visitor. Cycling long distances allows for a variety of unique situations when compared to traditional transportation modes such as automobiles. It was expected that topics such as poor weather and particularly difficult riding conditions may be more vividly remembered over time. While topics such as weather were mentioned, most respondents noted very positive situations and experiences they had while on their trip. This suggests that although difficult situations are easily remembered, the positive aspects may be very powerful and unique to the visitor.

In this section, a series of quotes and descriptions from the most popular themes from this open-ended question are presented (Figure 9). While the number of themes ranged to nearly 30 in total, the most popular themes are explained in detail. All other themes are included at the end of this section in the “other themes” category. The themes are presented from those most mentioned to those least mentioned by the respondents.



**Figure 9: Primary themes of cyclists' most memorable experiences while in Montana**



## Scenery

Cycling in Montana can take the visitor through a variety of landscapes. From the jagged peaks of Glacier National Park to expansive prairies of eastern Montana, the visitor transitions through a vast array of settings. Unsurprisingly, Montana's scenic vistas and natural areas were the most commonly mentioned experiences by cyclists. Interestingly, visitors did not specify only one section of the state as being scenic. The responses varied and included areas such as the Big Hole Valley, Bitterroot Valley, Highline, Glacier National Park, Yellowstone National Park, and prairies stretching into North Dakota. Thus, there appears to be a draw for all areas of the state.

Provided below are quotes from the visitor describing their memorable, scenic experience:

"Pedaling one morning through the Big Hole Valley near Jackson Hot springs was particularly memorable: **Beautiful morning light, no traffic, a beautiful mix of fields and natural habitats surrounded by magnificent mountains with antelope prancing and sand hill cranes calling.** Pretty special."

"We passed through Montana on a cross-country ride on the Trans Am route. My favorite day was riding from W. Yellowstone to Ennis - past Hebgen and Earthquake Lakes and then up the Madison River Valley. However, I very much enjoyed every day in Montana. **It's clear why Montana is called "Big Sky Country". Beautiful scenery** with mountains in sight everywhere we went. We also appreciated courteous drivers and good roads for cycling.

"The **most memorable day cycling in Montana was climbing up to the town of Wisdom**, and spending the night in that location. It was not one of the largest climbs of the trip so far, but we were unsure whether the snow had melted from the previous night's storm up top. When we arrived the snow had indeed melted, making it safe for travel with skinny tires. The town of Wisdom and the **absolutely breathtaking scenery** was the most memorable experience of the 3 month cross country trip."

### Climbs/Descents/Mountain Passes

One of the more prominent experiences that visitors expressed was the steep climbs, fast descents, and the various mountain passes that were traveled. Cyclists are proud of their accomplishments of riding over scenic mountain passes as well as the exciting downhill sections that are earned upon their successful climb. The theme of "challenge" paralleled the thrill of this theme as well. This theme contained numerous statements regarding specific passes that the visitor traveled over, which appeared to be a highlight. Some of these passes include Lost Trail Pass, Lolo Pass, Chief Joseph Pass, Marias Pass, and more. Accomplishing challenging sections of steep elevation gain may be one of the difficult situations that were first thought to be memorable prior to this study.

Provided below are select quotes about the theme of climbs/descents/ and mountain passes:

" I was on the Cycle Montana trip with Adventure Cycling and I **loved the ride from Chief Joseph's Pass into the Big Hole**. The scenery is spectacular and it is mostly down-hill and after the climb up to the pass. Even though, it was a tough slog with strong winds when turning south from Wisdom to Jackson, the next day with **that strong tailwind was FABULOUS!** I averaged 15.7 mph for the 76 mile ride into Fairmount, which for me (69 years old at the time), was unthinkable. Plus, I had a max of 43.6mph - another record. Yeah for tailwinds in Montana."

"Cycling from Sula, MT over the continental divide (2 times) and then dropping into Big Hole Valley before stopping in Dillon. **Massive climbs combine with screaming downhills all in one day**. Fantastic scenery and little automobile traffic."

"**Climbing over Rogers Pass was grueling and amazing and then the descent into Lincoln was so refreshing with the beautiful conifers lining the road**. After all the dry, narrow road, lack of shoulder, rolling, wide open expanse of eastern Montana, finally **hitting the western continental divide was such a breath of fresh air**."

### Glacier NP/Going-to-the-Sun Road

While themes were arranged to encompass overall experiences instead of specific areas, Glacier National Park, specifically the Going-to-the-Sun Road, and surrounding area appeared to be very memorable for many cyclists. Glacier NP is divided by the Going-to-the-Sun Road which climbs to over 6,000 feet and arrives at Logan Pass. Riding over this road provides visitors with sweeping vistas of the park and is considered to be one of the state's most popular attractions. Furthermore, there is a rich historical and cultural significance as being one of the country's most beautiful roads.

Provided below are select quotes about Glacier National Park and The Going-to-the-Sun Road:

"We were to ride the "Going-to-the-Sun Road" (and more) with a tour group. We shipped our tandem bike out and went to Whitefish a couple days early. We wanted time to test that the bike had arrived and was in good condition. Oh, and to test ourselves at that altitude as well. We rode from Whitefish up to the ski area. Without doubt, this was the steepest, longest road we'd ever ridden. It was hard. We had to take a rest between each switchback. But we made it.

We had read that if you can do this, that you'll be able to do the Going-to-the-Sun Road. So we felt great. We took the ski lift ride to the top and got lunch there. We marveled at the view, all those mountain tops and we were bike riding! We watched folks do the alpine slide. Then we tested our new brakes on the way down the hill. We stopped at a park on the lake and had a swim. At the end of this day we felt a **real sense of accomplishment and that just maybe we would be able to do the Going-to-the-Sun road**. Funny how this little test or preparation ride takes such a strong place in my memory. We did to the Going-to-the-Sun Road. It was hard. There must have been some sort of vacuum formed that day - there was no air, not until we stopped at the summit anyway! Additional pressure came because we had used it as a fund raising event. We just made it by the time limit (on our tandem). There was a flood of relief when we finally got to the top. Yes, this was the bigger ride, more notable ride, more important ride. **But it's the little ride to the ski area that sticks in my mind and won't let the big ride push it aside."**

"We rode into Montana from Idaho and spent a day relaxing in Whitefish before riding into Glacier National Park. **Riding up Logan Pass in the early morning was one of the great experiences of my 30 year life as a cyclist**. Breath-taking! We spent the night at the campsite on the other side of the climb and then rode up into Waterton. We plan to explore more of the state by bike in coming years."

"I have had more than one multi-day tour in Montana. Previous 3 questions were about most recent trip, in 2013. In 2012 I was on a group tour that included several days in Montana as we circled Glacier National Park/Waterton Lakes. **Certainly the most memorable day was the climb from East Glacier up "Going-to-the-Sun" and descending on the west side of Logan Pass**. It was wonderful cycling with the most amazing scenery!"

### Friendly Local People/Hospitality

The local people of Montana appear to stick in the minds of cyclists in a good way. The hospitality of small towns, as well as larger towns, appears to be a pleasurable aspect of Montana's touring cyclists. Whether it was a meal offered after a long day's ride or a hot shower with a few days of free lodging, local residents provide a great experience for cyclists. These results are promising for Montana's potential for bicycle tourism. While it is recognized that not all respondents were happy with the local hospitality, the overwhelming majority appreciated the sentiments offered by residents. For cycle touring, or bicycle tourism to succeed, the state must have the support of local communities which include many sparsely visited regions that may not be used to touring cyclists. Fortunately, results suggest a positive future for the continued support of cycle touring.

Provided below are select quotes about friendly local people and hospitality:

"I can't. Of the fourteen days I spent in Montana (12 riding), each day carries 'most memorable' status. 1st day on the south side of Clark Fork River, where we saw more eagles than people. 2nd day and the **extremely friendly people of Thompson Falls**. 3rd day and our first glimpse of the rugged Mission Range and a screaming downhill ride from Arlee to Missoula. Days 5-6 up the Blackfoot and Clearwater and down the Swan River Valley between two magnificent ranges. Riding into West Glacier, up the Marias Pass, down into East Glacier. All days with most memorable scenery. The last 2 1/2 days from East Glacier to Chester and on into Havre. Heading into a 20mph headwind that everyone said shouldn't be there, leaving the mountains for the

wide open rolling plains and **friendly rescuers in Havre. The friendly people of Havre and the Havre Buffalo Jump and Underground. No, I have no 'most memorable' day, just 'most memorable' days."**

"Met a local fellow in Jackson who invited my son and I to dinner at his cabin along with some of his other friends... from my journal "Elk steak, fresh green vegetables, corn on the cob, homemade beer, and barley wine! THE BEST MEAL we've had in 5 weeks!" **The scenery, hospitality and discussion were wonderful... not a NY experience for sure!"**

"In 2012 I rode from Portland, OR to Portland, ME and traveled through MT. I entered via Lolo Pass and exited into North Dakota via I-94. There were many memorable days in MT as it just seemed to go on and on (in a good way of course). **Beyond the beauty of the state, it was the kindness of the people that over and over impressed me with their support and interest in my journey."**

### **Weather (both positive and negative)**

Montana's weather can turn from gorgeous to miserable within a very short amount of time. A plethora of comments about both positive and negative weather were noted by cyclists. Because of the unpredictable nature of Montana, cyclists must be prepared to deal with all situations, dissimilar to traditional tourists. Thus, the weather patterns are reflected by the memories of cyclists. Summer weather can be overbearingly hot, while shoulder season weather can be cold and windy. Although it is impossible to ensure perfect weather in Montana, local communities can plan for cyclists and provide easily accessible amenities or accommodations in case of extreme weather. The hospitality of local people also was noted as being a positive outcome of extreme weather situations, which is a theme in itself. Cyclists were offered rides, hot meals, and lodging during poor weather.

Provided below are select quotes about the weather cyclists encountered:

"I spent about a week riding through MT during the 2011 Tour Divide. It is hard to pick just one day because each one was memorable. We hiked through the snow over Strykker pass for hours, uncertain whether we'd have to bivy over night up there, finally dropping below the snow line and pedaling into Whitefish through pouring rain. I shivered through the coldest night of my life in the Holland Lake campground and was brought back to life with a hot breakfast at Holland Lake Lodge. We climbed to Crystal Park in drizzling rain, crashed a wedding banquet in Polaris and struggled through the soul-sucking bentonite mud on Bannack Road. **Every day the route and the weather conspired to place new challenges before us but we were rewarded with great riding, stunning scenery and incredible hospitality throughout the state."**

"I had many memorable days along the Lewis & Clark Trail - Bozeman to Havre. **The scenery and the weather shaped my experiences in June 2013. Started a beautiful riding day, and hours later, flash flooding, lightening and high winds came into play.** A two day delay to my adventure in Helena. People that I met were fantastic, friendly and helpful. Took in museums, toured parks all relating to the Corps of Discovery."

"Most memorable: **leaving West Yellowstone on a morning that was the most icy (high teens) of the entire trip, and it was only mid-September!** Next most memorable: forest fires and smoky air, buying a respirator mask in Hamilton to reduce impact to lungs.

## Challenging experiences

As previously mentioned cyclists remembered specific situations where they had to climb large elevations or encountered less-than-ideal weather. Encompassing all of these situations is the theme of “challenge”. For many, the bicycle tour itself is the primary challenge; however, smaller scale challenges such as traversing mountain passes provide a sense of accomplishment. In Montana, it appears as though these rather challenging aspects are memorable to cyclists. Respondents noted specific situations where they felt they could not make it to their destination, but they pushed themselves past their perceived limits. Completing a large portion of the trail on a single day or difficult climbs is specifically mentioned in the comments.

Provided below are select quotes about the “challenge” of bicycling in Montana:

“The most memorable day on our trip was from Ennis to Twin Bridges, passing through Virginia City. We met up with an Adventure Cycling group so had more riders to share with, **the scenery was amazing, the terrain was challenging but rewarding, the weather was perfect, Virginia City was interesting, and there was wildlife. It was Montana at its best.**”

“Since this was the first time I was on a multi day trip, everyday was memorable in its own way. We started in Glacier National Park and finished in Bozeman. Scenery in Glacier was amazing. Spending the night in a tent next to a small roadside store watching and listening to the helicopters taking off to fight fires in the mountains was interesting. **Making it through the mountain pass going into Helena without stopping to rest on the way up hill was a personal triumph.**”

“The most beautiful stretch of road I saw in a cross country trip was the Pintler Memorial Hwy and I took that up to Georgetown Lake and down into Anaconda and ended in Butte. It was a relatively safe ride and gorgeous and had fun stops at the lake and in Phillipsburg. The next day, from Butte to Bozeman, **I crossed the continental divide, toured the Lewis and Clark Caverns, and had the longest single day of my 5000+ mile trip. It was extremely challenging but a true highlight of my 3 month trip.**”

## Undesirable Experiences

While most cyclists had positive memories about Montana, it is inevitable that undesirable experiences emerge. Undesirable experiences can be defined in a variety of ways including very poor weather, encounters with people, or wildlife. These types of experiences tend to stay with visitors for a long period of time, which was discussed previously. However, this is not to say that the cyclist did not enjoy their trip to Montana. It is a reminder that this group may face different challenges than traditional tourists and may encounter those who do not support cyclists. Cyclists must worry about whether the shoulder is wide enough to safely ride and experiencing nights in places that may be previously unplanned. Mitigation of undesirable experiences may not be completely possible, but support from local residents can help cyclists, and all tourists in general, feel more comfortable given their surroundings.

Provided below are select quotes about the undesirable experiences cyclists encountered:

“My favorite memorable days were riding from Whitefish to Swan Lake and then on to Seeley Lake - because of the combination of amazing, fantastic scenery and good road conditions (e.g. a shoulder most of the way, routes slightly off the heavily-trafficked road). **Riding on rt. 83 from Seeley Lake down to 200 (to get to Missoula) was gorgeous but white-knuckled terrifying**

**riding, because of heavy traffic and lack of shoulder.** (I also really enjoyed the day I rode from Troy through Libby and along Lake Koocanusa to camp at the marina - pretty, not much traffic, and decent road.) **Wished there was better camping along much of my ride: choices were impacted RV camps, or kind of creepy backwoods stuff that you couldn't count on, to have water or to be safe (from bears raiding your food, especially, or maybe armed militia types who actually do hang out in these parts).** Mostly I just love riding my bike in western Montana, except for the lack of places to keep your food safe from bears."

"I would have to say when **some trucker almost killed my brother just south of Kalispell.** He had to bail into the ditch to save his own life. Many of the **Montana roads are too dangerous to ride, because there is no shoulder and a few bad apples can really make things tough.** Luckily, a nice couple that lived just west of Missoula picked all three of us up in their RV and drove us to their house about 150 miles away. We were then on our way again. **Montana is a beautiful state, but it's doubtful that I would go there again for road biking.**"

"Well it was leaving Montana on the way to Yellowstone when I **was verbally accosted by a guy with Montana plate who told me we should not be on the road,** even though we were on a road with NO other traffic that was 2+ lanes. **This happens too frequently in MT since I have been through there about 4 times and each time I have had at least one of these vehicle encounters.** I think the issue is that even the state police think this is something that is routine. It would be a good investment of tourist dollars to get up a program against this type of behavior. They had that issue in ID as well but I understand the restaurant and hoteliers have decided it was beginning to cost them too much lost business and hence the state lost tax revenue."

## Other Themes

Because of the immense number of responses to the question of memorable experiences, the entirety of comment themes could not be included in this report. However, the remainder of themes will be provided along with a variety of quotes that relate to some themes. Listed below are the other themes listed in descending order in terms of number of responses.

Other themes include: 1) Enjoyable time spent in small towns, 2) Difficulty of specifying only one memorable moment, 3) Missoula and the Adventure Cycling Association, 4) Lack of people/traffic, 5) Good riding conditions, 5) Open space, 6) Wide variety of amenities, 7) Wildlife viewings, 8) Yellowstone NP area, 9) Meeting other riders, 10) Historical Sites, 11) "One-of-a-kind" experiences, 12) Relaxation, 13) Forest fires, 14) Plans to revisit Montana, 15) Montana Breweries.

Provided below are select quotes from a variety of themes:

"I cycled from Anchorage, AK to Lake Tahoe, CA this summer. Arriving back to the states in Montana was incredible. We cycled Going-to-the-Sun Road through Glacier at sunrise in August. It was the most amazing experience of my life. As my brother and I said countless times, Montana is the goods! Can't wait to get back."

"One day we road from Phillipsburg to Ovando. My favorite memories of the day were riding along a quite road with amazing scenery. It felt back I had gone back in time, completely removed from the busy modern life. It was peaceful and perfect. It reminded me of my youth on a cattle ranch. The few cars I saw had friendly people that took the time to wave and smile. Something I don't experience in the big city."

“I was completing the last section of my Trans Am. I really enjoyed visiting the headquarters of Adventure Cycling and the town of Missoula.”

“I've ridden over 2,500 mountain bike miles in Montana over the past 12 months. Touring, exercising and just riding for fun with friends. I've had so many incredible rides I cannot single one out.”

### **Summary of Cyclists' most memorable experiences**

Provided above is an overview of some of the most pertinent themes that arose during analysis regarding Montana's touring cyclists' most memorable experiences. As expected, a variety of themes are mentioned numerous times such as scenery and weather. However, themes such as “hospitality of local people” and “challenge” are unique themes that are telling of Montana's character. Cycle tours can be a very difficult endeavor for those who choose to embark, but the hospitality of Montana's locals appears to make the experience even more enjoyable as well as the scenic landscapes. The conversations with residents in restaurants and bars and their willingness to help them out when need be are noted experiences that were overwhelmingly positive. Furthermore, the challenge of Montana's diverse landscapes makes for an experience that is long-lasting. The grueling rides up steep mountain passes followed by the ease of downhill riding for miles provides a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment for those who may not have known what to expect prior to visiting. Unlike other states, the variety of landscapes proves to be refreshing for those who are cycling long distances. Respondents did not discriminate one section of Montana as superior to others parts, but they enjoyed the entirety of their stay. Thus, all local residents can help promote and facilitate a unique experience for the touring cyclist. One take away of this section indicates that Montana has much to offer for cyclists and the state is viewed positively through a variety of visitor experience dimensions. However, there are areas that may need improvement which are outlined in later sections of this report.

## **Summary and Discussion**

Results indicate that Montana has potential to become a viable cycle touring destination, but improvements are needed for a successful multi-day cycling trip in some areas. This section summarizes and interprets results for use by tourism promoters and planners. General touring cyclists' results are presented first, followed by results from those who traveled through Montana.

### **General Touring Cyclists**

Demographically touring cyclists tended to be 52-53 years old with a rather high household income. Forty-four percent of cyclists were employed, but 36 percent were retired. It appears those who are financially stable or are able to take substantial time to travel comprise the sample. Cyclists generally tend to reside in Western U.S. states such as Washington, California, and Oregon. The Great Lakes Region also tends to be prevalent in terms of the respondents' residency. Tourism planners and promoters may take this into consideration when preparing marketing plans to target these areas as they may have a higher propensity towards cycle touring. Those who are interested in cycle touring may also be more apt to travel to a destination if they are aware of its cycling potential. International visitors made up seven percent of the sample, which may indicate international popularity of cycle touring.

The sample of touring cyclists appears to be dedicated and actively involved within their sport. In fact, 92 percent of cyclists stated that they planned to take a multi-day bicycle trip in the next three years. Again, if planners or promoters could market towards the cycling demographic, it may entice those planning a trip to choose a route through Montana or focus the trip around visiting the state. Only



four percent of the sample hasn't taken a multi-day trip in the past three years and 64 percent had taken between 1-4 multi-day trips in the past three years. Thus, capitalizing on this long-term planning process is important in bringing the cyclist through the state.

Touring cyclists participate in multiple bicycle-related activities throughout the year when they are not traveling long distances. Eighty-five percent of respondents even take their bike with them on vacations. Promoting local trails or day rides may encourage visitors to bring their bike with them to a destination or to rent a bike once they arrive. Potential visitors may also be drawn to the fact that their potential destination has cycling-related activities at that location. Forty-six percent of respondents had been a spectator in the past three years at a cycle-related event, indicating potential for event attendance by nonresidents. Road races tended to see the highest engagement as a spectator with 76 percent of the sample noting participation.

There appears to be distinct groupings of touring cyclists based on trip lengths and mileage preferred: casual touring cyclist, intermediate, and advanced. Casual touring cyclists prefer trip lengths of 5-7 days (29%), intermediate 10-30 days (38%), and advanced 30+ days (28%). Preferred daily mileage fluctuated with three discrete distances preferred: 40-50 miles, 50-60 miles, and 60+ miles per day. The realization of multiple typologies of cycle tourists indicates that the trips desired could be very different from cyclist to cyclist. A shorter trip may indicate that the cyclists may want to experience as much as they can in the state in a short amount of time whereas a 30+ day trip may limit the amount of time/money spent in one place.

Eighty-six percent of the sample stated they bring wireless technology along with them on their trip. This result is not surprising, but reaffirms the importance of businesses/agencies/and planning entities' online presence. The most popular reason for using wireless technology was for updated information such as weather and directions/maps. Finding lodging, sharing trip experiences, and hours of operation for businesses are very useful for those using wireless technology. Keeping up-to-date information on websites and providing the most relevant information possible is critical for businesses. Cyclists are not given typical comforts of travelers and when bad weather arrives they must have access to these issues very quickly.

Finally, the cyclist's comments related to needs, challenges, expectations, and requirements for a successful trip provided interesting insights into what is needed for a cycle tour. This question was initially asked to include all locations of their trip, but many respondents discussed their needs and/or challenges in regards to Montana. The most commonly mentioned issues related to road conditions were rumble strips, driver courtesy, route safety, and maintenance of roadways. Montana is making strides by providing bike trails connecting towns like Missoula, Lolo, and Hamilton, but cyclists report that some roadways are not cycle-friendly. Some roads appear to have limited shoulders and room for a cyclist to comfortably ride. Also, education of both drivers and cyclists is also pertinent to a successful cycle tourism industry. Dangerous situations were mentioned where the cyclist was in a close-encounter with a vehicle. Residents must be comfortable with the fact that cyclists share the road with vehicles and cyclists should reciprocate this idea.

## **Touring Cyclists in Montana**

This section details the results concerning Montana as a cycle touring destination. Over 450 respondents had stated that they had taken a multi-day cycle trip through Montana in the past three years. While results of general touring cyclists are useful, a primary objective of this study was to understand Montana's cycle tourism potential.



The majority of touring cyclists in Montana tend to travel either solo, with a partner, or with 10+ people. This, again, indicates differences in the type of trip the cyclist participates in while traveling. Groups tended to be comprised of solo travelers (28%), friends (24%), couple (14%), or a tour group (16%). The most common ages represented in a travel party tended to be between 55-64 years old (54%) followed by 44-54 years old (37%). It would be most useful to market to these certain demographics of cyclists as they may be financially stable or possess large blocks of time for long-distance tours. This demographic also appears to be more active than previous generations, which could lead to an increased number of active vacations. The primary surface that cyclists rode on tended to be road/highways (91%), but 11 percent of Montana's visiting cyclists did ride off-road (mountain biking). The Continental Divide Trail may be the least cycled trail by a large amount of cyclists, but there could be potential for bringing in a different demographic of riders.

Touring cyclists in Montana tended to spend on average 8+ nights in the state. One third of the respondents spent more than 10 nights in Montana. The amount of nights spent on average is encouraging when compared to the average daily spending of cyclists. All cyclists combined spent \$75.75/person/day while in Montana. If a cyclist spends 8 nights in Montana, that would equal a total of over \$600 per trip per person spent in the state. Comparing only cyclists who spent, the average daily spending was \$102 per day. As mentioned earlier, the true average daily spending is most likely \$75-\$102 per day because of the large percentage of respondents who did not spend or did not answer the expenditure questions. Economically, small town communities could see considerable gains from drawing in touring cyclists to their community. Cycle touring could provide economic impacts, albeit a small niche of travelers, which would not be seen if the community did not attempt to draw in this market. Communities such as Twin Bridges, MT have made bicycle camps for touring cyclists to spend a night, shower, and relax while on their trip. In turn, this has led to increased spending in restaurants/bars and grocery stores in the community. As Figure 4 indicated, cyclists are not only visiting major communities like Missoula, but small communities such as Wisdom, Eureka, Ennis, and West Yellowstone cater to a large number of touring travelers. Encouraging local community leaders to embrace this niche market can provide a better experience for the cyclists and bring economic benefits to local residents who may not see as many traditional tourists throughout the year.

It appears that cyclists in 2011 spent less per day than cyclists in both 2012 and 2013. This may be due to a variety of factors including recall bias or the 2008 recession. However, it's encouraging to see that spending has trended upward in the past few years. Other spending results indicated that off-road cyclists have a significant amount of spending more per day than road cyclists. Again, promotion of off-road, multi-day trails could benefit local communities that the route passes through.

Satisfaction of a variety of trip aspects was asked of cyclists in Montana including services, road conditions, and amenities. Cyclists are most satisfied with the hospitality of locals, historical sites, local breweries, and signage on highways/in town. Shoulder width, cell phone coverage, and availability of bike repair services/equipment stores, appear to be where cyclists are the least satisfied while in Montana. Overall the state appears to be doing a decent job with cyclist's needs, but taking shoulder widths into consideration as well as improving cell phone coverage in some remote areas seems to be important. Again, cyclists do not have the ability to drive to the nearest town as a traditional tourist in a vehicle, making cell phone coverage important for updated weather reports and directions. In general, Montana should keep promoting its historical sites, increase awareness of the local breweries, and praise the hospitality that locals provide to nonresident visitors. Unfortunately, some of the comments concerning the challenges cyclists faced related to some of these "most satisfied" aspects as well. It is

impossible to make every trip perfect for everyone, but the state and communities can strive to provide the most enjoyable experience to all types of travelers.

Cyclists spent time visiting a variety of sites in Montana, but the most popular were Glacier National Park (41%), Yellowstone National Park (37%), Lolo Pass Interpretive Center (36%), and various hot springs (24%). Besides the variety of sites, a number of other activities popular among cyclists were: visiting historical sites (40%), visiting Lewis & Clark sites (38%), wildlife watching, (37%), and day hiking (33%). It appears that the trip experience is not solely focused on the cycling route, but includes a variety of different activities and sites. Reconceptualization of the long distance biking tour and what it consists of is needed. Cyclists prefer to enjoy a number of different places and activities while on their tour. Again, stakeholders should take this into account as there is potential for drawing cyclists to their location on off-days and as part of their trip.

Finally, qualitative results of the “most memorable moment” in Montana provided great insights into what makes the state special to visitors. The scenic vistas, local hospitality, and sense of accomplishment visitors feel while cycling through Montana is very encouraging. The state should not only focus on the improvements needed, but also recognize the great experiences that visitors are receiving currently. With a few considerations, Montana has the potential to become a premier cycling destination. The diversity of landscapes provides for different and exciting riding conditions in all regions. It should be stressed that Montana’s local residents provided some of the most welcoming and memorable experiences to visiting travelers. Many were so pleased with the reactions they received from locals during bad weather and how willing they were to bring them into their residence for a hot shower or warm meal that they want to come back.

The following section includes recommendations for future research and development of a viable cycle tourism industry in Montana.

## Recommendations and Future Research

Included are a number of recommendations Montana could provide to enhance the touring cyclist’s experience and to encourage future travelers to visit the state:

- **Planning for cycle tourism in decision-making processes:** One of the most important aspects of a long distance cycle tour is road conditions. Rumble strips, debris, and shoulder width are critical to consider when making or maintaining roadways in the eyes of the cyclists. If the rumble strip covers the entire shoulder, it does not allow cyclists to use the highway in a safe manner. Shoulders must be an adequate size to account for vehicles to pass and the cyclist to safely ride along the highway. It is even more preferred to build cycle trails similar to those built from Lolo to Hamilton. This would decrease the conflict that cyclists have with vehicles, create much safer riding conditions, and provide residents with a trail to use themselves.
- **Encourage local communities to embrace touring cyclists:** Visitor expenditures indicate a great opportunity for local communities to bring in extra economic activity through promotion of this niche market. Cyclists spend time in all regions of the state, not just a few towns. Much of Western MT and most of Eastern MT (more specifically the Highline region and the I-94/90 corridor) could see increased cycle tourism in their communities if proper services are provided.

Cycle-friendly infrastructure, welcoming locals, and signage would go a long way to embracing this niche market.

- **Providing amenities for touring cyclists:** Cyclists appear to need different amenities than the average tourist in a vehicle. “Bicycle camps” similar to what the town of Twin Bridges offers are very well-received infrastructure designs that substantially improve the experience for cyclists. If a number of small communities were able to build similar types of camps, the economic and social impact could be great for local residents. Word-of-mouth spreads quickly through niche market communities and the town may see an increase in visitation/spending due to these changes. Cyclists are willing to spend time and money in towns on their off-days and at night. Providing affordable, comfortable accommodations for cyclists encourages even more time spent in town to enjoy what it has to offer. Changing existing public campground policies to be inviting for touring cyclists would be beneficial. A number of campsites designated for cyclists/hikers only, excluding bicyclists from minimum night reservation policies, or providing bicycle-specific amenities at campgrounds (e.g. bicycle tools/racks, covered group shelters, electrical outlets for charging devices, and wildlife-proof storage containers) are a few of the many options to consider.
- **Educating the public of acceptance of bicyclists on roadways:** Driver courtesy is another significant aspect of the cycling experience. Many cyclists thoroughly enjoyed the hospitality of local people, but also noted that some drivers were not courteous on the road. It is not fair to assume that this is the majority of local residents, but only one bad encounter can make the entire trip unforgettable in a not-so-good way. Comments by cyclists referred to being pushed off the road by someone driving too close, being yelled at by passing vehicles, and drunk drivers. Thus, educating the entire public on how to share the road with cyclists and vehicles is needed. Even signs that say, ‘Bicyclists may use full lane’ provide a reminder to the public that bicycles may be present on the highway. Ensuring the courtesy of both parties provides a better, safer experience for drivers and cyclists.
- **Future research is needed on cycling and the potential for cycle tourism:** One major takeaway message is that little is known about cycle tours or the people that participate in this activity. Furthermore, more research is needed to understand differences between mountain biking and road biking, economic benefits, and infrastructure development. The state of Montana could attempt to target this market to bring in a demographic that appears to fit the geotourism theme. While questions were not asked directly about geotourism, it appears that touring cyclists fit within geotourism’s principles. They support local communities, practice environmentally sustainable behaviors, and are focused on integrating themselves within the culture of the place.

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## Appendix A – Questionnaire

Bicycle Tourism Survey										
<p>Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study about multi-day bicycle trips! We are interested in your cycling needs, challenges, route choice, spending, and other cycling related activities in which you have participated. This information is important to help us understand what is needed to make multi-day cycling a good experience. Your responses are confidential. This survey should take between 8 and 10 minutes to complete.</p>										
<p>In what U.S. state, Canadian province, or other country do you reside?</p> <p>U.S. State/territory</p> <p>--Click Here--</p> <p>Canadian Province/territory</p> <p>--Click Here--</p> <p>Other International country</p> <p></p>										
<p>Are you planning to take a multi-day bicycle trip in the next 3 years?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Maybe</p>										
<p>How many multi-day bicycle trips have you taken in the past 3 years?</p> <p>--Click Here--</p>										
<p>Did you take a multi-day bicycle trip in <u>Montana</u> in the past 3 years?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No</p>										
<p>What year was your most recent multi-day bike trip in Montana?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 2013 <input type="radio"/> 2012 <input type="radio"/> 2011</p>										
<p>Had you ever visited Montana, USA, <u>before this bike trip</u>?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Yes! I live in MT</p>										
<p>How many cyclists were in your travel party/group while in Montana?</p> <p>--Click Here--</p>										
<p>What option <u>best</u> describes your travel party/group?</p> <p>--Click Here--</p>										
<p>Please indicate what age groups were represented in your travel party/group. (Please select all that apply)</p> <table><tbody><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 11-17 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 years</td></tr><tr><td><input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 years</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> 75 and over</td></tr></tbody></table>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-17 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 75 and over
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-17 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 65-74 years						
<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 75 and over						
<p>What was the main surface type you used on this tour?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Road <input type="checkbox"/> Off-road</p>										
<p>In a few sentences, focusing on location, activities, and biking experience, please describe your most memorable day while cycling in Montana!</p> <p></p>										

Prior to your cycling tour, where did you or someone in your travel group gather ideas or information for this trip? (Please select all that apply)

- |                                                               |                                                                      |                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I Used no information sources        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other travel websites                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Magazine/newspaper articles                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I Adventure Cycling                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer online reviews (e.g., TripAdvisor) | <input type="checkbox"/> National Park brochure/book/website                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I Search engine (e.g., Google)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycling blogs                               | <input type="checkbox"/> State Park brochure/website                                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I Mobile Apps                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media (e.g., Facebook)               | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide book (e.g., Frommers, Lonely Planet)                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I rec.gov (for campsite reservation) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle guide books                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Information from private business (e.g., resort/motel/attractions) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I National Forest Service offices    | <input type="checkbox"/> Chamber/visitor bureau                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Information from special events                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I BLM offices                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Official MT website (VisitMT.com)           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I On-line video (e.g., YouTube)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Official MT guidebook magazine              |                                                                                             |

If 'Other' please specify information sources

Of the sources you marked above, please select the most useful information source.

--Click Here--

While traveling in Montana ON THIS TRIP, where did you or someone in your travel group gather ideas or information? (Please select all that apply)

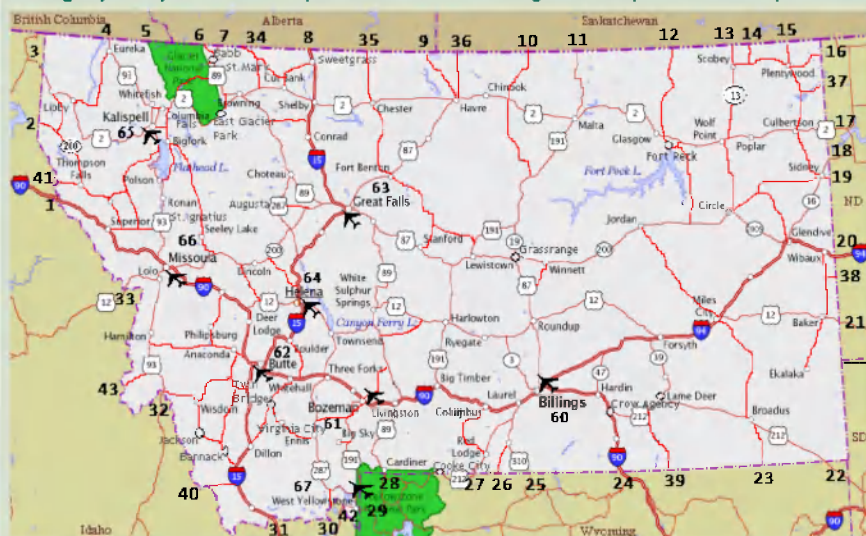
- |                                                 |                                                                      |                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure Cycling maps | <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer online reviews (e.g., TripAdvisor) | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitor information center staff      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle shop employee  | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media (e.g., Facebook, blogs)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Motel/restaurant/gas station employee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Campground staff       | <input type="checkbox"/> Official MT Guidebook Magazine              | <input type="checkbox"/> Brochure information rack             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 'Friendly' locals      | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle guide books                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Official highway information signs    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Apps            | <input type="checkbox"/> Map applications (e.g., Google Maps)        | <input type="checkbox"/> Billboards                            |
|                                                 |                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                 |

If 'other' please specify information sources.

Of the information sources marked above, please select the most useful source while in Montana.

--Click Here--

On the map below, please trace your route by clicking on the towns you cycled through in Montana. When you click on a town, a little green circle will signify that you selected it. (The numbers around the edge of the map and near the airports will be referenced in the two questions below the map).



If you entered Montana by bicycle, please reference the bold, black numbers around the state border from the map above. Select the point at which you entered Montana from the list below.

--Click Here--

Again, referencing the numbers from the map, if you exited Montana on bicycle please select the point at which you exited Montana from the list below.

--Click Here--

How many nights did you spend in Montana on this trip?

--Click Here--

Please choose the location (nearest town) and choose the lodging type (listed below) for your nights spent in Montana on this trip.

PLEASE NOTE: You can list up to eight nights.

Town, Night 1 <br> (Please scroll or begin typing the town or nearest town name to select where you spent your night(s))

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 1

--Click Here--

Town, Night 2

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 2

--Click Here--

Did you spend any additional nights in Montana?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Town, [Night 3](#)

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 3

--Click Here--

Town, [Night 4](#)

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 4

--Click Here--

Did you spend any additional nights in Montana?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Town, [Night 5](#)

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 5

--Click Here--

Town, [Night 6](#)

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 6

--Click Here--

Did you spend any additional nights in Montana?

☐

Yes

☐

No



Town, Night 7

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 7

--Click Here--

Town, Night 8

--Click Here--

Lodging Type, Night 8

--Click Here--

Please estimate how much you spent in U.S. dollars IN MONTANA (both cycling and off days) in each of the categories below (round to whole dollars; no commas):

How many people do the following expenditures represent?

Accommodations (hotel/motel, B&B, hostel, etc.) in Montana \$

Camping in Montana \$

Restaurant/bar in Montana \$

Fuel in Montana \$

Groceries and snacks in Montana \$

Bike related retail purchases in Montana \$

Bicycle repairs/service in Montana \$

Other retail purchases in Montana \$

Services, (e.g., rentals, massage, showers, medical expenses) in MT \$

Adventure Cycling Association guided trip in MT \$

Other guided or outfitted trip (e.g. rafting/fishing) in Montana \$

Fees/licenses/admittances (e.g. park fees, movies, events) in Montana \$

Transportation fares paid for in Montana (e.g., bus, plane, train) \$

Any other expenditures in Montana \$

If other expenditures, please specify ~

**While cycling in Montana, how satisfied were you with the following attributes:**

	Completely Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Completely satisfied	N/A
Width of shoulders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of debris on shoulders/road	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Amount of vehicle traffic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of pavement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Signage on highways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Signage in towns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courtesy of motor vehicle drivers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of showers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of restrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Laundry services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cell phone coverage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of restaurants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of cycling stores/equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of bike repair services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of motels/B&B/hostels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of camping areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Availability of grocery/convenience stores	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hospitality of local people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local breweries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Night life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Historical Sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**While in Montana ON THIS TRIP, please indicate all the activities in which you participated. (Please select all that apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Road biking	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife watching	<input type="checkbox"/> Golfing	<input type="checkbox"/> Visited museums
<input type="checkbox"/> Mountain biking	<input type="checkbox"/> Geocaching	<input type="checkbox"/> Sporting event	<input type="checkbox"/> Attended festivals or special events
<input type="checkbox"/> Day hiking	<input type="checkbox"/> Experience local Breweries	<input type="checkbox"/> Gambling	<input type="checkbox"/> Attended performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking	<input type="checkbox"/> OHV/ATV riding	<input type="checkbox"/> Recreational shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Viewed art exhibits
<input type="checkbox"/> Horseback riding	<input type="checkbox"/> Motorboating	<input type="checkbox"/> Visited farmers market	<input type="checkbox"/> Followed dinosaur trail
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature photography	<input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing/kayaking	<input type="checkbox"/> Visited Indian reservations	<input type="checkbox"/> Rockhounding
<input type="checkbox"/> Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing/fly fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> Visited Lewis & Clark sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Attended wedding
<input type="checkbox"/> Birding	<input type="checkbox"/> River rafting/floating	<input type="checkbox"/> Visited other historical sites	

**Which of the following sites did you visit in Montana ON THIS TRIP only? (Please select all that apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> Yellowstone National Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, Great Falls	<input type="checkbox"/> I Virginia City/Nevada City	<input type="checkbox"/> C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
<input type="checkbox"/> Glacier National Park	<input type="checkbox"/> C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum of the Rockies, Bozeman	<input type="checkbox"/> Ft. Peck Interpretive Center & Museum
<input type="checkbox"/> National Bison Range	<input type="checkbox"/> Montana Historical Museum, Helena	<input type="checkbox"/> Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center, West Yellowstone	<input type="checkbox"/> Missouri River Breaks Nat'l Monument
<input type="checkbox"/> Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation	<input type="checkbox"/> Big Hole Battlefield	<input type="checkbox"/> Bighorn Canyon Nat'l Recreation Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Ghost towns
<input type="checkbox"/> Lolo Pass Interpretive Center	<input type="checkbox"/> Clark Canyon Reservoir	<input type="checkbox"/> Little Bighorn Battlefield	<input type="checkbox"/> Hot springs
<input type="checkbox"/> Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex	<input type="checkbox"/> Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Pompey's Pillar	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Montana state parks
<input type="checkbox"/> Flathead Lake State Parks	<input type="checkbox"/> Missouri Headwaters State Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Fort Peck Lake	<input type="checkbox"/> <u>NONE</u> of these sites visited

When doing multi-day bike trips, do you bring wireless technology (e.g., smart phone, laptop, tablet) with you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

—Page Break—

While on a multi-day bike tour, how often do you use your technology for . . .

	Always	Frequently	Sometimes	Never	Don't know
Finding restaurants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike retail/service shops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attractions to visit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Activities to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ratings and reviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Price comparison	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sharing trip experiences on-line	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lodging availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Camping availability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding hours of operation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Road conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Road opening/closing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Weather	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Directions/maps	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

For you, what is the optimum length (in days) for a multi-day trip?

- ☐ 1-2 days      ☐ 5-7 days      ☐ 15-29 days  
☐ 3-4 days      ☐ 10-14 days      ☐ 30+ days

On a multi-day trip, what is your preferred daily mileage?

Which of the following cycling-related activities have you participated in during the past 3 years? (check all that apply)

- |                                                         |                                            |                                                   |                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take my bike on vacations      | <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain biking   | <input type="checkbox"/> Commuting to work/school | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent bike touring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rent a bike on vacations       | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle races     | <input type="checkbox"/> Day road rides           | <input type="checkbox"/> Casual cycling in town   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Used 'bike share' on vacations | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising rides | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial bike tour     |                                                   |

Which of the following cycling related activities have you been a spectator? (check all that apply)

- |                                           |                                             |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Road race        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain bike race | <input type="checkbox"/> Other bicycle events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cyclo cross race | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle tour       |                                               |

What is your age?

years old

What is your gender?

- ☐ Female      ☐ Male

What best describes your annual household income in US dollars? (Please select only one)

- |                                                      |                                                        |                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> \$25,000 or less               | <input type="radio"/> \$75,000 to less than \$100,000  | <input type="radio"/> \$200,000 or greater |
| <input type="radio"/> \$25,000 to less than \$50,000 | <input type="radio"/> \$100,000 to less than \$150,000 |                                            |
| <input type="radio"/> \$50,000 to less than \$75,000 | <input type="radio"/> \$150,000 to less than \$200,000 |                                            |

Are you currently: (please select only one)

- |                                      |                                  |                                 |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Business owner | <input type="radio"/> Unemployed | <input type="radio"/> Homemaker |
| <input type="radio"/> Employed       | <input type="radio"/> Student    | <input type="radio"/> Retired   |

Please provide any comments related to your cycling needs, challenges, expectations and requirements for a successful and comfortable trip.

Thank you for participating! If you have questions about the survey, please call ITRR at 406-243-5686 or e-mail [itr@msu.umt.edu](mailto:itr@msu.umt.edu)  
You also can view survey reports at: [www.itrr.umt.edu](http://www.itrr.umt.edu)

Would you be willing to be contacted via email to complete additional travel and recreation surveys?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No

If yes, please add your email address and we will send you an invitation to become part of research panel related to travel and recreation. Thank you!

## Appendix B – *Unedited* Open Ended Responses – What makes a successful trip?

1. It's somewhat difficult to keep smart phone powered up (even though we have solar panels). Electric charging points might be helpful if they were in an area where we could 'multitask', like at grocery stores 2. the dissatisfaction with road debris was limited to the interstate shoulders, particularly between Bozeman and Livingston. Shoulder width was bad in that section too. 3. the MT bicycle map was helpful for route planning (when we went off the ACA maps) because it gave some idea of volume of traffic. Would be nice to know if shoulders are <4ft but still > 2ft. this map could also be improved by using arrows/carets to show the direction of the climb (like Michelin maps) 4. really bad rumble strips on I94

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1. The Twin Bridges bike "hostel" at the city park was FIRST RATE. One of the best of my 59 day ride across the USA. More towns along the Trans Am route should build one! 2. The bike path paralleling hwy 93 south of Lolo was excellent. Plus the road had nice wide shoulder there, it almost seemed like overkill to have both. I could have used that wide shoulder in other areas. 3. The Trans AM route has been around since 1976, how about some signs along the way? See for example Missouri, which has such excellent signs, a cyclist doesn't even need to consult their map to stay on the route. Missouri has a sign at every turn. Also the Trans AM signs would remind motorists that their sharing the road with bicycle tourists. 4. I'll be visiting Montana to cycle again.

---

A few of the reasons I choose to ride in Montana are the scenery, the lack of traffic, and the locals. I grew up in Montana and I love to bring my friends to the place I love best. It's a cycling paradise.

---

A few times in Montana, I had to choose between riding on the highway or taking a road that went miles and miles out of the way. I always chose the highway route for time's sake. I never had any problems, but this was certainly the most unpleasant part of my ride. The shoulders on the highways were in pretty rough condition, and shoulders on some of the routes were slim, but overall, the riding in Montana was beautiful.

---

A good, functional bike, Brooks saddle, sunscreen, chap stick, and good people are my only requirements. My favorite thing about bike touring is that EVERY day is different. Some days are hard, some days are easy, some days scare the crap out of you, and some days have you laughing so hard you can only ride 30 miles. But the best part is that you never know what to expect from the day so you just stop expecting anything and enjoy the moments!

---

A large lack of road conditions as far as width of road and shoulder width. I usually drive route before biking. I wouldn't have to do the drive if information were available. Have requested information from states bike people (in state services) and have never received a reply. Doing a ride to Montana this coming late June.

---

A late Spring kept us from going through Glacier Park. The roads were still closed in early JULY! A disappointment but we were able to peruse news reports and reroute our trip accordingly.

---

A small group with a loose travel schedule works best for us. We have enjoyed supported fundraiser rides with larger groups, but small groups are more intimate and reliable. We have found most trips require a trailer and support drivers in our large spread out state of Idaho.

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Access to affordable cycle touring support options. For instance; maps and routes with support options, like shuttles or sag wagons without having to use an expensive outfitter or have someone in your party be a driver each day. If bike shops could offer these services at a fraction of the cost of a fully supported trip, they would have another income source and more folks could afford to tour.

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Accurate maps Ideas for shuttles Where to park your car Safety education for drivers

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Adventure cycle maps Quiet, back country roadster Towns with resources every day or two Cafe every day or two Temperatures between 50 and 90 deg. F Bike shop every 1000 mi or so. A few like-minded, VERY athletic companions GPX files I have recently begun motorcycle touring. It is very similar and compatible with bicycle touring. The daily distances are greater with less physical demands, less vulnerability on busy roads, and more flexibility. I suggest you expand you view to include motorcycle tourists too.

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Adventure Cycling Association is a huge addition to the economy of Montana. They should be very involved in guiding resources to assist cyclists in trips to Montana.

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Adventure Cycling is absolutely the BEST. They take care of everything for a very affordable price.

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Adventure cycling is an awesome resource. I prefer to camp when touring, road shoulder/traffic volume is the #1 concern, secondary to good scenery! Thank you

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Adventure Cycling maps have been a godsend. They give me just about all the information I need for a trip.

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Adventure, facilities (food, lodging, ), nature, roads/trails/tracks free of cars ( !!! )

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Affordable air transportation of my bike is always a challenge

---

Airline fees for a bike varies and has become very expensive. Bike assembly stations at major airport and train stations are much appreciated. Cyclist-only camping and hiker-biker campsites w/ free hot showers are a treat to long distance riders when some shelter and electric power are also available.

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All town and cities need better signage AS TO WHERE THE ' BIKE PATHS' ARE AND WHERE THE BEST ROUTES ARE...

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Although unemployed, I am currently seeking employment so I can continue my interest in cycling. My first real interest in cycling began when I turned 60. I love camping, but have found fully supported bicycle trips to be quite fun and engaging. My ideal group size would be less than 25 people so accommodations (camping spots/locations) are easier to come by. The \$1200 fee is a bit high for my budget and may prevent participation in the future. I have participated in other cycling organizations, some which are camping, some that provide lodging.

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Always looking for roads with shoulders.

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Always looking for new adventures and new places to ride. One day I will ride through Montana, fr sure.

---

Amtrak should provide appropriate storage space, as do European rail systems, on all its long distance trains for carrying bikes. I would be more enthusiastic about cycle touring in the American West if this were the case. Airline baggage fees for trans-Atlantic travel (which had been non-existent for bikes for many years until 4-5 years ago), together with more restrictive weight limits on bike boxes, are now somewhat of a deterrent for going abroad as often as I have in the past.

---

Anything and everything is possible as long as you are willing to try and keep pedaling!

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As Colorado resident, I have plenty of mountain passes to climb, locally. To bike in Montana, I look for different scenery and quiet(er) roads. Somewhat concerned that optimal bike travel time period in Montana - August - often coincides with maximum forest fire occurrence; have experienced several days of low air quality (too low to exercise) in Bozeman, for example.

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As little traffic as possible Great countryside And if it does not rain then that's even better But I am a Brit so that not often

---

Aside from scenery and attractions, my most important consideration is a safe and comfortable route. I do not like cycling on busy high-speed highways, and will not take a tour involving that kind of cycling no matter what the scenery is like. Four years ago I had the opportunity to do a cycle tour in Denmark, involving mostly separated cycling infrastructure. It was the best two-weeks of cycling of my life.

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At least 5 foot shoulders on highways that are paved when highway maintained

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At the very least, "Share the Road" signs make a big difference in my experience with drivers. Even better are the "Cyclists may use full lane" signs.

---

Availability of campsites, restaurants and stores is important. Also, good roads with wide shoulders and courteous drivers. I have cycles across country, down the west coast and the east coast. Montana is among the best states in which to ride.

---

available space on the road and support (water, food, lodging/camping) are needed as well as scenic places to ride

---

Being able to find current and reliable info about: campgrounds are they: open/closed, do they have biker sites i.e. tenting, fees; info about local hotel/motel/hostels re; rates, bike friendly ( allow bikes in rooms) area bike shops - when are they open and contact info restaurants - when are they open state road maps with recommended bike routes (if any)

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Best thing is wide shoulders on roads and good mountain bike networks. Lots of lodging and camping options also important.

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Better bike routes into Missoula. A few more motel options along Hwy 12. Even more mapped routes around the state for bike touring.

---

Better cycling roads, and only for bicycles.

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Bicycling in eastern Montana on US 2 was the worst experience of my life. I will never cycle in Montana again. The number of drunk drivers, animosity of sober drivers, non-existent cycle infrastructure, high speed limits and overall hostility toward cyclists was unbearable. Then you add in forest fires. I don't ever plan to return to Montana. Please note, I have cycled across the entire US, down the Pacific Coast, and in much of Western Europe, and Montana stands out in a different category of abhorrent for cycling.

---

Biggest concern is being sure there is a shoulder or safe area to ride. Trucks and cars not watching out for bikes is biggest concern, 2nd concern for long distances is availability of drinkable water. And latest, a safe place to camp or hotel to stay in that understands bike touring.

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Biggest problem I had in Montana was rumble strips. When they are "well-mannered" (no more than 12" wide, stay close to the fog line, and leave 3' of shoulder) as they were in most places, no problem. When they get drunk and mean, as they do around Cameron, and weave about in the middle of the shoulder, they force you into traffic. I ride a recumbent trike and I was forced to ride in the lane, in the rain, near sunset. This was very dangerous and scared the crap out of me. Even worse was trying to leave Montana via Lookout pass. Evidently there are no back road routes between Superior and Mullan, which forced me onto I-90. This actually was not bad at all, except for the murderous rumble strips that run all the way across the shoulder, from lane to dirt, and are repeated about every 50'. There is no way you can ride on these without shaking your bike to pieces, and no safe way to ride in the lane. What didn't help was the 1-3" gap between the lane and the shoulder, making it impossible to ride around the rumble strips when there was no traffic. Most of the people I met or interacted with in Montana, including the drivers, were wonderful - friendly and hospitable. However, 2 towns were notable in their poor attitude and sometimes outright hostility to bike tourists: Cameron and Jefferson City. I don't understand it: bike tourists have got to generate a significant portion of their income, but it was obvious that we were barely tolerated in a couple of cases.

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Campgrounds open in September.

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Campgrounds with potable water, toilets (pit or flush, don't care) and garbage & recycling service along common cycling routes. Where there are very busy roads (such as coming into Whitefish), having alternate cycle routes well signed is very helpful. Kitchen shelters with electric lights and a good place to wash dishes are my favorite campground "luxury"; after that comes laundry and showers nearby. Small groceries with fresh produce available, Farmer's Markets, and farm stands are great food sources for summer cycling. I love being able to buy fresh eggs, produce, juice & even baked goods from houses & farms along my route & I wonder if anyone has ever tried to find signage to help cyclists find farm stands (like A-board style signs that direct you to a farm stand just off your route & list what's available on a built-in white board.) My kids are older now, but I have cycle toured with young children (including in Montana, along the Northern Tier route), and believe it or not PLAYGROUNDS are a huge amenity for cycle touring families. Not to mention public libraries with excellent kids' reading spaces.

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Campgrounds with showers. Food resupply.

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Challenges: 1. Minimize the cost of lodging, which is the highest cost on any bike tour. 2. Getting reasonably healthy food on a bike tour. Most tour routes take one away from grocery stores so a good deal of the time there is only convenience food stores available. 3. Occupying the mind on long tours - especially when the scenery doesn't change a great deal during the day. I've tried mantras and breathing exercises - such as method taught in relaxation response. 4. Amazingly, many routes don't have any shade - try taking the AC Transamerica route through WY so being in directly sunlight hour after hour, day after day is a little disconcerting. 5. When it's really hot outside during a tour, what is the best practice? 6. It's pleasantly distracting to cycle with a partner or group. However, it is also more distracting from a safety standpoint. Some cyclists ride too closely to each other not realizing the danger of causing their own crash. 7. I've seen cyclists crash because they don't know how to ride steep or extended downhill portions of a ride - especially if they are carrying weight or towing a trailer.

---

Clean shoulders of roads are wonderful! As well as safer. The road from Whitefish to Eureka is horrible because lack of shoulders and where there are shoulders they are filled with gravel and debris. The road from Rexford to Libby was wonderful, wide and clean. Would like to see more signs educating drivers: share the road with cyclists. Would also be helpful in campgrounds if they posted how recently bears had been sighted. Rumble strips are definitely a problem when the shoulder is narrow.

---

Continuous, clean, well-maintained, 4' wide (or more) shoulders (with no rumble strips) is the number-one priority. Other important needs: Marked bike lanes (that do not suddenly disappear). Smooth road surfaces (many roads in Montana have a rough tar-studded-with-gravel surface that is uncomfortable and slow for cyclists). Courteous motor vehicle operators who are attentive and have been well-educated in the rights of cyclists and basic rules of the road. Continuous cell-phone service for all major carriers.

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Decent camping area with hot showers and restaurant or good grocery store nearby (within 10 miles) Need unusual things to see or a reason to detour off the bike route to see them.

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Decent restaurants, forested camping sites, inexpensive but clean motels, and road grades of 6% or less.

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Decent road surface (one day of our MT trip the road surface was quite awful, but scenery great). Good coffee. No wind! Comfortable camp grounds with showers and good space for tent.

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Dedicated bike paths make ALL the difference in the world-- allows me to ride care-free, which is why I'm riding in the first place!

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Distances are extremely important. Finding suitable lodging & fixing a safe passage through cities.

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During 2011 summer there were floods in eastern Montana and western North Dakota. It was difficult to find a safe travel around those areas so I had to take a bus to get on to the state highways. I also hit the craziest storms in Montana, very intense on bike.

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During my last bike tour along the northern tier from Seattle to Spokane I was unable to access internet on my phone. I relied heavily on the phone numbers provided in the Adventure cycling map (Northern Tier Section 1) to find camp sites and in-town amenities (libraries etc..). One thing that would have been very helpful is a better understanding of what types of amenities are offered at the on route campsites (water, toilets etc...)

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During my planning, I try to take into account all of the needs / requirements that I might have. Success can be measured in good weather, no crashes, etc. pretty much the things that you want to have go right, but are not in your control. I'm pretty much just happy to be rolling down the road.

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Enjoy camping while biking on supported trips. Great to have a shower and food nearby

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Favorite trips are to go somewhere, travel by bike, eat locally, camp for most nights and add a few hotel nights for showers and relaxation.

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Finding a bike shop on the trip was very hard. I ended up finding a triathlete in Polson that had tubes. No cell service around Wisdom was also a problem. Otherwise was a great experience

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Finding other women to tour with on self contained tours has been a challenge. I have ridden by myself many times. Over the past 2 years I have come to rely on my smart phone for many aspects of my tours. Limited battery duration on my phone has been a challenge. This past year I purchased a external battery to help bridge the gap for the days when electricity wasn't available. I chose not to buy a solar device since most tours I plan to do have resources most days. The information ACA provides on their maps is amazing and very helpful. Managing daily elevation gain and mileage to be within my comfort zone are what I look at when I plan a tour. Hope this info helps with your study.

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Finding water and restrooms on long days with few services is sometimes a challenge. US12 was very well catered for and a very pleasant surprise to find a visitors center at the top of Lolo Pass!

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First and foremost are the road conditions: 1) good, wide shoulder; 2) signage for sharing road with bicycles; 3) shoulders on bridges; 4) if the highway has a rumble strip, it should have skip spaces to be able to move across without having to pass across the rumble strip itself; 5) smooth pavement not rough chip seal; 6) dedicated bicycle paths such as rails to trails; 7) alternate, paved routes versus being put on a major highway. We were in Montana this past June, 2013. Super friendly folks. I just wrote "Thank You" cards to several people we met specifically in Montana. Glacier National Park was beautiful. Leaving the mountains for the plains was exciting but looking back, we always thought about the mountains of the west. Pretty special!

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Flats happen often. Get a Brooks B17.

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For a successful and comfortable trip, I like to have reliable maps, good camping and cycling gear, and a budget that will allow me to not only provide myself with necessities like food and lodging but also do the occasional "fun thing" (like a tour or activity). My biggest challenge was staying comfortable on the bike (due to a combination of occasionally poor roads and just long hours in the saddle). Going in to the trip, I expected to be challenged like never before but still have a lot of fun; to meet new people while still being able to stay in contact with my friends and family all along the way; to get in great shape and not hurt myself; and to see a side of America that most people who travel rarely see (the backcountry, back roads, small town America, and boundless natural beauty that has yet to be spoiled by civilization. At the end of my 4000+ mile trip from coast to coast, all of these expectations were met, and more!

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For adventure cycling to maintain current, accurate maps. They are very important.

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For me part of the reason for cycling versus other forms of transportation is that my human needs are reduced to the most basic. I camp out, I cook my food (breakfast and dinner, usually), my bicycle is my home, amazingly mobile and free after the input of 20-30% more calories than house life requires. I carry about 25 pounds of gear and never feel freer than when on a bicycle. It is the low needs, the lack of technology, and the love of the open, closed, busy, and scenic dirt roads that keep me going and make me feel connected to the landscape in a way utterly alien to the motorist. Go by bike!

---

For me, access to bike shops, campgrounds, and restaurants are the most important things. Eastern Montana is very, very difficult to ride through because of the lack of those things, but it is certainly beautiful. I also want to say that since my trip, I have returned to hike west and east Glacier National Park, visited Flathead Lake, and traveled up to Watertown. It's a beautiful area of the world that I may never have known about if it weren't for this bike trip and more importantly Adventure Cycling. Thank you so much!

---

For the Bicycle Tourist the biggest element over which you have no control is weather, which presents the biggest challenge. Cycling needs: the recognition by local shops (especially rural shops) that not everyone rides a Mountain Bike. I made due with worn tires in the area from Missouri to Western Virginia looking for 700cx32 touring tires only to be faced with shops that thought the world ran on 26" tires. I love to eat in local diners & cafes when I tour and wish that there was a better way to find these wonderful little local eateries. This summer while traveling through Chemult, Oregon I happened onto a wonderful little diner that served the best Patty Melt I have ever eaten and yet it didn't show up on any information I could find on the Internet or local maps, I have had a lot of success getting information about local road conditions, detours & challenges from the Internet. I've used it to get local phone numbers to assure that I'm not going to spend hours on an extremely trashed road surface. Google maps "Street View" also is a great resource for having prior knowledge of bike lanes and road widths. PS: I am planning on touring in Montana this coming year and look forward to seeing the Big Sky Country again!

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For the most part I just need a place to set up a tent and have access to a bathroom overnight. The Bike Camp in Twin Bridges is a perfect example of what I look for on a cycling trip.

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Friendly people and safe roads

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Generally local drivers were good and provided plenty of room while passing us. Commercial semi-truck drivers were dangerous, passed way to close, in a couple places actually knocked us off the road from their wind disturbance. The loads going toward the oil fields were oversized and most often were speeding.

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Generally, multi-day bike trips are relatively self-supported. I really like the campsites that have \$5 hiker/biker camping. That helps save some money and makes sense as a policy. The free maps that have traffic usage, shoulder width, and general bike friendliness help a lot. I know Iowa and Colorado have them, but I do not remember if we used one in Montana.

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Get rid of those "rumble strips" on the edge of some roads! They usual do not leave enough room to cycle to the right of the rumble strips, thus forcing cyclists to be in the main part of the road. PLEASE, get rid of the strips. Or, at least allow 2 feet of paved shoulder to the right of the rumble strips. The traffic engineers (I'm guessing most do not ride bikes) think they are making it safe for the car drivers. But, in fact, they have created a very dangerous traffic hazard for bicyclists!

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Getting the right gear, during the ride where to stay cheap i.e. camping and bike shops. A book or maps in books would work great.

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good

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Good attitude and love of cycling are important. As a cyclist, the most important things that I could have on a tour would be ample shoulders on low traffic roads, good road quality, and adequate signage (specifically marking the Lewis and Clarke and Trans Am routes). Cyclists should be able to handle most other aspects of touring on their own. Montana was beautiful to cycle through!

---

Good low-traffic roads, nice scenery, campgrounds, and towns for food purchases and restaurants.

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Good maps of local mountain biking areas in MT is hard to find. Helena has a pretty good map. Also, trying to find more mountain biking specific trails is hard as well. Whitefish has some great trails. Other MT cities can learn from these towns.

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Good maps, enough relatively cheap places to stay, possibility to meet other cyclists, nice cafes...

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Good pavement, good company and good food

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Good preparation and equipment are helpful. I enjoy the thought of carrying all I need on the bike. That's to say, tent, sleeping bag, stove/pans, food, clothing. Solo, cycling camping gives a true feeling of freedom and being out in the wild. Friendly locals add huge amounts of pleasure to the adventure and I can honestly say that during my 3 months crossing from Cape Flattery (Washington) to Virginia Beach (Virginia), I had no bad or negative experiences. The trip was recorded at [www.bikingacrossusa.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.bikingacrossusa.blogspot.co.uk) . In 2012 I solo, cycle/camped across Australia - [www.bikingacrossaustralia.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.bikingacrossaustralia.blogspot.co.uk) - again with only positive experiences. In 2014 I will spend just over 2 months cycling round New Zealand.

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Good road and trail facilities are paramount -0- Montana in general can do better on the roads, avoiding rumble strips that harm cyclists, removing debris regularly, providing good signage for drivers and cyclists

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Good road with wide paved shoulders. Good infrastructure, bike paths and bike lanes.

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Good roads with minimal traffic. Camping or lodging options with enough towns to re-supply.

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Good roads, low traffic and/or a wide shoulder, friendly people, good food, showers/bathroom facilities, and nice weather!

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Great experience. Was as expected. Thanks

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Grooved roads and sprinklers are your worst enemy. Make sure that you can find spare poles for your tent, or bring supplies to repair/replace them. Have fun in the rain. Camp out, its fun.

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Hard to do much riding in Oklahoma as there are very few bike lanes or trails, and drivers are often resentful of or inexperienced with cyclists.

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Have my solar panel attached to my BOB Trailer to keep everything charged up

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Having a decently priced place to stay and regular intervals is key. The majority of the places we stayed in Montana were private campgrounds which tended to be way overpriced, but we had no other option. One night we paid \$40 for a parking spot sized space to pitch three 2 person tents. After riding through Oregon and California and enjoying the luxury of their "hiker Biker sites" where the going rate for each person was about \$5 per person per night, I see now that this is the way to go. Traveling through Montana alone on bike can be very expensive (if camping), but luckily I was able to split the cost of camping with my two other travel companions. Hot showers are key to a great biking trip (at least for me). You tend to get sweaty and dirty while riding and it's just really great to shower off in hot water at the end of the day. I don't need a fancy place to sleep, I'll be fine if I had to pay for a parking spot to pitch my tent in as long as I can have a nice hot shower. (I think every place we stayed in Montana had great showers. Thanks Montana!) Thanks for being awesome Montana!

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Having a good, detailed and bike focused map or GPS route is crucial for peace of mind and plotting out breaks/meals/rest stops and lodging. Being able to have bike up, no reservation "bike and hike" camp spots is nice because a bike vacation/adventure can get off schedule very easily. For trips under 10 days, scheduling in advance seems o.k. for lodging but for a true touring adventure, we only scheduled some of the rest day/luxurious places in advance (1-3 days). Otherwise, it's all spontaneous choice depending on town and the condition of available hotels/camps and value. In Europe, we enjoyed the room and supper/breakfast combo. At the end and beginning of a ride day it's nice to not worry about where your fuel is coming from. But the food has to be good!

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Having access to recharge devices always seems to be a constant challenge while on tour. Wireless internet access seems to be the second most critical need I have.

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Having good shoulders on roads with limited traffic, safe routes through larger cities, showers at the end of the day and reasonable camping fees. Biking in states where the population had been educated concerning sharing the road with cyclists and what sharing the road means (the rights of cyclists to be on the road). Being a conscientious cyclist who is considerate of drivers. Having bike racks available at more locations to encourage cyclists to use bikes for transportation (Missoula is good example of a town that has bike racks all over the place and they are well used).

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Healthy food choices, good water, clean bathrooms, decent pavement, and a warm shower at the end of the day. No rain and a nice tailwind are always appreciated too. :)

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Here is the bottom line. A shoulder, even two-feet of shoulder would work. In Glacier NP, they were paving and I actually witnessed the contractor cutting away excess asphalt eliminating any possible shoulder. In Montana the speed limit on open roads is 70 MPH, but there is little or no shoulder on many portions of US-2 that we rode. I'm a retired law enforcement officer and I can not imagine being a deputy or highway patrolman and making a traffic stop on these roads. I would not want my wife, children or any friend to breakdown along portions of this highway with auto problems. This is a disaster waiting to happen.

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Highway design needs to better consider multi-modal use. Most roadways were fine most of the time, but critical shortcomings on major highways create danger zones for riders or walkers. SR 200 near Thompson Falls and Plains, US2 near Glacier are examples of beautiful roads with deadly deficiencies.

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I also wanted to check 5-7 for optimal length of tour along with 10-14. Since I was with Adventure Cycling tour, most camping was at schools or on the grounds of hotels (Jackson, Fairmont RV Park, and Philipsburg). I spent a couple days before and after this 1 week bike trip with relatives in Gallatin Gateway and saw Yellowstone with them, not on the bike trip. One road was bad, but not for sure where, maybe RT 569 by Mt Haggin Recreation Area going toward Anaconda (as of June, 2012). I bring a cell phone with me on the bike for personal and emergency calls. I don't own a smart phone. I certainly did not remember the costs of the trip without referring back to previous bookkeeping books I had, so this took much longer than 10 min. More like 45 min. I had also needed to refer to my photo album to get more information.

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I always enjoy cycling in Montana, although some places are easier than others. The Big Hole was the best trip I've done here, and Seeley was good too, just the roads up the Swan Valley are scary for a cyclist. I'd say that's one area that could use some serious road renovations that would pay off, since so many people go up there to recreate. Generally as long as I feel safe on the roads, I'll have a good trip. A bike shop in the Big Hole (Wisdom or Jackson) would be awesome too- its very remote for a cyclist with any serious gear issues.

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I am 1 week removed from a failed attempt at riding the Kokopellit Trail from Fruita, CO to Moab, UT. The weather was horrendous! Rain, Rain and more Rain. More than half of the trail was un-rideable. Instead of cancelling the trip and giving us a trip credit for next season, the outfitter went on with the tour. They diverted us off and around the trail on two of the 4 days. And come to find out, as nice and knowledgeable as he was, the guide had never ridden the two middle and toughest sections of the trail! Me and 2 buddies had to self-extract ourselves on day 3 as we were completely surprised at the level of difficulty of the climb up to

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the La Sal mtns. scott young.

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I am a life member of Adventure Cycling, but have only gone on one tour many years ago (Cycle the Divide). The reason for me is that the daily distances are too short. I prefer distances of  $\approx 100$  to 120 miles per day with lots of elevation. In May of this year I participated in an "elite" transcontinental from San Diego to Tybee Island, GA that averaged 160 miles per day with no days off (total of 17 days). The organization was PAC Tour. I prefer motels to camping and don't need much pampering. The previous organized trip I did a couple years ago (also with PAC Tour) was the Tour of Eastern Mountains from Atlanta to Maine where we averaged about 110 miles over  $\approx 20$  days. Besides the organized trips, now that I'm retired I spend a lot of time in the summer on my own independent bike touring. This summer (after my transcontinental) I spent a month in Alaska riding my bike all around the state (staying in motels/condos). Last year (2012) I retired in March and went on a road trip from April through October where I logged over 15,000 miles on my bike with over 700,000 feet of elevation gain (per my Garmin). As you can see, I am an avid cyclist.

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I am hoping to take a cross-country trip after graduation, but school schedules and budgets currently get in the way. We did an overnight camping trip to test viability and it was fun! I expect the biggest challenge is going to be food for the long trip; places to leave a stash ahead of time (via mail?) so I only would have to carry a week's worth at a time would be a great idea.

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I am in the Baby Boomer generation, and I think there are two main hurdles to many people doing multi-day, touring cycling: 1) as a society, I think we are overwhelmed by options of every sort (cars, cloths, bikes, cell phones, etc.), and as a consequence, people "lock up" looking for the "best" solution. When I was young, there were far fewer options for nearly everything, and certainly less social media by which one is smothered in feedback, so individuals were much more likely just to launch out. Now, many of us see afraid; 2) speaking of fear, the 24/7 media environment easily leads us to believe that there are serial killers lurking in every shadow. We live in a wonderful country, a wonderful world, but unfortunately, fears keep many of my peers from launching out.

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I appreciate lodging where laundry is available in house or nearby. Finding toilet facilities is useful.

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I appreciate the following: Reliable maps. Paved shoulders. Low vehicle traffic. Good scenery.

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I did a 480 mile 6 night, 7 day solo ride from NYC to Canada this summer as a warm up for a cross country Northern Tier solo trip in 2014 for my 50th bday. Testing out technology was a big part of it. Brought 2 cell phones, iPad, and a battery back-up. Used it a lot for maps, camp site locators, email, phone, Warmshowers.com, and to post daily logs to Facebook. I am not very proficient with technology so I don't go to YELP or other sites for ratings. I would love to learn what other sites are out there that might be helpful. And if I can be of any help, let me know.

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I did not anticipate how hard riding with weight is. My knee became very inflamed in Plains, MT. We started in Anacortes, WA. I wish I had trained with weight over multiple days to prepare my knee for it. I am much more cautious now. I have some weird foot/leg issues also factoring into this since I have Cerebral Palsy. That may have caused an imbalance and put more pressure on my knee as well. I loved Montana and North Dakota. Our biggest issue was getting through the stretch through Glacier in Essex. That road has no shoulder and is very busy. I would recommend re-routing that somehow. The maps were great. Google maps was not that great since it doesn't tell you if there are gravel roads. Shout out to Joe Loviska for all of the mechanical advice. He is friends with my classmate and gave me a ton of help getting ready. We hope to do another tour in 2017 when my student loans have shrunk a little. Great company and maps!

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I did not fill in the whole questionnaire because I can't remember all the details. Adventure Cycling maps and help from the staff in Missoula were invaluable, thank you!

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I did not know that one could cycle on the highways in Montana while researching my trip. Once I found this out, I was able to change my route to a more convenient way. However, I did experience more flats on the highways due to the road litter on the shoulders. The flats were mostly caused by steel particles from blowouts.

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I did two cycle trips with Adventure Cycling; one was Cycle Montana and the other Cycle Utah. Although I enjoyed both, the Utah trip was a bit more enjoyable since time was allocated to see both Zion and Bryce National Parks. Trips that have interesting places to explore is an important factor for me when investigating future trips.

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I dirt-bag it pretty well, which Montana is perfect for. That's why I live here! There's enough open space between towns that have enough services to keep rollin'.

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I do not remember answers to many questions or questions are not applicable to me. In last 3 years I have traveled across Africa, South America, Europe, Australia, USA and Asia. I am not your usual traveler as I have spent approximately 180 days year on cycling trips visiting about 40 different countries during last 3 years.

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I don't own a smart phone and while we have a tablet and laptop, we are not expecting consistent wireless access on our up coming trip and not even sure the laptop will come along. To be honest, I'm looking forward somewhat to being "off the grid" on our trip -- isn't that the point?

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I enjoy history. Also lean more towards B&B rather than camping trips. Look for solid support on the road...rest stops every 20 or so miles and mechanic on the trip.

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I enjoyed Montana. Lolo Pass was awesome and so was Glacier NP. The towns got few and far between once I left Great Falls. It as very hot, but the good news was that most of the small town let us bikers stay in the community parks for free or a small fee. Several of these small towns even had swimming pools, which was a great way to cool of and relax after a long day on the bike. The people I met were very friendly and most drivers were respectful - although they drive really fast in Montana. I wore bright fluorescent jersey and had blinkies lights on the rear, and I also had a mirror on my helmet to see cars coming from behind. The up and down road rollers near Jordan almost did me in, but as soon as I got to Circle life suddenly got better. Thanks for letting me share my experience with you. You can read about my trip through Montana on my blog [mikebike.madcity.us](http://mikebike.madcity.us) thanks, Mike C

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I enjoyed my bicycle trip. I did find that Montana drivers overall could have used a bit of bicycle awareness with the three-foot rule, for example. I was wearing high visibility clothing (Day-Glo OSHA approved construction vest - not wimpy pale or black cycling clothing) and had a little dog in a basket on the rear. On empty roads with out any oncoming traffic, I had more pick-ups/SUVs come shockingly close to me than elsewhere on the trip. I was grateful for my rear view mirror and several times nearly had to take it off the road to accommodate. As a commercial driver, I feel fair in saying that these drivers did not have any valid reason to require them to select a lane position that compromised my ability to ride safely. I did not encounter these close encounters in Colorado, Wyoming or Washington (drivers would generally give me three feet, and often the whole lane). If you are thinking of signage for the border areas (i.e. Lolo Pass), Idaho drivers could use some bicycle awareness too!

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I feel like having a smartphone has really been so beneficial to a cross country bike trip. It is truly amazing to have so much info available at the tap of your finger. I was able to locate restaurants, lodging, view maps, read reviews of interesting local places to check out and also meet up with fellow cross country cyclists. Really helped me out!

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I filled out the form for my "specific memorable day", but my answers don't necessarily pertain to much of the other cycling I have done in Montana. For instance in summer 2013 I cycled through Montana from Lolo Pass to Wibaux while on a cross country ride.

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i found parts of this survey too hard to complete because the availability of different things and road conditions varied vastly across the state. What part should i answer for? It takes way more than 8-10 minutes to complete! Thank you for conducting a survey, but be realistic in design. I am so grateful for progress that has been made in wider shoulders, better pavement and bike paths in some areas. Thank you thank you. I am challenged very much by rumble strips that cause dangerous conditions along the shoulder for cyclists. I mean DANGEROUS!!! Please, highway design needs to change!!! Do the rumbles have to be SO deep and wide to be effective? There are areas that rumble strips render the entire edge of the road not rideable, forcing cyclists into the traffic lane, then drivers have more difficulty passing and some become upset. I had one situation where the space between a rumble strip and a guardrail decreased and nearly caused me to crash. I u se front panniers and there was not enough space.

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I found that the infrastructure to support cycling in eastern Montana, along US route 2, was quite poor. I had expected to camp a few nights, but the campgrounds were rudimentary at best, seldom had showers, and were often right next to the railroad tracks with trains going by all night long. The motels were few and far between and of exceptionally poor quality, and high price generally. I was prepared from Trip Advisor reviews on the motels, but not for the poor quality of camping. I would not repeat the northern tier, nor would I recommend it to my cycling friends. In addition, Montana was the only state in my cross country ride where I saw zero traffic enforcement between towns, and where traffic was regularly whizzing by at 80 miles an hour, without slowing down with cyclists. This was particularly dangerous coming into Missoula on US 93 from the south, and on the route from Missoula up to West Glacier. The truck traffic on the east side of Flathead Lake was particularly bad, with no shoulders. There was a sign discouraging trucks at the beginning of the route, but clearly they were using it regardless. We didn't see a single patrol car along that stretch, nor on the busy, no shoulder stretch north of Big Fork going up to US 2.

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I gave a dissatisfied for road shoulder width because of the 93 between Eureka and Whitefish. Heavy traffic and no shoulder....quite terrifying! All other roads on adventure cyclings' northern tier in Montana were satisfactory or better.

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I gave Montana a dissatisfied rating on the amount of traffic because of the times we were on the busy highways. There were times we were on country roads and they were practically deserted. But Highway 93, in particular, was scary.

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I generally follow Adventure Cycling routes for the majority of my rides. Their maps cover camping, grocery and motel options very well. The maps also route through low traffic volume areas. The maps help organize daily planning and one can determine services and reasonable mileage for many days in a row without a lot of work or hassle. I like to camp with an occasional motel thrown in now and then. I also like to cook all my meals if possible so grocery options and town locations are important. Nature photography is also important to me so cycling through scenic areas is my first choice. I'd rather enjoy the scenery and take my time than put in mega miles each day.

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I had two bad experiences while in Montana. The first was on Interstate 90 coming over Thompson Pass to Superior. The road dept. was applying something called chip seal to the road and shoulders. This gravel was very hazardous to a bicycle - it was not compacted to the road and resulted in a very dangerous condition. This went on for around 30 miles. The second problem with the roads was on U.S. 12 from Roundup to Forsyth. There was a 15 mile stretch near Forsyth that was under reconstruction. The old pavement had been torn up and no new pavement was down. I had to ride on a loose gravel surface for this time. This was extremely dangerous. I see the need to improve your roads but I question why it cannot be accomplished in shorter segments rather than having the road torn up for miles. Thanks

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I have completed nine trans-America tours and numerous state transits. I have planned and led these tours with small groups at no charge. A few of the later ones are journalized on CrazyGuyOnABike. They are referenced below. <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/steve2008> (Underground Railroad from Mobile, AL to Owen Sound, ONT) <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/TA09> (Trans-America from Lincoln City, OR to Bar Harbor, ME) <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/ST10> (Southern Tier from St. Augustine, FL to San Diego, CA) <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/Discovery11> (St Louis, MO to Jasper, ALB) <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/OchocoChallenge2012> (one week tour in the Oregon Ocheco mountains) I am currently planning a 10th traverse of the nation from Anacortes, WA to St. Augustine, FL. That tour is outlined in the journal: <http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/doc/TAO2014> (signifying Trans-America Oblique in 2014). The journals provide a pretty good portrait of what I have found facilitates a successful bike tour.

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I have done multi-day bike tours in Montana 5 and 10 years ago, one beginning in Missoula heading for Salt Lake City; the other a loop from Missoula around Waterton and Glacier parks and back to Missoula. Successful tours for me include nice scenery, historic sites, light-traffic roads, avoid large cities, and opportunities for food, lodging and campgrounds.

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I have had three cycling adventures in the USA totaling some 6,500+ miles. It is my favorite place in the world to cycle tour for extended periods. It is safe, challenging cycling in magnificent scenery.

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I have never taken one but it's high on my bucket list

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I have switched from road bike touring to off road/ mountain bike touring due to the lack of dedicated bike paths here in the States. Being routed next to big rig trucks and on highways with high speed limits has worn on my nerves. I have ridden thousands of miles on road tour and I am pretty brave and jaded to cars passing me. But there have long stretches on ACA routes that have inadequate shoulders and a lack of signage to indicate bikes have a right to be on the road (not ACA's fault, but terrifying all the same). I wish for more desiccated bike paths; better driver education about how to safely pass bikes; more "sharrows" to indicate where bikes can be in the lane; more wide shoulders; and more public relations with the trucking industry, the RV driving community; and the general public. People are fascinated with us bike tourists. When I stop to eat, crowds form around me to ask me questions. It happens to all of us bike tourists. We need a public relations effort that captures this interest and results in safer driving around bikes.

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I haven't taken a smartphone with me in the past because I didn't have one before, but now that I have one I expect to take it with me in the future. I would still prefer to use paper maps rather than the GPS on my smartphone, however.

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I like challenging trips in less populated areas. I am coming back to Montana next year to start a long tour from Missoula. My choice is partly based on the excellent experience I had this year.

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I like to camp or stay in places. I am not very good about doing mechanical things with my bike so that is important to me, to have someone who can help me. Also, knowing you can get a ride if you need it, is nice. When I was younger, that didn't matter as I biked with my husband, but he doesn't bike anymore, we used to average around 50 mi/day. I like to bike on long trips as well as shorter ones. I would like to bike across Canada with a group that does around 50mi/day.

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I like to have 2 rest days weekly on the average. One day laundry etc. one day looking around and do some other things.

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I look for wide shoulders or designated bike paths (like the Netherlands) courteous drivers (like Minnesota and Quebec), cheap and bike friendly campsites (like Oregon and California), helpful bike shops (like Velorution in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario), cheap micro- brews (like Cascadia) and endless sunshine.

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I love cycling in Montana. We have done several trips along the Great Divide Route, as well as some side trips off route. The main challenge we have is finding a shuttle to take us back to the start of our route to pick up the car. Once on the road we have a fantastic time. Beautiful scenery, friendly people, lots of camping and other places to stay. I wish I was there now!

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I love long distance riding and camping and so am planning my retirement ride from ID to OR, up to WA, across to ME and back to OH this next summer. I've been planning this for years and plan to follow the Northern Tier Route basically with side trips to visit friends and family along the way. I have purchased all the maps over the past couple years and have updated most of my equipment. I am really looking forward to this trip and plan to take my time and be on the road for 6 months if necessary. No stress, no pressure, just ride to my heart's content.

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I love planning and taking long self contained cycling excursions. I just get on my bike with all my camping gear and head towards a destination. Time (I'm lucky to be retired) and mileage biked each day are insignificant. This past summer's cycling across Montana was just part of a 70 day excursion through Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, the Dakotas, Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri. There is no better way to see the world than on a bicycle.

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I love to go on cycling trips...both on the road and off-road. The key to pleasant road riding is SAFE roads....either big shoulders or multiple lanes ...curvy roads with no shoulders and high speed limits are all too common in beautiful areas...all it takes is one idiot in a car/truck to kill someone. That is the sole reason that I second guess continued road touring...which is a huge shame given that road touring has brought me to some of the most AMAZING places in the U.S. that I would have never thought to visit otherwise (e.g., Montana ...ended up being one of my all time favorite places that I have been). Bike routes and/or safe roads that are accommodating to cyclists are the #1 thing I will look for in any road touring trip (followed by amazing scenery, good camping, showering, and food options).

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I mostly mountain bike, because I don't really like riding on roads. There's just enough aggressive driver behavior to make road riding unsafe. I do lots of overnight and multi-day bike pack trips. Preferably deep in the forests, so services really isn't an issue for me. I wish trails were better maintained sometimes, and sometimes I wish they were built with cyclists in mind. But for the most part I just enjoy getting out, and bikes help me cover more trail miles.

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I no longer have a record of our expenditures, so left unanswered. Roads are mixed in terms of traffic, repair, shoulder width—worst area for traffic and lack of shoulder was highway #2 between Lake McGregor and Kalispell; this part of our route is off the AC Northern Tier, and we used it because we were heading for Billings. Other roads mostly acceptable for parameters of traffic and shoulder. I do not wish to specify income level.

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I now tour on a recumbent Shipping is tough and expensive I'm trying to figure out ride share

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I often use ACA maps. They are great. I supplement the maps with iPhone using google maps, yelp, trip advisor, motels, campgrounds, restaurants, etc. On the Great Parks Route, the only road that was considered uncomfortable/dangerous is the southern section of Yellowstone NP from the south entrance to the Roosevelt Parkway. Most of the other sections had good shoulders/little traffic.

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I pay particular attention to the requirements of wider bikes since I ride a recumbent trike. Routes that are marginally safe for a bicycle (shoulder width, bridge passages, etc.) often do not provide adequate safety margins for a trike. Routes that would not be suitable for trikes should be brought to the rider's attention so their trip can be planned accordingly.

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I plan a multiday bike trip in Montana in June 2014 with a cycling friend from Portland, OR that I met on a multiday ride in Utah. It is hard to find...but I like roads like the one near my home that I train on daily. It has a nice wide paved shoulder so I feel separated from the vehicular traffic. When planning highways, remember cyclists when you position "rumble strips." Cyclists CANNOT ride on these. So if you muck up a narrow shoulder with a rumble strip, the only place left for the cyclist to ride is in the traffic lane...very dangerous, needless to say. Thanks for letting me put in my two cents.

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I really wish the libraries location would be posted near the town welcome signs.

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I rode my bike from Ferndale to the Salmon Lake area on Hwy 83 on a Sunday in July. The road was heavily travelled with trucks pulling boats and campers. There isn't much of a shoulder on that entire route. It was my most stressful day of riding in Montana. Other than that day, my bicycling experience in Montana was FANTASTIC.

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I think the biggest help would be knowing where to camp out safely.

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I think the most challenging part of cycling through Montana in 2012 was road construction where pilot cars were used and I could not keep up with the cars. I was then forced to ride on the road with giant oil trucks driving on my side of the road. This was along the road between Seely and Swan Lakes. This was dangerous and not well thought through.

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I thought it was a long desolate stretch from Lewiston to Glendive. Would have appreciated more motels and / or a state park

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I usually cycle in Europe. great "greenways", castles, history, etc.

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I was recently intending to go to Montana, but my companion and I were bringing our bikes from Chicago, and the Amtrak stop and Wolf Point, MT didn't allow checked luggage. So we went to North Dakota instead. Trail riding is the best riding, and amenities along trail intersections will get good business. The more camping, the better! And well-maintained shoulders are a must.

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I wish that parks would reserve (as does Oregon) some spots for biker/hikers. We frequently ride most of the day and cannot be "first come". I have missed out on many camp sites because I arrived after 3 p.m. and there were no spots left.

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I wish there Were safer roads to ride, and more bicycle paths for touring cyclists across the United States. Missoula has a great bicycle network.

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I would highly suggest that Montana market towards off-road cycling. The terrain is there and could easily compete with Colorado and Utah. Day trips on great trails exist in the Whitefish, Helena, Butte, Bozeman and Missoula areas (and probably others). Each of these areas have more than enough mileage to make it interesting. I'd also suggest that Montana spend a little money to promote the Great Divide Route and the opportunities for off-road touring, it would be a great way to see the state.

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I would hope for 3' wide (or wider) shoulders on primary roads with heavy traffic where there is no reasonable alternative to the road, WITHOUT RUMBLE STRIPS; I would hope for state or federal campgrounds, with showers, at reasonable distances; I would hope for decent cell phone coverage (I had AT&T and it was mostly non-existent; my riding partner had Verizon and he generally had okay coverage); it is good to have markets with fresh fruit, and groceries without having to rely on convenience store packaged foods; in state and federal campgrounds, it would be nice to know that there was always space for bike campers, even if all of the vehicle spaces were claimed (Rising Sun Campground in Glacier had a specific site available to bicyclists and backpackers, regardless of the number) - it is difficult for a bicyclist to just ride to the next campground at the end of the day. My riding partner and I were in Montana as part of a cross country trip C along the Adventure Cycling Association Northern Tier route (and up into Waterton National Park in Canada). Montana drivers were by far the rudest, most threatening that we experienced anywhere on our trip. This was particularly true along Highway 2 from Wolf Point to Cut Bank, and then again from Columbia Falls to Eureka. These areas were the only areas on our whole trip where I was fearful for our safety. On the other hand, the traffic in Glacier National Park was very accommodating. Some of the small towns allowed us to camp in their town parks and were very accommodating; however, where they did not, several of the private campgrounds charged us more for the two of us than they charged an RV, despite the fact that we had much less impact on the campground. In Circle, we were unable to locate any campground (one that appeared to be listed on the ACA maps was in complete disrepair and appeared to be inhabited by oil field workers on a permanent basis), and while the owner of the local grocery store offered to let us pitch our tents in the parking lot, the county government officials were unwilling to let us camp on the lawn outside their offices. The folks at the library suggested that we could camp at the county fairgrounds, but there was apparently no specific authority allowing us to do that, and just the previous week, the town council had disapproved camping on the library's lawn, hoping to steer camping to the private campgrounds. Based on our experience of riding on Highway 2, and from Columbia Falls to Eureka, as well as the absence of decent campgrounds along part of the route, I don't know that I would ride in Montana again.

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I would like to see a bike trips that have a base camp and then do daily rides from the camp of about 15 miles. How about staying at a nice hotel in city and exploring the cultural offerings of that town and area?

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I would like to see Montana widen the shoulders on all of its roadways. I would also like to see more "share the road" signs. I wish there was more education for motorists about how to pass a bicyclist when a car is approaching in the oncoming lane. I have had a few close calls that have been terrifying.

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I would love to begin pushing the transportation of bike in airplanes w/o a box. It would be nice to be able to use my bike as transportation when I reach my destination w/o the need of major assembly.

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If I am traveling with a small group or myself I like to know that I, or whoever is organizing, has a grasp of the route and options. When traveling with a larger group I like to get enough information in advance so that I know that the organizer(s) are well prepared to guide and support the group.

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I'll be back. Loved Montana!

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I'm happy as long as there are mountains, and a grocery store at least every four days.

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In 2013, my husband and I rode from Washington to Kansas. The drivers in Kansas primarily pulled into the left lane when passing us, even if we were riding to the right of the fog line. I believe that this practice should be a national priority. A 3 foot distance should be mandatory, as a minimum.

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Instead of a multiday trip, this year we stayed in a central location and made several day trips in the area around there. We were in Great Falls for 3 days, Missoula for 5 days and Wallace, Idaho for 7 days. When on a multi-day we will camp or motel depending on the weather and convenience. We prefer restaurant eating. We have done group rides where campsites and food are provided but prefer going it alone at our own pace where we can enjoy the scenery and local flavor more. We are not so young anymore and have chosen rail-trails more frequently when available because of the flatter terrain. We go for four to six weeks every summer, carrying our bikes and all gear needed for any occasion that comes up. We have been all over the US, cycling and cycle touring in most of the states. We will continue until we are physically unable. My wife is 71, so we hope for another 10 years.

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It is important for me to be able to get my bike to the start. I have looked at Montana biking opportunities in the past and rejected them because it seems that ground transportation is hard to arrange.

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It was a blast. Best scenery I've seen in years. Did 3600 miles in 67 days. Celebrated my 60th at the end. Washington to North Carolina. Need spare parts and know how to fix most parts of the bike if you are alone. Take your time enjoy the ride and remember it is not a race.

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It was impossible to fill out the chart on road conditions because they changed so often on our trip through Montana. Wide shoulders to no shoulders, clean shoulders to very dirty shoulders with glass, etc. This chart is highway (or even section of highway) specific. Also, just could not remember all of the towns and lodging where we stayed. We really appreciated the free camping in the small towns in eastern Montana though. Our trip through Montana was part of a 10 month, 9,000 mile trip around the USA. The things a cyclist needs: Wide clean shoulders on roads with high traffic volumes and/or speeds. Camping and/or lodging every 50 miles Grocery and restaurants every 20 miles.

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It's nice to know if the roads I want to bike have shoulders. It would also be nice to have some idea of the volume of traffic flow. Montana has great bicycle touring options. I have bicycle toured your state 4 times in the past 30 years. One of those trips was from west to east, all the way from ID. to N.D. I'm thinking of riding Adventure Cycling's revamped Lewis and Clark route, west bound, but have concerns about the oil and gas drilling traffic in eastern MT. It would be great if there were more camping options on highway 2 in central and eastern MT, for bicyclists, such as city parks.

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I've done a number of cycling trips with Cycle Oregon. Their model for week-long cycling tours is exemplary. They provide shower trucks, excellent food service, on-site and on-road bike repair services, entertainment, coffee/beer service and sag wagons. For an additional fee they provide/set-up tents and baggage handling each day. And they donate a significant portion of proceeds to local communities. I would love to see similar efforts in other western states. It's not a model that appeals to everyone but CO annually musters 2000+ cyclists to ride Oregon backroads. Something like that in Montana or Colorado (or Europe) would be very cool.

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I've done both self-contained (loaded) multi-day tours and supported tours. Although I've camped all my life, since I'm older now, I prefer to stay in motels. I enjoy Adventure Cycling Assn's supported tours because they do a terrific job with all of the logistics of doing a tour -- meals, mechanical support, sags when needed, carrying baggage, etc.

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I've really enjoyed riding long distances on rail and towpath trails

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Lack of adequate shoulder along highways. Made cycling very uncomfortable at times. Lack of courtesy and poor driving skills of motorists was an issue as well.

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less chip seal, drivers move over farther when passing

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Light weight quality gear.

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Like I mentioned earlier, it seems there are a number of unnecessarily dangerous narrow roads with high speed traffic with drivers who are in a hurry and not always careful. If you can survive those sections of road there are also many gorgeous back roads with considerate drivers and plenty of space for everyone. What is difficult is finding a route from point "a" to point "b" which avoids these dangerous road ways. It often seems that there are no alternatives and even after much effort with google maps, the ACA maps, and asking locals no alternatives can be identified. A common feature of these dangerous roads is a gully or ditch immediately off the fog line which I assume makes it not as easy to widen to road for a shoulder. If there were some way to fix this problem I imagine that the roads would be safer and more comfortable for everyone. Personally I would contribute money (not that I have a ton) to making improvements. As someone who drives on rural roads I can also understand the nervousness of interacting with cyclists on a narrow and high speed roadway and I would like to avoid giving our MT hosts a heart attack!! Thank you Ed

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Like many, I did not spend a lot of time physically preparing for the trip. It took me about 4 or 5 days to get up to speed and ready to ride for 8 or more hours a day. I would recommend people to just get out and ride and be prepared to make changes to your trip as needed.

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Like rail trails, river trails, any ride away from cars, trucks, drivers of any kind. Idaho trails are wonderful to ride.

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Like trails. Biked a bit by west Yellowstone, no shoulder a big trucks made us bike back roads.

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Locating services (food, water, lodging/camping, bicycle parts) proved challenging many times. We used the Trans America route from West Yellowstone to Hamilton and then jumped on the Lewis and Clark route... More opportunities to buy food and drinks are needed!! Finding suitable replacement tires when we needed them was extremely difficult (a manufacturing defect led to ply separations on all 4 of our tires). I appreciate the fact that rural towns with low populations are not inclined to stock much of a selection of, if any, bicycle parts from an economic standpoint. Nonetheless it came as a surprise just how few were available. We encountered other cyclists with equipment problems (3 with broken front derailleurs, failed cable shielding, broken spokes) that also would have been glad to obtain parts and/ or repairs while on the road.

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Location of good water, camping, road conditions, bike repair locations, food stores, weather conditions. A lot of this I have on by Garmin attached to my bike, which routes me onto roads and bike paths, google earth helps with searching for camp areas and road grades. Your maps are also a great source of information, currently planing a solo ride Calif, Nev.,Utah, WY, ID, MT, and/or Washington.

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Love dirt roads and small town saloons.

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Low traffic highways are desired. Unfortunately in many western states the roads are sparse and you are often forced to ride on U.S. highways that have high speed traffic and often little or no shoulder. U.S. 2 across northern Montana is a good example of this. When there is a small shoulder on these roads they often have deep rumble strips that make them unridable on a bicycle, forcing you to claim a spot in the traffic lane. Many drivers do not understand this, especially drivers of RV's, and you can have some scary moments. Having shoulders on these roads without rumble strips are definitely a plus for cyclists.

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Low traffic routes with wide (minimum 3ft, prefer 5 ft.) shoulders is most important...followed by food and good night sleep

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Low traffic, scenic routes, and warm shower members along the route. I don't mind combining a bike trip with other means of transportation, e.g. train, bus, etc...

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Low volume cars on the road scenic beauty and wildlife clean air, water like rivers, lakes, creeks friendly people places to camp as well as hotels places to get food

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Main concern is traffic and shoulders. Rt 200 between Sandpoint and Missoula is not a good road to ride on for the most part. it is not an ACA route for that reason. I will be returning in May to travel from Missoula to Bismarck, ND and will be following ACA routes the entire way.

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Many of the tech questions are mute since I was with a tour and they provide route signage and trip sheets.

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Many states have a long way to go to improve the physical cycling environment for road cyclists. Too-narrow shoulders, debris-littered breakdown lanes, and lack of accommodation for cyclists in work/construction areas along the highway were frequent challenges on our 800 mile trip from Oregon to Missoula.

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Maps, Maps, Maps, Gear

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Maps, motels, restaurants

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Mileage depends on weather we are on our mtn bikes or on our road bikes. We love bike touring and try to get in at least one a year.

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Montana is a great place to run and cycle!

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Montana must be careful about placement of rumble strips in the shoulders in order to leave a lane for bikes.

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Montana needs to provide bike paths that don't suddenly terminate with a sign that says "BIKE LANE ENDS" but instead show a little hospitality towards the rider who is putting it all out there to ride in the state. It isn't as easy as you would expect to subject your little pink body to heavy traffic while riding on a road without a shoulder. You can't see the texting teenager, mother tending her crying baby, or trucker who hates all bicyclists as they pass you within inches of your unprotected self. Signs and paint don't make the state bicycle friendly. Awareness, courtesy and physical separation would serve to make Montana a destination for touring bicyclists.

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Montana presents many challenges for the bike tourist: Winds, long distances between services, occasionally heavy traffic (Hwy 2) including oil service and combining crews with wide loads travelling at high speeds, mountains and lack of bicycle services to name a few. Other than that, there is some nice scenery and the roads aren't usually too busy. The road shoulders on Hwy 2 varied a lot from place to place. Some places they were virtually non-existent, other places wide and spacious and everything in between. Then there was the fog line rumble strip to contend with.

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Montana was a difficult State for me to cycle across on Route 2. GNP was great. East of GNP, the challenge began. The road is long, hot, windy, and little to see in the central and eastern parts that were close enough to get to by bicycle. The people were very friendly toward me and accommodating. A number of cyclists told me of their concerns about the Native Americans' bothering them. I never had any problems nor did I have any problems with anyone for the 3,826 miles across the country. I believe it's how we present ourselves that will often determine how we are received. The Northern Tier route is physically very difficult. Mentally, it is even harder because of so much of it being empty and barren. I met many touring cyclists who recommended other cross country routes as being more preferable. In spite of it all, it was a great adventure - the greatest one in my life. As a result of this trip, I have become hooked on bicycling, getting out and staying active (it helps keep the dust off the nose). I'm in the process of writing a book about my trip. Sincerely, Brian G. Phelps

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Montana was beautiful! Open roads, nice pavement (thank you taxes!), and wonderful people. I'm trying to plan a trip back to more parts of the state that I haven't been to. Thank you!

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Montana was my favorite state in my multi-state, multi-week tour.

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MONTAN'S RUMBLE STRIPS ARE POORLY LOCATED FOR CYCLISTS

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More important than anything are road and riding conditions. I LOVE Montana but frankly many of the roads were terrible for cycling. US 93 south from Missoula, other than the bike trail section, was scary, especially south of Hamilton. Narrow shoulders, rough surfaces. We got hassled/threatened by a local in a diesel pick-up truck in the Big Hole Valley near Wise River who took great umbrage to our cycling on the highway. The road there is narrow and rough with zero shoulder. A wide, clean shoulder really makes a day on the bike. Wyoming and Kansas, for example have way better state highways in that regard for cycling.

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more shoulders and please keep them clean

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More state signs re "Bikes on road" would be helpful and hopefully educational for vehicle drivers. Signs to parks, campgrounds, similar services.

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Most of my multiday trips are short, 2-3 days, & usually include some forest service or dirt roads, or even singletrack mountain bike trails & some camping, some hotels stays. A bike map that shows bike routes as well as dirt roads & singletrack trail would be great. Roads with wide shoulders are important. I often go with my kids, distances are short, 10-30 miles/day I did vacation in SW Montana last summer & did a couple single-day trips. I had this problem: I ran into private property not shown on my (Delorme) map & ended up riding through Ted Turner's buffalo herds - scary! Still I loved Montana!

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My cycling partner and I do a 10-11 day ride each August. We try and plan it for 600 miles, 35,000 feet of hill climbing in 10 days. This year we did Jasper Canada to Whitefish, last year was Seattle to Klamath Falls Oregon, year before was Pasco WA to Havre Montana. We have been doing this type of ride for many years. We do a different ride each year. We always include a train to the start, or home or both. Amtrak allows bikes for \$5 plus a box, free if used and \$15 if it is new. Turn the handle bars, remove the pedals and roll it in. This greatly expands our ride choices.

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My favorite rides are along rivers and across mountains of the West. Also have enjoyed multiple tours in Amish country. I like low traffic roads with a shoulder. Prefer scenic and historic routes like the Lewis and Clark trail where I stopped at each and every sign.

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My most memorable cycling trips have been in places with challenging, beautiful terrain. Going-To-The-Sun Road is a good example; a strenuous climb followed by an exciting descent, with great hiking and photography at the top.

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My plan is to take a cross country bike trip every 5 years, God willing.

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My rating on the road surface deserves some explanation. On the days we traveled from Lolo Pass to Missoula, the state was doing new chip seal on the highway. This meant we were riding through loose rocks for much of our journey. I totally understand that we just got unlucky with our trip timing, but man it sure did suck! To their credit, the road work folks were very friendly and accommodating of us as we rode through the construction area.

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My trip through southwest Montana was part of an 88 day TransAmerica bike trip across the U.S., from 28 April to 27 July 2013. I had to visit a Missoula hospital due to a dislocated finger suffered during an accident upon entering Missoula. The hospital was friendly and efficient. The bike shop I visited in Missoula carried out some major repairs on my bike, and did a professional job. I am glad to see that Missoula is considering improving, for bikers, the section of highway between Missoula and Lolo.

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My wife and I have followed Adventure Cycling maps across the country and in other smaller areas. In the past we packed all our own camping gear on our tandem. Now we are tending toward partially supported or fully supported trips, and we are open to being on our own but staying in motels. Our ideal trip so far was the Santa Fe Trail Bicycle Trek in 2011: low-cost, having our gear trucked, camping on high school or college campuses and eating in their student unions, seeing great scenery along the Santa Fe Trail from Santa Fe, NM to New Franklin, Mo. We would like to return to Montana (we haven't done northern Montana), and we would be interested in trips similar to the Santa Fe Trail Bicycle Trek or in loops where we could do it on our own and stay in motels.

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My wife drove our motor home as a support vehicle, so my needs weren't the same as some solo riders. My greatest needs are for signage for directions and safety

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Narrow shoulders were a concern leaving East Glacier. West of White fish some very narrow shoulders and some very rough shoulders. Most drivers were accommodating. People pulling large campers were the worst. Truckers were generally the best. Much of the route was very rural. I was not surprised that restaurants and groceries were at some distance. I probably would not stay in Wolfe Point again.

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Need a safe road with good pavement. It would be nice to have a website that showed/recommended alternate routes to main roads. Adventure cycling maps do a good job of this but only for their published routes. I personally need to get the road grime off of me after a ride. Showers are preferable (I try for RV Parks if they are available), but a lake or stream also works. I usually stay in a motel every 4th or 5th night. I spend a lot of time planning my trips. I tour on a bike because it is the best way to see scenery, but busy roads with inadequate shoulders and aggressive drivers take the fun out of the ride. I did a tour in Colorado this year and CO had an online map that showed bike routes and identified traffic levels and shoulder widths. I adjusted the route based on the map information and was very pleased.

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Need more clearly-marked bike lanes. They don't need to be completely separate from traffic lanes, but should be wide enough to provide a safety margin.

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Need more time off of work so that i can explore our beautiful world by bike!!!!

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Need trips averaging abt. 60 miles a day, like some climbing, and some downhills, enjoy campgrounds in pretty places.

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Needs would include safe roads, regular camping spots, regular food supplies and friendly people. Montana provided all of these to various degrees and rates highly in my list of must visit cycling regions.

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Needs: water and a decent place to camp. It'd be nice to have shoulders when the speed limit is high like it is in Montana.

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Needs: few. Of course I need good food. Not fast food or deep fried food. Wholesome food. Or as much in that direction as possible. Need beer, coffee, muffins. It's OK: those are good food. Water. I was able to find that well enough and took no filter, nor felt the need for one. Weather information from conversation, media, or direct from NOAA. Challenges: not hills. Rollers. Those are psychologically challenging. Sanctioned overnight places. I never had to gorilla-camp, though I told myself I would. The angels always provided. Expectations: have no expectations. It's easier. Have the ability to roll with whatever the adventure offers. Requirements: humor. Lots of humor. Gratitude in great abundance works well, also. An occasional really tasty dark beer. Maybe two at lunch on an especially hot, head-windy day. Check it out: [www.crazyguyonabike.com/gphavas](http://www.crazyguyonabike.com/gphavas). Next trip: 'round the Rockies in 2014. That's the plan.

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Needs= after taking 3 trips, it is a need that the trips get longer in length- also, all of our tours start and end at home (there is no flying involved if there is a way to get to the destination by land). cycle touring is addicting. Our first trip was 3 weeks long, second trip was 2 months and the third trip was 13 months. When you take a long trip, it becomes a lifestyle. To me, anything less than a 2 month is just a trip and isn't the same as a long tour. It is impossible to really "get into" touring if it is anything less than that- it is just over too quickly and I can say from experience that it is a COMPLETELY different feeling when you finish a REALLY long trip than just a couple week trip!!! It definitely gives you a different perspective on the world around you to have left your home ridden to all of these places and then 385 days later, returned to your starting point the same way that you left it- and to have done it all by your own power is an overwhelming feeling. For us the requirements for a successful trip- NEVER give up no matter how hard it gets--- things will always make the most of it by really experiencing it. We only paid for 5 hotels over the course of 13 months, it was more exciting to experience nature camping (in remote locations for free) and to socialize with people who invited us over and through Warm Showers. There is nothing better than cycle touring for us- it has just played such a big part in our life and has really created a unique bond between my husband and I. We have conquered our dreams together, seen each other at our worst, and are always looking forward to the next adventure we can share on our bikes! Challenges= winning the lottery is almost impossible, if it were easier, we would tour for life.

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Nice landscape, good camping place, near shop for food

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Nice weather helps!

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Note: the selected proffered length of trip is just my longest trip. I have certainly done shorter trips and find that the length of the trip doesn't relate to how much fun it is. Need good roads/trails. Need good rest areas. The long stretches of road in Montana can be fatal if you run out of water in the summer.

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On any multiday trip I travel with my husband. We choose minimal traffic roads or trails. We tend to over pack but that really reduces our stress level. We also tend to use what we already have which makes travel fairly inexpensive. We don't have a lot of bicycling specific equipment since it is so expensive. We always take a good attitude. Grumpiness and whining do not make for a good trip.

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On multi day cycling tours in Montana, ie: Yellowstone NP we were not sure of the camping availability. In California, Vermont, Nova Scotia we knew there were always bike/hike camping available. We did not want to ride @85 miles in and around Yellowstone and find out there was no camping which is on a first come, first serve basis. We did have everything mapped for Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming area trip but were skeptical on the accommodations. We did change our plans to Washington State, Mt Rainer, Yakima Cannon, Northern Cascades, and Olympic National Park never once worried about overnight lodging.

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On this particular trip most of our trip was in Canada. We finished in Kalispell to fly home. I have been to Montana several times.

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On this trip one of our biggest challenges was cell phone coverage. We were trying to coordinate with the rest of our party that was in a car, not being able to call them when troubles arose was stressful.

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One of the best states to cycle though! Thanks

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One of the greatest dangers I have been presented with is deep rumble strips on the edge of the highway. At times it is necessary to ride in the highway (passing another bike, avoiding something in the side lane like a dead deer, high speed downhill etc.) and deeply cut rumble strips will almost tear the handlebars out of your hand. On extremely scenic routes frequented by bicyclists, it would be better to not have rumble strips, but there is never an excuse for cutting them deep.

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One of the high points of my life was in 1999 when I rode my bicycle from Fairbanks, Alaska to Indian Springs, Nevada. I also did numerous 2-3 day trips around Alaska. Age and arthritis has become my enemy.

---

Optimal bicycle touring for me means that I/we can land at a campground at the end of each day. Showers are a bonus. Nearby food stores are another bonus. Our bicycle touring is usually done on a tandem so creature comforts for wife/stoker are important (shower . . .). Montana is on my list for a tour . .

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Outlawing cell usage while driving. People are so self-indulgent and inattentive that education is only effective on the population that is interested. Cyclists lose.

---

Overall experience on cross country trip was fantastic! Overall Montana was a very pleasant state to ride through. Some of the Adventure Cycling roads did not have shoulders but that rarely presented any problems as most drivers were very courteous. People along the way were very friendly and helpful. Really enjoyed the small towns along the route.

---

Overall our recent trip to Montana was good. The purpose was to see Glacier and then the Canadian Parks, so Montana was involved to get to and from Missoula where we left our car at a friend's house. Route 83 could be improved given the very nice "S" lakes (Salmon, Seeley and Swan) along the way. Also the road north of Whitefish was bad from a cyclist perspective. The traffic was surprisingly very friendly to us. Otherwise the riding was good. The ACA did a good job with mapping. We had all that we needed, the only challenges were the 2 roads I just mentioned, the trip met our expectations. We have done over 8000 miles of bike touring since 2005 so other than food and lodging we have our routine set. We do like campgrounds with showers at the end of the day, so that would be our only requirement. We travel simply. This was our 2nd bike tour in Montana, the first was in 2005 as part of a 3-week ride. Our next will be in 2015 as part of a crossing of the U.S. regarding the below questions, I probably would only be able to complete travel and recreational surveys regarding bicycling.

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#### PEOPLE

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Personal preparedness is essential to self contained cycling trips, especially when traveling solo. I always carry a mobile phone, some type of shelter from inclement weather, enough water and food, basic bike parts and tools. Friendly locals are an invaluable resource while cycle touring. They have the best info on local businesses and attractions, and they tell the best stories about the area :)

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Places to stay, food and water, repair kits, proper clothing, sunscreen, and chamois butter.

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Please turn the dial down on the wind machine.

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Prefer fully supported tours with hotel accommodations

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Quiet, rural roads or busier roads with wide, clean shoulders. We like to stay in B&Bs. Will not camp, so we need lodging every 60 miles or so.

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Quiet, smooth roads make for a good trip. A smooth shoulder bike lane is a big plus!

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Quit my job to do the trip hence low income student currently.

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Recently completed Bike Idaho - my first multiday tour experience (with the exception of some 2 day events). It was close to perfect. Extremely well run. It has gotten me into the mind set to do another. I would also like to do some self-contained touring when I can find time.

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Residents MUST be educated that bikes ARE legal on the roads and dangerous attitudes toward bicyclists must change. They need to understand we have every right to be on the road as they do, and running people off the road (literally, I'm not kidding) is the WRONG way to improve the bicycle touring situation in your state. Honking and other rude behavior, which we experienced a LOT in Montana, made it by far the worst state I've ever ridden in and will never, ever ride in again, sorry.

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Riding through Montana (on a cross US ride) was a lot of fun. Beautiful scenery, drivers were pretty considerate (only got blown at once). Probably the biggest problem that we had was the placing of rumble strips on some of the highways. If the shoulder is narrow and you have rumble strips, then cyclists tend to get closer to the white line than many motorists want. So either sweep the roads and get rid of tire debris, or get the rumble strips in the middle of the road to prevent head-on-collisions between cars instead of over on the right side.

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Road quality is important! Hate chip seal. Wide, clean shoulders, informative signage, businesses happy to accommodate cyclists, decent food, good beer, reasonably priced accommodations.

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Roads are generally good EXCEPT FOR RUMBLESTRIPS.

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Roads were great most places. Exception was West of Glacier, where they were life threatening. Really need some big bike lanes there.

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Roads were very good except for 93 north of Whitefish. Heavy traffic, winding, bumpy, and under repair.

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Routes like Germany

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Safe and good info on weather and fires. Weather includes flash floods like the one that washed out Bannack state park.

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Safe road conditions and drivers.

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Safe routes is the biggest need. Clear signage helps. It would be nice if transportation departments had road shoulder condition and maintenance as a higher priority. Sometimes repaving stops at the lane edge and leaves the shoulder in worse shape than the road and creates a hazardous edge. I realize budgets are tight but whatever can be done to make roads safer for bicycles will pay off in increased bicycle tourism. I will not return to do any cycling in Wyoming because of the conditions of the roads there. Availability of campsites for cyclists is my second priority - finding a suitable place to camp can be very stressful. Knowing there is a communal site available for cyclists at the next campground takes a lot of stress out of the experience. My next trip will likely be in Montana, thanks for the opportunity for input.

---

Safe shoulders on the roads is the one essential element to having a great touring trip. My partner and I go on long cycling trips to to experience a landscape one kilometer at a time, to sleep under the stars, to revel in, and sometimes battle the elements, and to challenge our bodies. We use this time to simplify life and are happy if we find a nice place to sleep at night, and a good beer. Montana gave us all of these essentials. Being a vegetarian, I found the choice of food available to me in restaurants to be very limited outside of the larger towns but I consider that my problem, not of fault of the place. We will be back to ride more of the back-roads of this amazing state.

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Safety on the road is issue #1. I appreciated the bike paths in MT e.g. south of Missoula. Shoulders at least 4 ft. wide are also good. Some roads were busy with traffic and had little or no shoulder e.g. the highway into Whitefish from the west. These roads were often scary. Overall I enjoyed cycling through W. MT. More "hiker-biker" campsites would be great, such as in Yellowstone NP. Too often campgrounds charge \$20-25 for a cyclist. I can afford this but refuse to do so as it is beyond poor student cyclists.

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SAFETY, ACTUALLY WRITING A BOOK ON BICYCLE SAFETY WHILE TOURING. DON'T PLAN AHEAD TO MUCH, JUST RIDE AND SEE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN, COVER UP YOUR BIKE COMPUTER AND KEEP YOUR HEAD UP. WAVE TO CAR AND TRUCK DRIVERS, SMILE A LOT YOUR RIDING YOUR BIKE.

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Scariest part of my 6-day bike tour in MT last summer was a short stretch of Hwy 37 to intersection with US Hwy 93 that was hilly with absolutely NO bike shoulder, requiring me & my son to ride on the highway& pray that motorists approaching from behind us would see us & slow down & not run us over. Then once we turned onto Hwy 93 & headed towards Eureka, the bike lane was full of rocks & other hazards making a crash or tire blowout much more likely.

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Scenic roads with as little vehicular traffic as possible and a usable shoulder. Rumble strips down the middle of shoulders are a safety issue for cyclists. Reasonably spaced campgrounds, lodging, grocery stores, restaurants, etc. Expecting the unexpected is a normal mode. The journey is the thing, not the destination.

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Short time biking in Montana, but my complaint would be the rumble strips that were put in the MIDDLE of the shoulder. Not good for the biking.

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Shoulders on roads, services especially water fountains in the empty areas, less debris on the shoulders, low traffic

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Shoulders were noticeably lacking in Montana, especially coming into Whitefish. This made that experience harrowing. It seemed the road contractor simply stopped paving and did not put in a shoulder there. Shoulders are most important thing to bike touring.

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Simple access to local information, probably map based. Relevant to a bikers needs. Ie., access to food, lodging, route info. Especially in urban areas, which are often the most difficult. The European system of using 'finger boards' in urban areas, giving simple, key info ref routes and time to travel (to 'city center', etc.) is very useful. I do not recall seeing one in the US.

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smooth roads, wide shoulders, light traffic, scenery, fun

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Some of MT was great in terms of shoulders and road conditions, but other areas are terrible. I entered on I-90 and the shoulders are narrow and covered in debris. I got the majority of my flat tires in MT. Missoula was an exception, so was the Pintler Hwy, but not having an alternate route to I-90 in some of the western areas of the state was not enjoyable. Central and Eastern MT had better and more frequent frontage routes and alternate roads to stay off the interstate. MT had really nice people but also the worst person on my trip who smoked me out with his diesel exhaust while driving by in his big-boy truck. But by and large I met many very friendly people and many willing to help me out when I got stuck.

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Some of the roads we traveled had a very thin shoulder with blind corners and truck traffic. It seemed pretty sketchy. I would love to see some old rail road beds converted to bike trails. The old railroad bed near Phillipsburg seems like a great location for one. I would like to see more "Share the Road" signs around MT.

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Strong legs, open roads, and wind at your back. Hot springs increase the comfort.

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Tent camping in Glacier National Park was horrible. Generators are allowed to run all the time by Motor Homes. Why can't they provide a grassy area separate from the RV'ers for bicycle campers? Also there was not one single place to pull off of HWY 2 to take a break if you were not in a town. How about adding a few rest areas. It only has to be a turnoff with a picnic table.

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Thanks for everything!

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The ACA maps were excellent as was some towns allowing touring cyclist to camp in parks. Harlem stands out for this. If you can arrange a strong tailwind across the whole of Montana I'll come over again.

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The bicycle infrastructure in Montana really has to be improved if you want to attract cyclists to the state. There is a woeful lack of bike paths and reasonably priced places to stay overnight. Even campgrounds can be expensive. Also, there just doesn't seem to be any reasonably priced campgrounds in or near major cities such as Missoula, Helena, Bozeman or Billings. Most cyclists don't have the finances or inclination to stay in upscale campgrounds at \$40-\$50 a night such as KOA. Subsequently, we avoid spending much time in the cities except to pass through.

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The biggest challenge for me was just the unknown. The adventure cycling maps were by far the most important thing to have. Having such detailed maps that contained mileage, elevation changes and road conditions, along with the icons for markets, post offices, etc. was great. There are always going to be variables such as roadwork, and restaurant and market closures, especially in the small towns, that no one can plan for. But that's one of the beauties of touring, is the unexpected trials that you have to overcome.

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The biggest challenge on my cross America Route 93 trip last April and May was road conditions. Including width of shoulder, debris on shoulder road covering. Other than a short stretch out of Whitefish which was under construction and a terrible (rough) stretch through the Tobacco Valley area, Route 93 in Montana was a pleasure to ride. Much better than Arizona and Nevada, lol

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The bike camp in Twin Bridges is wonderful. I didn't have the opportunity to stay there but I did check it out as I passed through. For cyclists relying on lodging other than motels, options like the bike camp are a terrific option on a tour!

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The entrance to Missoula along the freeway was frightening and we remembered a lot of debris on the road. Within a mile or so, we got on quiet roads thanks to Adventure Cycling maps. Without those, we would have gone straight into Missoula on an awful road.

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The guard rails on Montana highways are sometimes located on the white line, so there is no shoulder and if a car or truck comes I am afraid I'll be waxed to the guard rail. Rumble strips on the shoulders are a bad idea because they cause problems with bicycle handling and safety. The campground fee for state parks seems kind of steep... \$23 bucks for a one night stay? And the expectation that you have reserved a campground online or called ahead is a problem if you are bike touring. It would be nice if the cars and trucks moved over while passing at high speeds. Also, I don't understand how motorcycles are allowed to operate with open headers and no mufflers.

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The last 4 miles into Whitefish (from west heading east) using the Adventure Cycling "Northern Tier" maps was the most dangerous of my entire cycling trip from Seattle to East Glacier. Totally inadequate shoulders, high traffic, with dangerous and often quite blind corners at a few key times. Question: Since in all 50 states bicyclists generally have both the same rights and responsibilities as motorists to ride on all (except interstates and a few other restricted areas) all state and local roads/highways, why does Montana (as well as many/most other states) always create safe travel lanes for motorists but seldom create wide enough paved shoulders to safely separate slower moving bicyclist traffic from faster moving motorist traffic? If you want to encourage more bicycling and other healthy (and economic) activity patterns, why set up/maintain many/most highways in ways that statistically result in more accidents/occasional deaths. You can and should do much better on this!

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The Montana rumble strips were hell. Some are 14" wide, leaving 6" of shoulder on both sides - which can't be used by cyclists. We were forced to ride on the left of the white line many miles.

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The more bicycle safety is communicated to all, bicyclists and motorists, the better.

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The need of a good bike is imperative. Food was a mass concern more than lodging. Places to disperse camp safely without penalty or threat of harsh legality need to be made open for cyclist. Eating and having a secure, inexpensive option to rest (i.e.: MORE hostels, cafes are key) LOVED Rocker, Mt, and the massive truck stop just outside of Butte. Showers open and accessible need to be created so that travelers do not need to find homeless shelters as a the only, advertised option for staying affordability in Montana. A sleep system is a must for a cyclist (bivy, sleeping bag, thermal pad) and from there, such system needs to be flexible (reducing or reselling items not needed in the summer, buying additions during the winter) An open food resource, asking local bakeries to offer their discards to visitor centers for those who are cyclist to rummage through and use as fuel for their trip. Heck, charge a small fee to keep this service in place and to recoup money for such a program. Thank you for this survey and keep cycling, all of you in the great state of Montana.

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The optimal length fully depends on the target. About every year I go on a 5 day trip and less frequent I go on longer trips ranging from 2 weeks up to 3 months. Finally I also make on a regular basis day trips.

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The quality, condition and adequacy of cycling infrastructure is of utmost importance to a rewarding experience. While the scenery and experience of cycling in Montana was overall positive, the varying road conditions, quality and adequacy took away from what could have been an outstanding experience. My biggest criticism was the inconsistency of adequate shoulders on which to ride. This was especially so along 83 in areas north of Missoula. This was a particular criticism of Route 2 up and over Marias Pass, and segments of Route 2 across the state to Wolf Point. The narrow and winding route over Maria Pass with the heavy traffic requires adequate shoulders. I felt this was a very unsafe portion. Various portions east of the Rockies were adequate others were totally inadequate with high volumes of high speed traffic and no shoulders whatsoever. On our coast to coast tour, the state of Minnesota exemplified great cycling and was our most positive experiences of the trip. Wide, smooth, well maintained shoulders are the rule in Minnesota and provided a very pleasing experience along with the outstanding Rails-to-Trails infrastructure. Montana could do well to learn from that exemplified by Minnesota.

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The State of Montana needs to focus in on adopting a standard for road shoulders that takes into account the state's desire to be a "mecca" for cyclists. There were too many time when my wife was scared out of her mind as we attempted to bike between Seeley Lake and Clearwater Jct. and then again from Helena to Three Forks. Sure, some of the road shoulder segments were adequate but then just as suddenly, we'd be dumped out in the middle of the two-lane with all the trucks and motor-homes. Most of the folks we met in Montana were fairly nice but in the more rural area of the state especially in and around Lincoln, it is my opinion that the cowboys in that area would shoot us as look at us. This is quite a shift in what I consider Montana-type hospitality having lived in an adjoining state (Idaho) and worked in the Dillon area back in the early 80's. I'm not sure what's changed and it may be indicative of the polarization that I find in many states throughout the country. On another ride I took in 2011, I noticed the state had recently repaved the section of US93 south of Ronan. It appeared to me that the shoulder the state installed was woefully inadequate for cyclists. Was this condition rectified?

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There are only a few requirements for an enjoyable cycling trip. They are: Free/cheap camping Mapped trail systems open to mountain biking Huge cheeseburgers Beer

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There is vast room for improvement in state highway infrastructure as it relates to cycling. A small but adequately wide shoulder immensely affects comfort while on tour, and we, as Montanans, would do well to show cyclists that they are welcome in our state by adding accommodations for bicycles in all new transportation projects. Proper bike infrastructure, both in cities and on rural roads would do a lot to legitimize bicycles as a viable means of transportation. Bicycling is cheap, low environmental impact, fun, safe, reliable, combative of the vast majority of American society's medical problems (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, mindless consumption, etc. etc. etc.), convenient, easy, efficient, patriotic, invigorating, and the list goes on and on. Why wouldn't state or local government officials, with the best interests of their constituents in mind, and, more importantly, their budgets, spend comparatively miniscule amounts of money to support bicycle transportation? It's bogus! Aaaanyways, as my cycling needs go I'm fairly comfortable with the current infrastructure, realizing that it could be infinitely improved. I enjoy cycling challenges. My expectations and requirements for a successful trip are only that fun is had by all members of the group. My requirements for a comfortable trip are that I have adequate food and water to keep me going, and a flat spot to pitch a tent at the end of a long day. Anything beyond that is luxurious.

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There were 17 people on this trip

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This is a rather vague prompt. My needs amount to a bicycle, and my challenges, the road. Expectations only serve to get in the way, and my requirements for success are only that I engage fully. As for comfort, I find it to be more often a friend than an ally.

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This was my first cycling camping trip in 40 years. I will go again in 2014 (Colorado). Montana surprised me as being incredibly beautiful. I suck at camping - next time will be inn-to-inn. I did my best on this survey, but please don't expect me to do it again.

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This was my first extended trip from Hot Sulfur Springs, CO to Seaside, OR. I was previously used to supported trips or Midwestern trips where you have services every 15 miles. So knowing I had to be prepared I thought the basics in Montana, though sometimes sparse and "just in time" they were fine. Riding self contained I didn't need much and one of my best nights was in Kristy's Antelope Grill in Wisdom. She was concerned about the Rainbow folks who had been pestering her so we (riding companion) stayed overnight in the bar! Such trusting hospitality!! Obviously stop in Missoula was fine though I had to get used to so many people again. Our ride north from West Yellowstone was following the 4th of July so the majesty of the Big Sky country was quite stirring emotionally, and renewing. I loved my time in Montana.

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Train more than you think you will need, take less stuff, take more money, travel with others, talk to the locals, at the very least, put your foot down in every town through which you pass.

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Transamerica maps were great for route, lodging/camping locations, and convenience store/grocery locations. The weakness in travel was in the lack of a rating system for Transamerica's lodging, camping, service stops in a easily accessible format. Word of mouth or internet searching was good but sometimes unavailable and/or unreliable. But the unexpected or the unusual or whatever is the great part of bicycle touring and one can get bogged down with too much information also.

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Try to schedule around the best possibility for good weather.

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Twin Bridges was a wonderful example of a way to meet our cycling needs. The biker housing was fantastic. Finding food and water are our basic needs. Finding a place to sleep where we feel welcomed and safe with restrooms makes the trip more enjoyable. Laundry facilities are always a treat.

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Unfortunately about 12 days into our trip I partially tore my Achilles tendon, and because I didn't want to end the trip early I rode the remaining 350+ miles in a half-leg walking boot! It was shocking how mentally taxing an injury can be when the main purpose of this trip was to be carried out by my body...and an amazing insight into being thankful about what our bodies can do!

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Very hard to find shade or water in Southeast Montana! You need to put together 100 miles-plus days, and hope that the wind isn't against you.

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Washington sure does a way better job of better shoulders, roads, and dedicated paths for cyclist

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We absolutely love cycling in Montana - so far in all of our trips there, we have encountered no difficulties with traffic or road conditions. The only concern we have had is the width of shoulders on some highways, and the presence of the annoying rumble strips on the edge of that shoulder. When you have a 4' shoulder, with a 1' rumble strip, in effect the shoulder is only 3' and when you're riding a 33" wide recumbent tricycle, it makes for an uncomfortable ride!

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We are planning a self-supported cross-country journey in 2014. We'll depend on ACA maps for the routes and local info for activities along the way. We plan to bike through Montana next summer.

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We camped a lot in city parks - would have been nice to have more showers - maybe at the public pools The bike camp site in Twin Bridges is so wonderful - a perfect example of how a bike campground should - thanks for that maybe more "share the road" signs on the road from Helena to Three Forks - it's very busy with narrow shoulders maybe encourage property owners to put out a basket of fruit or water for bikers in those LONELY stretches (far-fetched I know )

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We consider low traffic roads and roads with generous shoulders (appropriately placed rumble strips!) to be essential on a road trip. On off-road trips it is best to have up-to-date information regarding stores for resupplying, accurate locations for water sources, and current information for camping and lodging. We can download maps and guidebook information onto our devices (iTouch, iPad Mini, and GPS) to use on hiking trips. On the Pacific Crest Trail and the Appalachian Trail we have enjoyed using the apps created by Guthook and the GPS chip created by the Pacific Crest Trail Association. It would be a real plus to have downloadable maps and info from Adventure Cycling for both for ease of use and for updating changes and adding new information while we are on a cycling trip.

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We design our own tours (wife and I) and go on one tour/year of about a month. We often use Adventure Cycling maps as a starting point but may also go to various state web sites: Oregon does a terrific job with cycling and is one of our preferred states to ride through. We look on line for other opportunities mostly in the west and southwest of the USA. We go self contained and camp, getting a motel once or twice per week. We tend to get a good breakfast in a local cafe and eat lunch and dinner at camp at night or on the road during the day, shopping at local grocery stores and carrying 1-3 days worth of food with us depending on the availability of stores. We really work hard to find back roads and to stay off US highways--We've been on US 2 in Montana and were scared to death. On the other hand we've done trips such as riding up the Yak River valley which was an awesome road...

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We followed the excellent ACA maps through Montana. All the information required by a touring cyclist is easily found there. However, Montanans were really helpful when quizzed for local information.

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We had a 57 day cross county trip in summer 2012 from WA to Maine. ACA was very a very good source of information since we had not done a long trip before. We bought the ACA maps and used them a lot, sometimes going off course. The West part of Montana was great, including Glacier. Going East after that it was hot, flat and not too interesting. Maybe other parts of Montana are better. Parts of Rt 20 had no shoulder and were very dangerous, with heavy truck and RV traffic... also same going into Whitefish. The friendliest people were in North Dakota!!

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We have always enjoyed self-contained bicycle touring and usually only stop to eat, rest, or sleep. We love Montana and live here, although we also bicycle in the surrounding states, preferring leaving from home.

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We mainly start our bicycle trips from home, because it is difficult to travel with a bicycle. The Amtrak Cascades train allows people to bring bikes on the train, but most train lines require bikes to be boxed. If we could take a train to Montana without boxing our bikes, we would definitely go bike touring there.

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We often camped on high school fields; not an option given in your 'where did we stay' page.

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We plan to ride a circular route around the US next year, so we'll be riding through Montana again. When we plan a trip we look for; places to stay that are between 30-70 miles distant places with showers. Camping is ok, but after a day on the bike you have to have a shower food. On a bike you can not carry ice, so you need sources of food each day. Montana was great, the bike shop in Whitefish was very helpful.

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We prefer at least a 7 day trip. We always stay in hotels rather than camping.

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We prefer low traffic roads with shoulders. MT was our favorite state as we rode from Florida to Oregon. The dog chases from Florida to Missouri were relentless. We had none of those in MT (or west of Missouri) so that as much as anything encourages us to do our future touring in the west. We plan on a Great Divide ride in the coming years as well as more road rides that involve MT

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We were on an organized camping tour for 7 days. All lodging, meals, etc. included. Our preferred way to go.....food, showers, route markers, mechanics, sag support, etc. in a reasonable sized group. Have done two,

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7-day tours of Montana this way. Low traffic, good roads are primary concerns.

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We were so impressed by the network of trails that are do not require cyclists to compete with cars! Job well done and the more you get the better. We had no problem paying (at Route of Hiawatha) and would be willing to pay a toll for upkeep to stay off the road. Wallace Inn is such a great supporter.

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We, my wife and I, ride a tandem and expect to keep riding until we're 90...or older!

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We'd be interested in the possibility of a cycling trip for parents with young children in a bicycle trailer. Having a kid has made the prospect of multi-day trips difficult, or impossible.

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We'd love to have a van supported trip in western Canada!

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Well when you ride the Northern Tier you don't expect much in the way of services and that turned out to be the case. Biggest challenge for us was to get something decent to eat; we relied a lot on Cenex stations: aren't many good restaurants on that route except in Whitefish (and of course Point of Rocks). It would be great to have a bike shop somewhere in eastern Montana (first one since Winthrop WA was in Medora ND). Having said all that we had a great time and would love to do it again. The people, everyone was great.

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Well, let's see. While I'm fantasizing, I'd like to see a transcontinental network of PAVED interstate bike trails, similar to the interstate system we have for motor vehicles. This should be the de-facto method of dealing with defunct railroad beds: the railroad company bears 60% of the cost of converting the rail bed to a paved rail trail, and the taxpayers should bear the other 40%. I'm guessing it'd be a whole lot cheaper than restoring the original grade. Every single one of these routes should have detailed signage, restrooms, and a useable bike pump/set of tools, every ten miles. Failing that, though, I'd like to see at least 4' wide, paved, well-maintained shoulders on EVERY state route and federal highway. It'd be nice if there were at least signage on every major state route/federal highway specifically directed at bicycles, indicating the grade, pavement type and quality, shoulder width, etc. Such information should be posted every five miles and maintained by local towns in order to encourage bike tourism, which as far as I can tell is excellent for local economies (how the hell else is a place like Noxon, MT, going to get tourist dollars?)

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What I need (that is usually in short supply) for a successful trip is (in order): beauty, road shoulders, campgrounds, showers, friendly locals, good cafes. The Blue Moon Saloon was a wonderful surprise! The last nine miles into Twin Bridges from Dillon (SW) was very busy with very little shoulders. I wish Montana had a bicycle touring road map that showed shoulders, traffic, wind direction, camping, showers, and services in small towns, elevations/grades, and sites along the routes. We found Montana to be the most memorable and beautiful yet had very little bike touring oriented information. Based on the information available before the trip, I would not have guessed that it would have been the most memorable. Maybe publishing something like what Adventure Cycling publishes but with a lot more nature pictures. Also publish where the good shoulders are.

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When conditions are bad, Permission to camp at fire stations, police stations and city parks is often a

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lifesaver.

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When I do bike trips (which I do myself with my wife as SAG driver) i want routes that are reasonably safe and with as little traffic as possible, availability of clean and safe hotels/motels/ Band B's and bike shops that are reasonably accessible inn case of major repair issues. I ship my own bike to whichever town I am starting from (the motel where I am staying the first and last night) and always have my route planned in advance and do not change unless road closures or weather require that I change. Finally and certainly one of the most important needs is good craft beers and local breweries along the way. Montana is a great place to ride and for the most part drivers have been courteous and friendly

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While the weather and scenery were near perfect, as with many states the roads varied from excellent to very poor. At times the shoulder was wide and clean, other times non-existence or worst, the pavement was broken and ragged forcing us to ride out in the traffic lane more. The roads we traveled were high speed roads, meaning the vehicles were for the most part doing 60 mph or more. While the speed doesn't bother me, the lack of a riding space for me does. This situation puts me and the vehicle in direct confrontation. Not good under any circumstances.

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Wide shoulders are great. Guardrails can be very hazardous when they narrow a shoulder for no apparent reason. Share the road signs and sentiment are important. I typically spend over \$2,000 on a two-week bike tour usually in a single state. Letting business owners know this is important to build support for us on the road. Most people are very helpful and respectful.

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Wide shoulders, courteous drivers, decent camping, showers, good food (shops and restaurants), nice temps, no headwinds! Water available. I found drivers in MT to be very courteous, and there was generally a good shoulder. But the drivers were terrific (they suck in Colorado). Sometimes there were long distances with no food or water available, or the only food was very mediocre. The public campground in Ennis doesn't have running water - that was a huge pain in the neck, dragging drinkable water in from town, especially since the camping fee charged wasn't low.

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Widen the shoulder going onto Missoula. Marking no the TransAm trail not good at all. Virginia is the standard to meet. Also need to emphasize the 3 foot clearance rule for Montana drivers.

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Wider road shoulders

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Wider shoulder widths would make cycle tourism much more feasible in the state of Montana. Also, for local bike paths the Dutch (the Netherlands) bike path system is extremely well designed. We should use their recommendations for building bike paths in the future. The current recommendations (generally listed in a big manuals by various DOTs) for bike paths in the United States are sub-par and often lead to bike-car conflict due to their poor design qualities. For instance, please watch this educational video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIAPbxLz6pA> Also, many of the videos posted by the user "markenlei" on youtube are very helpful in explaining why the Dutch bike path system is so well designed and successful.

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Wider shoulders is the best thing to increase safe cycling. I have been back twice for multi week trips and will

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be back again.

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Wider shoulders and new pavement (but especially wide shoulders) is always very appreciated.

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Width of shoulders. I was amazed at the shoulders while in Montana. There were stretches that there were no shoulders (and usually little or no traffic). Other stretches had lane size shoulders. Most areas had an acceptable width shoulder and the placement of the rumble strip determined if it was good for a bicycle rider. On a lot of the ride between Cut Bank and Havre the rumble strip would go right down the middle of the shoulder. This made the shoulder almost useless for the loaded tourer.

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With my 8 year outdoor planning background; REI Outdoor School Instructor, I planned this trip for 2 years with equipment, training, research and food prep. I am naturally comfortable traveling out of doors. Since this would be my first solo trip, I selected my route to be easy. No mountain passes were involved. My biggest concern was food. If anything, I over packed food for this trip knowing amenities are limited on the route. Another concern, was cell phone reception. I only phoned home to check-in. Often I turned off the phone to save the battery, due to constant search mode for cell towers. As a female, I felt very safe for my personal safety when not on the bike. Safety on the bike sometimes varied. Mostly due to road conditions. The bike lane, if any, on the highways were questionable in width. Defensive riding became crucial between Three Forks and Townsend. From Townsend to Helena was fantastic! The rumble strips between Rudyard and Havre could have been placed more strategic, in accordance to the fog line. Understanding weather in Montana, I packed accordingly for wet conditions. Which came in handy with the severe weather; lighting, hail, flash floods... I felt very well prepared with packed gear, clothing, food and training for a self-supported, solo bike tour. I look forward to planning more adventures and instructing this activity for REI's Outdoor School.

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Would prefer shorter distances on supported tours.

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Would welcome an organized (not race) tour of Montana. Prefer the ride the divide route Roosville to Wyoming, kind of thing. Interested in a trip that does not require too much logistics figuring, on my part.

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You have a fantastic resource and I understand how people there can be put off by what they may see as a bunch of people from out-of-state bothering them. However I also think you have a full industry of people relying on income from tourism and bad behavior sure makes us think twice about returning. For example I had planned a Montana trip this summer and I typically spend 2k to 3k on these trips most of which would have gone into your economy. Due to my experience out there with roadside harassment I elected to go out east where they are developing a beautiful set of interconnected off-road trails which I found must more enjoyable. I think you might benefit by looking at what was done in Wisconsin. I had a beautiful ride across Wisconsin on my trip and I think you might be able to do some of that in MT. Hope this is of some assistance.

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You need good gear!

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You should differentiate your survey for mtn bike touring vs road touring. Also, guided vs self guided. Also, loaded touring (panniers) or sag wagon.

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Your "state" drop down box does not list Alabama. I know we are out there, but we are one of the 50. Thanks for doing the survey. Route marking (maps and sign posts) are very important to having an enjoyable trip.

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Your state is beautiful. I plan on going back at least twice. I want to hike at Glacier & I want to ride the "Ride the Divide" route

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## **Appendix C – *Unedited* Open Ended Responses – Most Memorable MT experience**

I think it was the day we first came into the Big Hole valley, beautiful weather, mountains on the horizon 360 degrees. We stopped at the interpretive center and stopped in Wisdom where we had a wonderful dinner.

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1) Visiting Missoula, MT and encountering the Adventure Cycling organization at it's national source. To have interacted and be inspired to that upon the next further thousands of miles I would be cycling that I was not alone. Rewarding. 2) Cycling and being offered further a ride over the continental divide. I was Aided by a truck driver to whom I helped get back on the road. He gave me a lift and I shared my intentions of cycling across the country and through Montana 3) Seeing the Anaconda Smoke Stack. Wow, as it looks grand upon the backdrop of some of the most beautiful Mt. rages I have seen. A "Lord of the Ring" moment look onward at this tower in the middle of Mts. 4) Would have to be cycling through the Crow Nation and the beauty upon the struggles of cycling such hilly, mountainous terrain. Worth it to suffer the climb cycling the very remote landscape and also being treated to such vast beauty. Big sky and wide open land indeed!

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1. Climbing Chief Joseph's pass on an American Cycling Association tour out of Missoula in 2012 2. Ride from Dillon to Wise River on ACA tour out of Bozeman in 2011.

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9-8-11 Wisdom to Dillon on the Trans Am- Wonderful ride through Big Hole Valley. Saw 4 west-bound TA'ers, talked with 4 motorcycle riders at Jackson Mercantile and one local cyclist around Bannack. Had a great soul searching moment reading the roadside plaque as I came out of Big Hole Valley. The plaque had Meriwether Lewis' journal entry from his 31st birthday on it. I will never forget that day.

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A 400-mile loop starting and ending in Missoula. There were four memorable days on the tour. For the sake of choosing one, the 63 mile ride from Jackson to Wise River via a remote road through the Pioneer Mountains was the most memorable.

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A beautiful ride from Whitefish to Glacier National Park to end a 4 week bike camping trip starting in Seattle. Lovely countryside, good roads, interesting people, and Glacier Park at the end!

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A friend and I did a Trans America ride this summer which included riding across Montana. Glacier

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National Park was one of the most memorable parts of the trip

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Actually just spent a few miles in Montana. Toured from the Oregon coast to Jackson WY. Came up north through Idaho to West Yellowstone Montana, and then to Yellowstone and parts south.

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Actually two days: camped in Glacier Park and biked Going to the Sun Highway going east on one day, camped at Rising Sun Campground then biked back the next day. Just a great ride.

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Adventure cycling northern route. Riding South out of Waterton Lakes with a big tailwind. Front range of the Rockies on our right and the great plains on our left. Spectacular. Climbing the Road to the Sun, was also memorable. Cold, wet and foggy. But glorious all the same.

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After a long hot day riding and arriving in Helena Mont just a head of a thunderstorm, we stopped for supplies at the local grocery store. While waiting out the rain under the wonderful awning, two different people asked us about our trip and offered us a shower and a place to stay. This was quite welcomed as we were planning the end of the trip for my son as he had to return to work while I would continue on to Minnesota. The family we stayed with helped us get his bike to UPS and took him to the airport as well as putting us up for two days! We had not only had a great time cycling in Montana but had made some great friends.

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After a very late evening in Philipsburg involving locals (or at least temporary locals in the summer) buying us too much beer, the ride to Missoula was beautiful, as were the people.

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After crossing the Rockies, seeing the vast expanse of the High Plains ahead of us. It took us two weeks to cross Montana, riding fully-loaded touring bikes. Friendly people, good roads, wonderful experience!

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All of them, the sights and people are awesome!!!

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All our days in Montana were beautiful and memorable. Probably my favorite was cycling through the Bitterroot Valley to Missoula.

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Although not a pleasant memory, my ride between Jordan and Glendive was my most memorable, As this was a supported ride (wife was driving SAG), we were heading for Circle. The only motel in town was so horrible that I rode an additional 50 miles to Glendive making a 118 mile day in 100 degree weather.

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Amtrak station in East Glacier, over the Going to the Sun Road, and continuing west after. The most memorable day was attempting to cut through the Flathead NF on a forest service road and being turned back by bears up ahead as the sun was going down, tried to hitchhike past them in the next pick-up truck, and ended up sharing a campsite and big fire with a nice group of locals

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Any day where I got to meet new people that were interested in what I was doing.

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Arriving at a small gas station convenience store in Rollins Montana during the worst rain, lightening storm I had ever experienced and being welcomed inside to hot coffee and pastries n/c.

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Arriving at Bighorn Lodge in Noxon, MT after a full day of rain. Glad to get to a place that was warm and dry. Stayed there an extra day (unplanned) before heading east toward Libby and Whitefish.

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Arriving at the ACA HQ, Missoula, on day 68 of my Trans America bike ride in 2008. It was some 3,337 miles into my 4,000 mile journey and I knew I was going to make it to the Pacific Coast. The mountains, sunshine, forest, rivers and roads were all fantastic. However, my strongest memory is of the wonderful, friendly helpful, generous people I met. In 2011 crossed the Continental Divide again on my way to Missoula again whilst cycling the Lewis and Clark Trail. I crossed Rogers Pass and entered the beautiful area of the Blackfoot Valley.

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As part of a two month long bike trip that started in Alaska, it was the Going to the Sun Road up to Logan Pass in Glacier National Park!

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As we made the haul up Lookout Pass, I realized my dog was no longer beside my bike. When I looked back, she was standing in the middle of I-90. I called for her and she makes it back to the shoulder as she is missed, narrowly, by an RV.

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beautiful scenery, less aggressive chip seal would be nice and rumble strips should be banned !!

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Before riding in Montana, I could never believe - the sky can be that big. When I have read that like - Big sky country. Once day after Wisdom, me and my bike buddy (we were on a tandem) were so tired and thought it will be hard to cross another climb, so we have requested someone to give us a tow, but during the morning, when we have started, the weather was so refreshing, we had made that right :)

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Best memory was riding up the Going to the Sun Road to Logan Pass from Lake McDonald. There were many other great memories also. The worst memory was camping at Whitefish Lake State Park next to the busy railroad track and adjacent to a group of B.U.B.A.s that drank and made loud noises until 0300.

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Between Noxon and Plains on a side road in the pouring rain

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Bicycling on the Going to the Sun Highway in Glacier was spectacular!

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Bicycling over Chief Joseph Pass, visiting Big Hole National Battlefield, seeing the beautiful ranches and prairies south of Wisdom

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Bicycling over Logan Pass on the Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park

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Big climb followed by wonderful single track descent on GDR.

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Big Hole Nat'l Monument, overnight at uncrowded and beautiful May Creek, climbing Chief Joseph Pass the next morning - uncrowded, cool, fewer mosquitos, great scenery, really friendly people at Hook and Horn Coffee shop in town west of Big hole Nat'l Monument.

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Big Hole Valley loved the scenery

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Big hole valley--great except for mosquitoes

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Biked on the ACA TransAM route. Enjoyed climbing over Lolo pass, spending a night at Lolo hot springs, swimming in the pools, the next day biking into Missoula and having lunch with friends there.

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Biking into Glacier National Park was the most fantastic day. We started a little outside of Columbia Falls, rode on a slightly sketchy narrow 2-lane highway, then stopped for delicious Huckleberry Pie...the last downhill into the park was so exciting as it meant we had reached our destination!!! We then went to the edge of Lake MacDonald, ate lunch, and swam around before biking to our campsite at Rising Sun campground, where we again went swimming in the lake before dinner. It was the most memorable day filled with good food, swimming, and glaciers!

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Biking over Chief Joseph Pass

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Biking over Chief Joseph Pass and down into Darby. Also, Earthquake Lake and following the Madison River to Ennis.

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Biking the Pioneer Mountains Scenic Byway

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Biking the Pioneer Mountains

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Biking to a remote campsite that happened to be closed for the last two years, and spending time with the Montana youth conservation core that I found there by means of their fire.

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Biking up Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park!!!! It was BEAUTIFUL, challenging, exciting, and amazing.

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Camping at KOA in West Glacier and then biking thru Glacier NP up to Logan Pass. We stayed at St. Mary Campground the next day and that was stellar also. Day two of our ride leaving St. Mary and heading for Cut Bank was my second favorite day of our tour. We did spend a few days hiking around the park before starting our 17 day trip to Wisconsin. We are coming back next year starting from Anacortes WA and ending at Glacier NP to finish Adventure Cycling's Northern Tier route. Road conditions were generally good. There are a few sections of Hwy 2 where the shoulder disappears, but the traffic is light so was never much of a problem.

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Camping at the confluence of the Jocko River and the Flathead. Watching the local native Americans fish and talking to them there. Riding into Jackson MT. thru the most outrageous ranch country and spending the night at the Jackson Hotel and Hot Springs. Camping at Lake Five Resort outside West Yellowstone where the owner of the resort lent us a canoe to check out the lake Montana also had some scary encounters with drivers, trying to see how close they could come to a loaded touring bike. Mainly in far western MT.

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Can't say just one... But to put the one out, after Jackson on the road to Dillon. Beauty, infinity of the sky, freedom.

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Careening down Lolo pass into the Big Hole. Headed up the pass was raining, cold and windy. I made the top and flew down only to blow right past a line of the forest into this enormous, beautiful landscape that I wasn't expecting. It was a very powerful experience.

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Climbing Chief Joseph Pass South of Missoula following the Trans America Bike Trail was one of the most beautiful and challenging days on my 2,000 miles bike trip. Beautiful scenery, good road conditions, and a nice rest area at the top to cool down.

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Climbing eastbound to the top of Lolo Pass, then sailing down into Idaho.

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Climbing Going to the Sun Hwy. from the East on a loading touring bike and then zooming down the West side. Had met several other self supported touring cyclists in the campground the day before and enjoyed riding with them and sharing experiences of the road.

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Climbing Going to the Sun Road

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Climbing Going to the Sun Road and watching my panier flip off my bike and tumble down a rocky stream!

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Climbing over Rogers pass was grueling and amazing and then the descent into Lincoln was so refreshing with the beautiful conifers lining the road. After all the dry, narrow road, lack of shoulder, rolling, wide open expanse of eastern Montana, finally hitting the western continental divide was such a breath of fresh air.

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Climbing over the continental divide -heading north on loop from Missoula

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## Climbing the Big Horn Mountains

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Climbing the Going-to-the-Sun Road! It was like competing in the biathlon in that you'd pedal hard then stop and take a picture without shaking the camera.

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## Climbing the Highway to the Sun in Glacier National Park

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Climbing with the tandem trike made every day a challenge. But, it turned fun when single bikes tried to stay with us down hill.

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Climbing, summiting, flying down Chief Joseph Pass on the Trans Am route was memorable. It was the most difficult climb up to that point in my west to east ride. It was cold, snowy, and almost too foggy to see the road at the summit.

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Coming down from Chief Joseph Pass, I stopped at the Big Hole Battlefield Monument. I left in tears, but only partly because the smoke from Idaho forest fires was getting thick. I stopped in Wisdom for a wonderful hamburger, then foolishly decided to continue on to Jackson hot springs. On the way, the smoke from the Idaho fires got so thick that the sun was blotted out. Small pieces of ash were falling everywhere, including into my eyes. (Ouch!) I made it to Jackson, got a cabin, a shower and a good dinner. The next day, I actually got to see the Beaver Head mountains that I had ridden beside the day before. For all the trials and tribulations, it was a great day, and one of the most memorable of the entire trip.

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Coming out of West Yellowstone, meeting up with a large group of cyclists going the opposite direction at the first fork in the road, waiting out a hailstorm near Hegben lake, then riding through the valley in blissful sunlight. Getting stuck that same night as the sun went down and two flats. Got too cold to move, so we hitchhiked to Cameron where we stayed the night. Riding in Montana was one of the best parts of our ride.

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## Coming over Lolo Pass after leaving Missoula

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Coming over the crest of the mountains from Avery, ID to St. Regis, MT and seeing the start of what became a significant forest fire.

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Coming over the hill from Virginia City down into Ennis MT...bright sunshine, gorgeous vista and mountains, fresh air,

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Coming over the mountains to White Fish Lake.

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Coming over the pass out of Idaho

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comment on your survey question how many: I cycled through MT sometimes solo, had one friend join me, one sister join me, three friends join me, 5 coworkers join me, etc. for 3 to 10 days during different parts of a 6.5 week trip. Why dictate only specific answers which may not reflect reality? There was no other option. after camping at Agency creek with two friends, (we went to a nearby hot springs in the evening), I Climbed over Lemhi pass solo, picnicked at the spot with the little spring that is dedicated to Sacagawea, descended the MT side and camped solo at Clark Canyon reservoir & swam in the lake. The exhilaration at the top, the remote feel of the east side and the contrast of the alpine down to the desert was amazing in just a few hrs. time.

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Continental divide trail day that ended at Holland Lake. Was beautiful and ended in a great spot.

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Cook City to Cody WY: incredible ride through valleys near Yellowstone, then a fun, yet challenging 10 mile ascent up Dead Indian pass, then an 11 mile descent...

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Cresting Lolo Pass and descending into Montana. This was near the end of our 800 mile trip from Astoria, OR on the Lewis & Clark Route. We finished up in Missoula.

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Crisp weather, smooth roads, great people. Loved biking to Lolo Hot Springs, as well as staying in Twin Bridges.

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Cross country bike trip through Missoula, MT. Missoula was memorable as we found it to be a particularly lively, beautiful, and cycle-friendly city. We also enjoyed hot springs between Missoula and the Idaho border.

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Crossing Idaho border near Huron. It was near the end of a long trip, so it was much appreciated.

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Crossing Logan Pass in Glacier NP, riding over to Cut Bank, MT.

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Crossing Marias Pass with 50 knot headwinds. A grind, but a great feeling of accomplishment when I crested the summit. The weather was cloudy with light drizzle in places. It was late in September and I was concerned about completing my cross-country trip on the Northern Tier trail. I decided to push on in spite of the winds. The scenery was beautiful and even though I was crawling along at less than five miles per hour.....I felt great! My wife was my sag wagon on the trip pulling a 19 foot travel trailer. I descended the western side of the pass and she met me at an RV park with an Irish coffee in hand. All Good.

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Crossing over Logan Pass in Glacier National Park. This was the reason for the tour, the going to the sun road. Friend who set it up has done it 4 times and he said it was the hardest he has ever encountered this year. At least it made me feel good that I did it under those conditions.

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Crossing the continental divide

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Crossing the Continental Divide and visiting the battlefield national monument of Chief Joseph and learning about the end of the walk towards Canada. The hospitality of people along the way.

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Crossing the Continental Divide at Fleisher Pass; Lolo Pass was a close second See  
[bachebiketrip2012.tumblr.com](http://bachebiketrip2012.tumblr.com)

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Crossing the continental divide at Mc Donald Pass

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Cruising down the Continental Divide with snowcapped mountains in the distance on three if not four sides.

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Cycled from Holland Lake Lodge over Richmond Peak area to Ovando, Mt. I very much enjoyed the lack of traffic, the people we did see were friendly and helpful. Ovando was a wonderful place to stay and we were very excited to see the options for lodging in the Inn as well as low cost camping. We also fly fish, and though did not do so on this trip we will be back to fish some of the rivers and lakes we saw while on the trip. My husband who is a photographer took many photos of the area. We ate dinner at Trixie's bar and had breakfast at the Stray Bullet. Both great places to eat.

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Cycled Whitefish to Canada to Glacier to Whitefish. Also came across Mt. West to east as part of cross country trip 2011. Cycling going to sun in the rain, sun and fog!!! Awesome!!

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Cycling a portion of Going to the Sun at Glacier National Park was a great day. I cycled across the entire state on Adventure Cycling's Northern Tier. Most of the ride was pleasant.

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Cycling along Quake Lake and the Madison River as we rode across MT.

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Cycling along the Clearwater and lochsaw rivers

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Cycling along the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route between Whitefish and Lincoln.

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Cycling along the West Side Alternate along Lake Koocanusa was the highlight. No car or truck traffic, beautiful views, great weather, peaceful, relaxing. Didn't have to worry about or concentrate on traffic. Just able to enjoy a wonderful ride!

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CYCLING AROUND LAKE KOOKANUSA!

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Cycling east from lovely Missoula on day 1 of the adventure. We rode to a campsite along a stream. It was a great day.

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Cycling east from Missoula into rolling truly big sky country as one of our ten days traversing Montana on way to Portland Maine. Roads and shoulders were good and vehicle drivers courteous.

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Cycling from Cut Bank to the Rockies against a cold headwind, and in cold rain. Arriving in East Glacier post season with no cheap accommodation, and closed campsites. Eventually camping overnight in closed camping field, and waking to snow.

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Cycling from Darby to Jackson MT through the Big Hole Valley.

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Cycling from Glacier National Park to Whitefish Montana was a delight.

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Cycling from Sula MT over the continental divide (2 times) and then dropping into Big Hole Valley before stopping in Dillon. Massive climbs combine with screaming downhills all in one day. Fantastic scenery and little automobile traffic.

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Cycling into Montana from West Yellowstone into Bozeman. It was a narrow road with hardly any shoulder, but the scenery was amazing, and the cycling was a breeze!

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Cycling single track portion of divide trail

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Cycling thru glacier national park on a fully loaded camping trip

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Cycling up going to the sun road. I started early in the morning and tried to beat the traffic, but I had a hard time making it to the top by 12. Once I got to Logan's Pass I hung out for a long time up there, and then hiked the hidden lake trail.

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Departing from Three Forks at 8am, my wife and I bicycled southwest through Harrison and Norris before arriving in Ennis for the night. As this was Day 6 of a 10-day trip, we didn't avail ourselves of any other activities (other than biking). We sat in the park along the Madison River in Ennis after we had finished our biking for the day.

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Did about 250 miles of the Great divide route from Whitefish to Lincoln. Most fun I have had on a bicycle as an adult was a long piece of single track on the downhill getting whacked with little spruce branches. Lots of scratches on my legs but laughing my butt off for about 3-4 miles. Every rider coming off of that section was smiling, laughing, hooting, and hollering.

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Dillon to Jackson Hot Springs, through the Big Hole. Just stunning.

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Dirt roads. I love multi day trips on dirt roads and did so in 2012 up near Whitefish, MT and into glacier national park on the gravel road that is inside the park on the northwest park boundary. Such beautiful country! Polebridge, MT was a highlight - there's a hostel there and a great little bar where locals were playing music on the porch late into the night.

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Doing 2 week loops around Billings where my son lives. Mostly camping. Love the wildlife, isolation, and people. Dislike the wind.

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Each day in Glacier/Waterton was magnificent. Lodging was excellent.

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Either doing Going to the Sun Highway or Beartooth Highway both of which i have done in the past three years

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Enjoyed doing the Hiawatha trail and the rolling hills terrain between Idaho and N Dakota.

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Entering Montana at the summit of Lolo Pass, we flew down the hill into Big Sky Country. Missoula, with its beautiful downtown river and miles of bike lanes, really is one of the best bike towns in America.

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Every day biking from Yellowstone to Eureka and back.

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Every day I've ridden in Montana is the most memorable. Was it the day I rode for 70 miles into a stiff headwind from Three Forks to Helena? Or the next day when I climbed MacDonald Pass out of Helena then pedaled all day in perfect weather through beautiful farmland to my immaculate campsite alongside the Blackfoot? Perhaps the next day, my first century, which took me through Missoula and the Adventure Cycling Association headquarters before heading over Lolo Pass and into Idaho. Of these, however, the best was probably Ovando to the Idaho border on US-12 on account of the wide shoulder and great scenery with the exception of US-93/US-12 from Miller Creek Rd. to the turn-off at Lolo. That stretch had heavy, seemingly inconsiderate traffic.

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Every day was an epic ride (day 5 to 12 on the Great Divide): Day 5: Roosville -> Whitefish - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615132> Day 6: Whitefish -> Bigfork - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615208> Day 7: Bigfork -> Richmond Peak - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615221> Day 8: Richmond Peak -> Lincoln - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615239> Day 9: Lincoln -> Rimini - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615268> Day 10: Rimini -> Highland Rd climb - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615294> Day 11: Highland Rd climb -> close to Clark canyon reservoir - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615307> Day 12: close to Clark canyon reservoir -> Red Rock Lake Wilderness CG - <http://connect.garmin.com/activity/111615323>

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Fall cycling in Glacier National Park and surrounding areas was awesome (we rode from Jasper Ca. to Belgrade, MT.). The traffic was minimal and the road construction on Going to the Sun road, worked to our advantage. The fall colors were incredible and the goats were out in mass. Stayed at Lake MacDonald Lodge, and had the place to ourselves!

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Farmers market in Missoula, freezing our butts off in Jackson at 7am in 35 degrees, remarkable open spaces, welcoming town of Phillipsburg, all the Warmshowers hosts who hosted us!

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Fighting a fierce wind into Fairmont! And even stronger winds biking into Thompson Hot Springs. Also nice was the climb from Anaconda to Philipsburg (and also in the opposite direction).

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Finding a lake off of the interstate and swimming in it. The downhill/ride into Butte, MT. Visiting and staying in Phillipsburg, MT. I love Montana!!!

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Finding shade during the middle of the day whether in Raiders Quick Stop in Hinsdale or Point of Rock in Olney or a beautiful picnic spot shown to us by the Postmistress in Lindsay or Bergies Ice Cream in Nashua - finding a place to rest and maybe supply up was a challenge and we were always surprised that we could find something.

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First was sharing a road close to west of West Yellowstone with 12 buffalo while trying to get to our destination. It was terrifying but luckily it worked out fine and we have been talking about it ever since. We also loved seeing the mtn goats, big horn sheep and the bald eagle. Second was arriving at Missoula, MT while riding as a family across America. The reception was wonderful and we felt like champions. Third was riding the Hiawatha Trail. That was a beautiful and friendly adventure. The signage wasn't very good and it took us a while to find it, but it was worth it. We loved the views, being able to ride side by side and the informative signage.

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Following the Madison from West Yellowstone to Ennis, camping at the MT FWP fishing access areas and commercial campgrounds. Camping, meals, and floating in the hot springs at Norris Hot Springs. One of the most beautiful parts of this year's ride in MT was leaving Custer, following ACA's Lewis and Clark route east on a road with no traffic, except for a herd of jumpy cattle.

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Fort Benton views and hospitality, the "town" of Sand Springs and the homeowners hospitality to bikers, Missoula's fun, hip spirit

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From Eureka to Whitefish over Whitefish Divide and Red Meadow Pass (Great Divide MTB route). Nice scenery

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From Hamilton to Missoula.

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From Lincoln to Whitefish crossing Mount Rainer in 3 feet of snow with all fully packed bicycle. Took me almost 6 hours to get across. Exhausted at a staggering average speed of 1 mile an hour. For 6 long hours I said to myself, I'll never do this again. But after crossing the top, below the snow line again I couldn't wait to get to the next one. And to complete a day full of new experiences there was a brief encounter with a bear in the dusk.

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From Missoula to Dillon via Chief Joseph pass

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From West Yellowstone to Three Forks (120 miles in one day). Had a very strong tail wind, allowing me to cruise with very little effort!

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glacier N.P.,

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Glacier National Park

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Glacier National Park- going to the sun Road was the best !!

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Glacier National Park, Going to Sun Road, Many Glacier

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Glacier NP and Independence Day in Libby

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Glacier NP, Flathead Lake

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Glacier Park & environs

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Going from Big Fork to Whitefish. Glacier was still closed so had to bypass & keep riding.

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Going over Lost Trail Pass and Chief Joseph pass and into Big Hole country.

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Going over the "Going to the Sun" road in Glacier national park. or Riding 100+ miles in the heat from Fort Peck to Circle, MT.

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Going through Glacier National Park

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going to a very small town with one motel where we showered, had dinner in the community center, and went to the bar for entertainment. Biking the roads with so few cars was fantastic, and seeing ranches with animals but few people was also great

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Going to Adventure Cycling's office in Missoula and meeting other riders and in particular meeting Greg Siple.

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Going to Sun Road in Glacier National Park!

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Going to Sun road in Glacier park.

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Going to the Sun Highway in Glacier!

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Going to the Sun in Glacier National Park

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Going to the sun road

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Going to the Sun Road

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Going to the Sun Road in Glacier was fantastic; the absence of choices and lodgings to exit from Eastern Montana into either South Dakota or Wyoming

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Going to the Sun road in Glacier, Holland lake and Richmond peak

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Going to the Sun Road over Logan Pass traveling from east to west, camping that night in Sprague Creek Campground. We were at the end of a month long bike trip having traveled from Vancouver BC to Calgary AB on Highway 1 then down to Glacier/Waterton National Park. We spent the previous night in St. Mary Campground with 6 other hikers and bikers. We have done that road in a car several times and it was much more awesome by bike. We ended our trip at Whitefish where we took the Amtrak train back to Oregon.

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Going to the sun, flathead lake, Missoula, big hole valley . . . all good days. Montana folks were friendly and a lot of fun. One of the best states/places to ride.

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Going west to east into billings with a 40 mph tail wind.... Made short work of a 90+ mile day

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Going-To-The-Sun Highway

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Going-to-the-Sun highway in Glacier National Park was definitely the highlight. We crossed Montana completely from west to east on the Northern Tier bike route. The highway through Glacier offers spectacular scenery and the thrill of a high climb, but the traffic is excessive for most of the day and cyclists are banned during peak hours. Glacier needs to address its traffic problems in a way that considers the needs of cyclists.

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Good trip. It was an adventure cycling trip.

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great divide route through Ovando

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Great Falls down to Helena. Beautiful scenery and good road

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Great scenery and little traffic.

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Had just turned south off HWY 2 in eastern Montana (near Circle). Rain so cold, you wish it would turn to snow. Worse yet, headwinds. Punted my pride and took a lift with a trucker. He was, quite simply, mad. After 20 miles, I made an excuse I need to get back on the road (though conditions no better). Was quite relieved he pulled over rather than hearing the sound of the door locks engaging. Felt like in the middle of a Hitchcock movie, perhaps Stephen King.

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Hard to choose one. Most any early morning ride!

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Having cycled into Missoula I wild camped near the airport. The following morning I visited the Adventure Cycling Association offices and was made very welcome. Shortly after cycling out of Missoula that afternoon I suffered a puncture requiring me to return to the city to purchase a new tyre and following a number of coincidences I ended up giving a talk about my Pacific to Atlantic solo cycle trip to a group of teenagers at a local school.

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Heading east over going to the sun road. East bound riding over the pass is pretty ideal. Going up the pass car traffic is going as slow as you are. The slow speed allows you to get some great views... Far more spectacular than what you get in a car (I've driven this road countless times, its true my amazing by bike!)

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Helena to butte. Riding the four wheel track over the peak.

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Highway 89 north from Yellowstone NP to Glacier NP

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Hmm. Hard to say. Montana is so spectacular.

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Hwy 287 between Ennis and West Yellowstone -- weather not too hot and not too cold, drivers and traffic at a great level, terrain not too difficult, not too easy.

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I arrived in Montana by Amtrak to East Glacier and the most memorable day was biking north up and down hills with Glacier National Park on my left/west the whole time, and then finally descending a couple thousand feet into the park itself. Amazing views.

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I biked from Columbia Falls to Butte following the continental divide route. Climbing, climbing and more climbing.

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I biked from great falls to Missoula along beautiful rivers and mountains in clean air and wide open spaces. I loved the new areas, where I've never been before. People drove fast and were not as friendly as most. Overall a great trip though.

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I biked from Walla Walla, Washington to Missoula, MT, over about 3 days. So the last (and only day in MT) was spent going over Lolo pass and into MT. I spent several nights in Missoula, where I was met by my spouse, who travelled by car. I would have liked to have spent more time on two wheels in MT, but scheduling constrained my visit. I hope to return to MT via bicycle (from my home in Eugene, OR) in the next couple of years.

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I came in to Missoula on HWY 200 and stopped at Adventure Cycling (a destination that I had chosen for my route). The biking was good and the traffic was tolerable. Missoula was a great stop for me and I enjoyed the city and all it had to offer, especially Adventure Cycling. I didn't get to wander around the back roads of Montana, though I would imagine that they would have been enjoyable, and intend to go back.

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I came through Montana on a cross country ride going from West to East. My best day was the ride from Drummond to Helena over McDonald pass. It was a beautiful day the scenery was great.

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I can't. Of the fourteen days I spent in Montana (12 riding), each day carries 'most memorable' status. 1st day on the south side of Clark Fork River, where we saw more eagles than people. 2nd day and the extremely friendly people of Thompson Falls. 3rd day and our first glimpse of the rugged Mission Range and a screaming downhill ride from Arlee to Missoula. Days 5-6 up the Blackfoot and Clearwater and down the Swan River Valley between two magnificent ranges. Riding into West Glacier, up the Marias Pass, down into East Glacier. All days with most memorable scenery. The last 2 1/2 days from East Glacier to Chester and on into Havre. Heading into a 20mph headwind that everyone said shouldn't be there, leaving the mountains for the wide open rolling plains and friendly rescuers in Havre. The friendly people of Havre and the Havre Buffalo Jump and Underground. No, I have no 'most memorable' day, just 'most memorable' days.

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I cycle every day in Montana. But if I limit my description to just multi-day tours, my experiences on the Great Divide route are probably the most memorable. I distinctly remember one day on that route that took me from Elkhorn Hot springs to outside of Lima on the Great Divide route. A long day that had a bit of everything and ended camping on BLM land with a view of Red Rocks lake and the Lima Peaks.

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I cycled from Anchorage, AK to Lake Tahoe, CA this summer. Arriving back to the states in Montana was incredible. We cycled Going to the Sun road through Glacier at sunrise in August. It was the most amazing experience of my life. As my brother and I said countless times, Montana is the goods! Can't wait to get back.

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I cycled from coast to coast this past summer. I started in Seaside OR, and finished in Portland ME. I biked through Montana via Lolo Pass, then to Missoula, then spent a couple days in Glacier, and then returned to Missoula and rode east to Great Fall (over Rogers Pass) following the Lewis and Clark route from Adventure Cycling. Missoula is a very biker friendly town - one of the best on my trip (others were Portland Or, Walla Walla WA and Portland ME.

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I cycled the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route. Loved the Montana section. Few Bears!!

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I did a cross country ride from Astoria, Oregon to Yorktown, VA. Montana was by far the toughest state that I traveled through. The headwind that I encountered were miserable. I had one day that I didn't get over 10 mph and I broke and didn't know if I could finish the ride. I was by myself so I had no other choice. I pedaled on to get through the day.

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I did a cross country ride in 2011. I rode the Northern Tier Route until got to St. Mary and then took the Great Parks Route down to Missoula. I rode the Trans America Trail down thru Montana into Wyoming. My favorite day was when I rode the Going To The Sun Road in Glacier National Park. I plan on coming back to Montana again.

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I don't remember the city but it was about 50 to 90 miles east of Missoula on the transamerica route. As we Cycled horses ran along side of us for about a mile. The sunrise and sunsets were some of the best of the trip.

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I enjoyed every day in Montana. We entered Montana from Waterton National Park, Glacier, Whitefish, Flathead Lake (favorite time staying with friends), Missoula, Big Hole (beautiful), Madison River, to Yellowstone. The worst day was a headwind out of Ennis, which had nothing to do with the beauty of Montana.

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I followed the Adventure Cycling "Great Parks North " route from NW MT to Yellowstone NP. I enjoyed Flathead Lake, the Bitterroot Valley and the wild openness of Big Hole. People were friendly especially in the smaller towns.

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I followed the Great Divide Route from Banff to Seeley Lake.

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I guess Missoula was the most memorable because I stayed for an extra day to rest and visit with ACA, toured the city and visited the University all guided but my host who ran a local bicycle hostel. Also great bike paths south of Missoula and friendly people.

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I had a nice day visiting Pompeys Pillar National Monument (bikers get in free) and riding along the Yellowstone River. This area of Montana is an easy ride, because there is not much elevation change.

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I had many memorable days along the Lewis & Clark Trail - Bozeman to Havre. The scenery and the weather shaped my experiences in June 2013. Started a beautiful riding day, and hours later, flash flooding, lightening and high winds came into play. A two day delay to my adventure in Helena. People that I met were fantastic, friendly and helpful. Took in museums, toured parks all relating to

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the Corps of Discovery.

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I have had more than one multi-day tour in Montana. Previous 3 questions were about most recent trip, in 2013. In 2012 I was on a group tour that included several days in Montana as we circled Glacier National Park/Waterton Lakes. Certainly the most memorable day was the climb from East Glacier up "Going-to-the-Sun "and descending on the west side of Logan Pass. It was wonderful cycling with the most amazing scenery!

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I have ridden the Great Divide Mtn Bike Route from North (Rooseville) to South Montana (into ID and WY). A lot of great memories. Probably climbing and descending Fleecer Ridge was my most memorable day.

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I left Breckenridge, CO and rode North through (very Windy) Wyoming and into Montana. My Adventure Cycling Mapped Route (Trans Am) took me through the Tetons and Yellowstone and into Montana. As I was riding during motorcycle week in Sturgis, a group of riders passed me going east from Oregon to Sturgis. As they passed, a satchel came off one of the motorcycles. As I tried to flag them down followed by a cell call to alert the Sheriff, and without cell signal, I turned around and rode 30 miles back to a small town. Finding the motorcycle group inside the Cafe, I returned the bag to its owner. They stood up and all hi-fived me and thanked me for returning downwind to return the bag (that I later learned was full of money). I got a free dinner and a cabin paid for the gesture! A week later they passed me again as I entered into Oregon! They stopped and once again thanked me!!!

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I love the scenic first day of a three day cycling tour we have ridden four times which begins in Wise River, goes south over the pass between the East and West Pioneer ranges to Elkhorn Hot Springs, then the second day follows Grasshopper Creek to the highway, then turns west, crossing the Big Hole Divide, ending up at Jackson Hot Springs on the second night. The third day features breakfast and Wisdom and follows the Big Hole River back to Wise River. One memorable day my husband and I were on our tandem and right at the top of the pass one of the crank arms fell off and we had to remove the chain. It was very exciting coasting down all the switch backs to the Elkhorn Hot Springs turn-off. We had to push the tandem up to the hotel, where our friends were waiting. Fortunately one had a car, which we borrowed for a quick trip back to Helena to pick up our two single bikes in order to be able to finish the second and third days of the trip.

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I loved coming down from Lolo Pass to Missoula trying to beat a rainstorm coming from the west. Just made it! Met some great folks at Adventure Cycling and enjoyed a zero day in town.

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I loved coming over the Lost Trail pass which was a big accomplishment for me. I also loved the bit from Hamilton to Lolo (bike path— hurray!) and also the bit coming into Flathead Lake (also bike path). Basically, I REALLY appreciate bike paths (or very empty country roads) and probably would only choose to do another multi-day trip if most of the route was bike path.

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I loved that you could camp anywhere that was not posted! I did not have to pay to camp at all for the week I road through the state on a cross country tour.

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I loved the Pioneer Scenic Bi-way ...but all days of that 8 day trip were amazing. The only times I was not comfortable was when we were on narrow, 2 lane roads with no shoulder. The speed limits are WAY high ...and there were a few dicey moments on curvy roads....and even on roads where there was plenty of room and loads of visibility (some people are just rude and dangerous in motor vehicles). Honestly, those couple of moments make me second guess riding on the road (anywhere)...which is a real shame.

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I passed through Montana on a west to east cross country bicycle trip in late September 2011. My most memorable days were riding from Sula to Twin Bridges. I crossed the continental divide for the first of many times, visited Big Hole national battlefield, and met 9 other touring cyclists (all going in the opposite direction of me).

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I really enjoyed my day going over Lolo Pass and entering Missoula. It was beautiful!

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I really enjoyed the morning we woke up in Wisdom, MT. We rode through Jackson and then down to Dillon. You hit two passes before descending in to Dillon that aren't too hard but you get "paid back" by the 14 mile descent into Dillon. It was so stellar that when we got in to Dillon (where we had been planning to stay), we decided to go all the way to Twin Bridges! Twin Bridges was also very memorable as that is where the cyclist only lodging is. It is a little hut in the park with a shower, bathroom, sink, picnic tables, bike stand and it's all free. We gave a donation though because it was incredible! Overall, riding in Western MT is incredible. I can't say the same for Eastern MT.

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I remember a storm in Wilbax that we hid from in a truck stop restroom. As we rode into town, the power was out and trees were on the ground. It was epic. There is a man in Wolf Point called "Doc Z" who is a legend. He gave us breakfast and a book of spiritual sayings. He should be listed on the adventure cycling maps for his wisdom and friendliness. He owns a bar in town called "Doc Z's" and he started Missouri Breaks Brewery. I think cyclists going through MT should be told to carry blow horns for stray dogs. It's a wild place but tons of fun.

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I remember beautiful scenery, friendly people, and frighteningly narrow roads with high speed traffic. For a while we were riding on a dilapidated shoulder which was basically gravel mixed with chunks of pavement and I thought I was going to die. We had studied the map in detail and were unable to find any parallel roads which would be safer so we just prayed and tried to make it to the end.

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I remember the green mountains, beautiful forests, Lewis & Clark -places... And Missoula was nice and very bike-friendly. I met a woman (a local biker) who invited me to stay at her house in Missoula - that was very nice. I also visited Hardtimes Bluegrass festival!

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I rode from Billings to Crow Agency and visited the Little Bighorn Battlefield. The ride was not spectacular as I was on the highway. However, I had visited the battlefield as a child (then called Custer's Battlefield) and I was looking forward to visiting it again. Though the event is a black mark in US history, it was great to see how the native American aspect has been included in the site.

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I rode from Missoula up into Canada on the way to Alaska this summer. The ride up the Swan River valley was beautiful, peaceful and very enjoyable. Thoroughly enjoyed the trip. In Eureka, MT met a German couple cycling from Las Vegas to Jasper and had a wonderful week connecting and riding with them. Serendipity is what I enjoy about bicycle travel.

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I rode the Transam from Yorktown, VA to Astoria, OR and from there rode to Seattle, WA in order to catch my plane towards Vienna where I took the train to Passau, Germany and rode back to Vienna following the Danube river. I had a very nice experience from the entrance in MT in West Yellowstone, the visit of Adventure Cycling Association HQ in Missoula and the exit at Lolo Pass, entering Idaho. The countryside, the remoteness and the kindness of the people met will let me an unperishable remembrance of the whole trip. In addition to the magnificent landscapes, I really enjoyed the bicycle friendly city of Missoula and its breweries. The only thing to improve and this concerned the whole of the US is the cleaning of the shoulder of the main roads, a lot of debris increases drastically the risk of getting a flat.

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I rode through as part of the Adventure cycling Transamerica self supported group. Missoula was the most memorable day, not because of the cycling, no the days just before and after were better riding, but the day off tubing in the river was one of the best days on the three month trip. Met some wonderful cyclist on that day.

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I rode to Placid Lake and that evening watched a thunder and lightening storm roll in slowly over the lake. It was a beautiful fireworks show, and then I slept through the sound of quiet rain.

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I rode two separate trips in 2012. I rode from Anacortes, Washington to Missoula with a friend and then rode Cycle Montana with the ACA with about 90 people. My best day was riding along Koocanousca Lake and camping in the pines on one of our first dry and sunny days on the friend trip and riding into the Big Hole Valley from Chief Joseph Pass on the group trip.

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I spent about a week riding through MT during the 2011 Tour Divide. It is hard to pick just one day because each one was memorable. We hiked through the snow over Strykker pass for hours, uncertain whether we'd have to bivy over night up there, finally dropping below the snow line and pedaling into Whitefish through pouring rain. Finished the day with stellar service from Glacier Cyclery and amazing burgers at Buffalo Cafe. I shivered through the coldest night of my life in the Holland Lake campground and was brought back to life with a hot breakfast at Holland Lake Lodge. The Wickes and High Ore Rd detour through the Comet ghost town had some of the steepest and gnarliest grades of the whole route and then we met a crazy lady as we rolled into Basin. Heard from another racer that she started a brawl in the bar later that evening. We climbed to Crystal Park in drizzling rain, crashed a wedding banquet in Polaris and struggled through the soul-sucking bentonite mud on Bannack Road. Every day the route and the weather conspired to place new challenges before us but we were rewarded with great riding, stunning scenery and incredible hospitality throughout the state.

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I spent all or part of 7 days riding (with sag wagon support) from Lolo Pass to West Yellowstone, with a break near the start to drive up to Glacier N.P. Every day was wonderful in different ways. (1) Lolo Pass and marmots. (2) The Bitterroot Valley. (3) Chief Joseph Pass (4) Big Hole and Bannack (5) Beaverhead Rock (6) the Madison Valley (7) Earthquake Lake.

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I started on the Great Divide Route from Canada and then to Polebridge and Glacier. I had planned to continue farther, but found the tiny town of Polebridge to pass up. The people there were really cool and welcoming, and less than 24 hours after meeting some people there we went kayaking in Glacier National Park and huckleberry picking together! Bike tourism is the best way to meet and engage with people, and provides opportunities you'd never get otherwise.

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I stayed 8 days in Montana on my coast-to-coast ride, east-to-west across America. This included rest days in both West Yellowstone and Missoula. I especially remember the day I arrived in Missoula and visited the headquarters of Adventure Cycling Association.

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I was completing the last section of my TransAm. I really enjoyed visiting the headquarters of Adventure Cycling and the town of Missoula

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I was on the Bike Montana bicycle tour put on by Bicycle Rides Northwest. One day we rode a bridge across Lake Koocanusa, and then along a road high above the western shore to Libby, Montana. The riding along the west side of the lake was really great; rolling climbs and descents, great scenery, and hardly any cars or RV's.

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I was on the Cycle Montana trip with Adventure Cycling and I loved the ride from St. Joseph's Pass into the Big Hole. The scenery is spectacular and it is mostly down-hill and after the climb up to the pass. Even though, it was a tough slog with strong winds when turning south from Wisdom to Jackson, the next day with that strong tailwind was FABULOUS! I averaged 15.7 mph for the 76 mile ride into Fairmount, which for me (69 years old at the time), was unthinkable. Plus, I had a max of 43.6mph - another record. Yeah for tailwinds in Montana.

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I was passing thru on a 6320 mile trip. I loved the variety of scenery, road conditions were mostly wonderful, cars were polite

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I will never forget crossing the Bad Lands seeing the purple mountains majesties for the first time. I was filled with pride. I'm born raised from the SE projects of Washington D.C. and had never been off the East coast. Fourth of July, was in Missoula, I was the first time I had ever spent that day outside of D.C. It shocked me to see how much other Americans celebrate the night.

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I would have to say when some ass hole trucker almost killed my brother just south of Kalispell. He had to bail into the ditch to save his own life. Many of the Montana roads are too dangerous to ride, because there is no shoulder and a few bad apples can really make things tough. Luckily, a nice couple that lived just west of Missoula picked all three of us up in their RV and drove us to their house about 150 miles away. We were then on our way again. Montana is a beautiful state, but it's doubtful that I would go there again for road biking.

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I'm giving you 2 because I can't follow instructions: 1)Going to the Sun Rd 2) Chief Joseph Pass

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Impossible to pick one day. We enjoyed the plains, Buffalo Jump in Havre, Glacier NP, Flathead Lake, Lolo Pass.

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In 2002, two friends and I cycled across the US, Anacortes WA to Bar Harbor Maine, In Montana, I stopped as a train (100-110 cars) was traveling across the horizon. I could see the front, middle and back end of the train, all at the same time. Just like when I was a child and watched western movies of the steam engines (4 or 5 cars) traveling across the horizon. Very enjoyable.

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in 2006 Riding Hwy 200 from the Idaho MT border to Missoula

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In 2012 I rode from Portland, OR to Portland, ME and traveled through MT. I entered via Lolo Pass and exited into North Dakota via I-94. There were many memorable days in MT as it just seemed to go on and on (in a good way of course). Beyond the beauty of the state, it was the kindness of the people that over and over impressed me with their support and interest in my journey.

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in and out of wisdom

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In the big hole country going over Chief Joseph Pass in mid afternoon and the snow comes. Still a couple of hours from Wisdom and the temperature is dropping fast. Snow on the road and wind picking up and then there is Wisdom in the sun a few miles away. Nice town, Saloon was a blast, people were great.

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Incredible ride from Red Lodge to Cooke City and then back again -- we stayed with friends in RL, then a hotel in Cooke City -- incredible scenery and we saw many other cyclists too -- I took my teen daughters (ages 14 and 16) and one of their friends.

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It is viewing the wide open spaces of Eastern and North Central Montana where it is the real big sky

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country.

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It was a week-long loop out of Missoula, through Hamilton, Darby, Jackson, Fairmont, Philipsburg, Ovando, and back to Missoula. The most memorable day was heading into Fairmont; the wind was howling and it was very difficult for cyclists. We couldn't put up our tents until late afternoon.

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It was all great. People, scenery, fresh air.

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It was part of a solo ride from Oregon coast to NJ coast. I used the interstate from Billings to Miles City. Distances are vast and services few. Between Miles City and Baker, there is hardly any service. Some water fountains would have been very welcome. Drivers were amongst the most courteous that I encountered and gave the bike plenty of room. The most memorable day was the one from Miles City to Baker - 80 miles of emptiness.

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It was the day I road into St Regis--- I started riding up the logging road there thinking it was only three miles to the top. It had just rained so it was super muddy. At midnight I was still slogging up this road, it was snowing, (end of May), and I was exhausted so I camped alongside the road and hoped for the best-- it was quite the adventure and all turned out well.

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it's may be the stage between Dillon and Salmon ID through Lhemi Pass on the Lewis & Clark bike trail

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It's when you get wet, right? We were pedaling from Wise River to Jackson looking at coming squalls. We tried to outrun them and failed. Got soaked to the bone. Good thing we still had 10 to go. I was mostly dry by the time we pulled into Jackson. Beer and food made all the rest well again.

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I've done a few short trips recently. Two were two-day, road-riding, credit-card touring trips with my wife. Three were two-day or three day, mtb, camping trips...one with my family and friends (for my birthday) and two with a friend. I've also bike camped (mtb) for hunting four or five times.

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I've ridden over 2,500 mountain bike miles in Montana over the past 12 months. Touring, exercising and just riding for fun with friends. I've had so many incredible rides I can not single one out.

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July 6, 2012, we biked along the Yellowstone River on Old Highway 10. The scenery was beautiful along the Yellowstone River.

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Lewis and Clark route along the Clearwater River.

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Libby to Kalispell. Cold and rained all day. Great lunch and happy hour at Kickin' Horse Saloon in Happy's Inn.

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Libby, MT STOKER ride. Two day ride. Beautiful mother day ride weekend of May 11. Best weather that year. Short trip for our group from Coeur d Alene, ID. Good food, well organized, fee for two day ride was reasonable as I recall. Did the 47 mile and the 35. One man (62) in our group was on a tri bike

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having just recovered from a serious brain bleed.

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Lola pass and latcha river

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Lolo Pass

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Lolo pass into Missoula. Rest days in Missoula and Helena. Crossing the Badlands and Badlands Nat'l Park. Riding through the Indian Reservations.

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Lolo Pass to Stevensville then next day to Missoula. Great weather and a bike path between Stevensville and Lolo.

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Lolo pass, west to east. Gaining the summit pass, descending to Lolo hot springs/campground.

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Loop tour starting and ending in Missoula, Darby, Sula, Jackson, Wisdom, Anaconda, Philipsburg, Drummond, Ovando. Beautiful scenery. Very, very windy between Wisdom and Jackson, but the most beautiful view of the mountains. Roads were good. Toured with Adventure Cycling for 1 week fully supported.

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Love the quiet serenity of roads in and around Missoula.

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Loved it all but a lasting memory was an excellent bike path before and into Lolo.

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Loved Montana on the Trans-Am trail. Beautiful scenery, good campgrounds, felt safe on the roads.

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Many great trips so hard to pick one. Mostly MTB, always head into the Rattlesnake and up Pattee Canyon, but the new Whitefish trails are also great!

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Many of the days in Montana were great but my two favorite days were riding along a farm road (Market road?) outside of Whitefish looking at the wildflowers, fields, and birds and riding through the Glacier NP on the Going-to-the-Sun Road.

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ME: Crossing the pass and dropping in Ennis was the most beautiful. Also, surviving the bad road coming into Twin Bridges and surviving the hurricane near Twin Bridges. The evening ride from Wisdom to Jackson with the beautiful smoky sunset will never be forgotten. MY WIFE: following the Lewis and Clark trail along rivers, watching fly fishing, and the beautiful scenery in wide open valleys. The Montana HP stopped to see if we were OK and gave us chocolate from his private stash.

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Met a local fellow in Jackson who invited my son and I to dinner at his cabin along with some of his other friends... from my journal "Elk steak, fresh green vegetables, corn on the cob, homemade beer, and barley wine! THE BEST MEAL we've had in 5 weeks!" The scenery, hospitality and discussion were wonderful... not a NY experience for sure!

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Missoula was beautiful!

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Missoula, Montana was the destination of our trip, which started in Portland, Oregon and followed the Lewis & Clark Trail maps from Adventure Cycling. So the mad descent from Lolo Pass, stayed overnight at Lolo Hot Springs, then cruised triumphantly into Missoula. Probably our favorite thing we did in Missoula was a twilight game of disc golf up on Blue Mountain followed by dinner at Biga Pizza.

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Missoula, the Bitterroot Valley, Chief Joseph Pass, Wisdom, the ascent to Yellowstone

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Missoula, through Helena to Yellowstone, Tetons, Rockies to Grand Junction Co. Montana drivers VERY respectful of bikes, Wyoming & Idaho, need driver education, they did not know what to do about passing a bike on the road.

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Montana had beautiful scenery with good roads to ride (Highway 2) and with low traffic.

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Montana has great cycling. Good roads, beautiful scenery, not too many cars. The mountains, streams and farms as well as the friendly locals made more an exceptional biking experience.

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Montana has many epic miles of road and off road biking opportunities. Up and over the Going-to-the-Sun road is always a favorite!

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Montana is beautiful! Lolo Pass was the best part of the trip! Cross country by the Trans Am!

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Most memorable day consisted of two awesome downhills after grueling morning of mountain bike climbing.

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Most memorable day was definitely biking up going to the sun road in Glacier National Park. it was absolutely gorgeous and such a rush :)

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Most memorable: leaving West Yellowstone on a morning that was the most icy (high teens) of the entire trip, and it was only mid-September! Next most memorable: forest fires and smoky air, buying a respirator mask in Hamilton to reduce impact to lungs.

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Most of my bike tours in Montana have been 2 day off-road bike trips with only 1 night of camping with 3 - 5 friends, but I have done a couple week long trips in Montana as well. One week long trip was solo and one was with 4 friends. These extended trips were road trips.

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My dream came true when I saw Glacier National Park from a distance. Riding up Going to the Sun road and flying down to St Mary's was great. Riding north through the Camas Valley on Route 382 on the west side of Flathead lake was magical.

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My favorite memorable days were riding from Whitefish to Swan Lake and then on to Seeley Lake - because of the combination of amazing, fantastic scenery and good road conditions (e.g. a shoulder most of the way, routes slightly off the heavily-trafficked road). Riding on rte 83 from Seeley Lake down to 200 (to get to Missoula) was gorgeous but white-knuckled terrifying riding, because of heavy traffic and lack of shoulder. (I also really enjoyed the day I rode from Troy through Libby and along Lake Koocanusa to camp at the marina - pretty, not much traffic, decent road.) Wished there was better camping along much of my ride: choices were impacted RV camps, or kind of creepy backwoods stuff that you couldn't count on, to have water or to be safe (from bears raiding your food, especially, or maybe armed militia types who actually do hang out in these parts). Mostly I just love riding my bike in western Montana, except for the lack of places to keep your food safe from bears.

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My favorite route is Route 2, from Browning to the ND border. Many long distance tours in MT., all over the state.

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My favorite stretch was cycling over Lolo Pass and riding adjacent to the Lochsa River. Beautiful country and not too many cars.

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My friend and I biked from VA to OR using a combination of our own routes and Adventure Cycle routes. In Montana, we stuck to the Lewis and Clark route, from Beach, ND to Lowell, ID. Most memorable day was running into 2 other cyclists in Big Timber, MT going the same direction as us. They had a place to stay that night at a Warm Showers host, and we did not, so they invited us to stay with them. We ended up biking for the next 10 days together as a big group- a nice change from our small 2 person group for the previous 2 months! One of the other bikers, Paul, and I then met up again on the west coast, continued biking for 2 months together, and are now happily living together in Iowa with many years together in our future. When people ask us where we met (I'm from Maryland, he's from Minnesota), we say, much to their confusion, Montana!

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My friend and I did a self-guided brewery tour in Missoula

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My group entered Montana at Lolo Pass, we went through Missoula then Glacier NP, west to Wolf Point, then southeast past Glendive. We were on a cross country tour from Seaside Oregon to Bar Harbor Maine. Probably the most memorable day was crossing the continental divide, on the Going to the Sun Rd. in Glacier. Logan Pass had only been open two days, it was a beautiful day. We also enjoyed camping two nights in Glacier. One night at Fish Creek, and one night at Avalanche. Missoula was great too!

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My most memorable day was a leisurely ride in Glacier NP over Logan Pass, east to west. I took my time and stopped at most the pull outs to enjoy the sites. I even did a little hiking. The night before I left was spent in the Rising Sun campground and the next night was spent at another campground near Lake McDonald. (I could have those names wrong)

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My most memorable day was biking over Logan Pass from St. Marys to Whitefish.

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My most memorable day was biking through the Pioneer Scenic Byway. It was so beautiful and I was surprised by the lack of cars through there and its popularity with bicycle tourists. The pass was a hard climb, but we soaked in Elkhorn hot springs on the other side which was a great end to the day.

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My most memorable day was not the best day for biking. We had 50+mph winds and the tour company really was not around to help people who wanted to stop until almost the very end. They also did not provide water on the previous day for a very long mileage, hot day. They had over 90 people in the group which was way too many for them to handle. Otherwise, Montana was beautiful and the roads were great. Loved Missoula so we stayed a couple of extra days after the tour. Would consider going back to Missoula and parts north sometime soon.

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My most memorable moment was when I was almost hit by a car. Every day we had terrible experiences with Montana drives, it was by far the worst state I've ever traveled in.

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My pit bull Bailey and I road East to West from June-Sept 2013. We started in Dewey Beach, MD, jumped onto the Trans Am, detoured to St Louis, and made it as far as Grangeville, ID. Very awesome experience seeing sites and being accepted by many folks. People were extremely friendly and generous. My dog loved it and everyone loved Bailey. Most memorable day in Montana was biking from West Yellowstone, through quake lake, to Ennis, MT. Beautiful views, lovely people, and just peaceful in general.

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My Stay in Missoula and riding up Chief Joseph Pass along with entering through Lolo Pass

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My wife, Julie, and I rode (self-supported) from Missoula to Jasper (Alberta) and back in 2013. The highlight of our tour was of course, Glacier National Park. Julie has wanted to cross Logan Pass in Glacier for some time.

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North on Hwy 56 into Eureka

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Northern tier route. Glacier N.P. to Shelby

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Oh gosh. It was the summer before this one, so I'm not all that sure. I remember the weather was crazy, and the people were nice. I fell in love with Missoula when I stayed there for two days.

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oh mannnnn!!!! Going down Going-to-the-sun-road and swimming in Lake McDonald was a good one. Or riding in through Chief Mountain with the sun setting and the moon rising.

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One day we road from Phillipsburg to Ovando. My favorite memories of the day were riding along a quite road with amazing scenery. It felt back I had gone back in time, completely removed from the busy modern life. It was peaceful and perfect. It reminded me of my youth on a cattle ranch. The few cars I saw, had friendly people that took the time to wave and smile. Something I don't experience in the big city.

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One fond memory is biking along Flathead Lake, it was a hot day and we stopped for a picnic on the shore and then had a delightful swim. One "memorable" experience--though not one I'd care to repeat--was our route from Thompson Falls to try to connect with the Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes. We took Google's bike route suggestion of Cooper Pass Road, aka National Forest Road 7623, paying far too little heed to the "Primitive Road Unsuitable for Trailers or Passenger Cars" sign. It was grueling but we eventually made it up & over.

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One of the most memorable days of cycling through Montana were in and around Philipsburg, MT. I remember the weather being absolutely perfect in mid June and the town its self was charming and welcoming. I remember having the best cheese burger of my life in that town. Also the candy shop has been ingrained in my mind forever.

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Only spent a day in Montana but planning a trip next year (2014) to travel across the state.

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Our first and last days in Montana were the most memorable! Climbing to the top of the Beartooth pass and descending into Red Lodge was a surreal experience that I will never forget! When we left Montana we decided to avoid Thompson Pass by taking forest rd. 7623 to Wallace Idaho. This was a mistake, but unforgettable due to the fact that the climb was ~7 miles with an average grade of 7.5% and it was all rocks and gravel! Real character building days getting into and out of Montana!!!

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Our most memorable day was crossing the continental divide, and blasting out of the mountains and onto the plains! We rode through East Glacier.

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Our third day of cycling had exceedingly high winds, so windy that a bicyclist was blown over. I have never experienced winds as strong as those.

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Our tour was a 450 mile route starting and finishing in Missoula. I was struck by the beauty - rivers, trees, good roads. Made me want to get an RV and learn how to fish. Just don't remember specific roads

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Our trip was actually a portion of the TransAm - most memorable was the 100 miles before we arrived at Yellowstone.

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Outdoor, landscape, mountain, rivers, animals, big mountains, friendly people, good campsites, adventure

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Pedaling from West Yellowstone to Missoula. The Madison River and surrounding areas were spectacular beautiful. Salmon River was nice too.

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Pedaling one morning through the Big Hole Valley near Jackson Hot springs was particularly memorable: Beautiful morning light, no traffic, a beautiful mix of fields and natural habitats surrounded by magnificent mountains with antelope prancing and sand hill cranes calling. Pretty special.

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Philipsburg to Ovando. Philipsburg was such a great fun little town and the only place we actually "shopped". Great fun downhill and nice road surface to the interstate. Beautiful little climb up to Helmsville where the Copper Queen Saloon was kind to fill our water bottles and let us use their restrooms. Short but NOT PLEASANT ride from Helmsville to HWY 200 and then Ovando was just a kick! Nice variety, nice people.

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Priest River, ID to Libby, MT--seeing a grizzly bear, Moose and lovely scenery as we cycled by Cabinet Mountains

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Probably the many days along the Salmon River (I think it was the Salmon River) on our way to Missoula. It was beautiful...although the traffic was a little unnerving at times. Beautiful state. Can't really go wrong anywhere especially in the mountains.

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Redford to whitefish.....mt bike.....via Great Divide .....unsupported

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Returning towards Washington, riding west on Highway 12 along the Locksaw River was lovely. Very few automobiles were on the road, so the riding was relaxed and pleasant. I stayed near the river and took in the full-moon light with my dinner before turning in for the night's rest.

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Ride from Chinook to Elkwater in Alberta, 189k.

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Riding along Big Hole River from west to east. Just beautiful riding. The other was the ride up through Virginia City and then down into Ennis there also was a town that had a rest stop just for cyclists with accommodations for overnight. I can't remember the name of the town right now. I thought that was something many towns could/should do.

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Riding along the Blackfoot River from Missoula to the Russell Gates fishing area. Beautiful country and a wonderful campsite.

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Riding between Townsend and Harlowtown was a great day. The ride was both challenging and beautiful. Going up Deep Creek Canyon was amazing. The high peaks beyond were awesome. Later had a great tailwind west of Harlowtown.

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Riding from Helena to Missoula on MT-200, I was about 20 miles outside of Missoula when I looked up from my cycling computer to see a 3-legged bear crossing the road in front of me. It stopped in the road when it saw me (there were no cars coming at the time and I was all alone) and we just kind of stared at each other while I free wheeled toward it, not 50 feet away from me at its closest. A car came and it finished trotting to the other side. I love Montana. A few days earlier, I pedaled my butt off to escape a gnarly looking storm that was fast enveloping Paradise Valley (awesome tailwind though). A few miles outside of Livingston, I passed the Sweetwater Fly Shop on Rt 89 and a sign outside that read FREE BBQ! The proprietors were awesome and I spoke to some super friendly locals while I wolfed down bratwursts and PBR's. That was my first day in Montana.

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Riding from Libby up Rt 37 to Eureka. Stopping at Eureka for lunch. Beautiful scenery stretching north

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to the Canadian border.

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Riding from White Sulphur Springs

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Riding in Glacier Nat'l Park was exciting due to the great scenery. Especially fun was riding around all the "parked" cars on the Going to the Sun road. Cars all held up due to ever present road construction but bikes could ride through. Also, western Montana with Adventure Cycling tours is a wonderful trip, I have done two of these 8 day trips.

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Riding into the Big Hole from Dillon at around 7:30 in the evening - the light was yellow with the coming sunset, Bitterroot mountains shining, and there was no wind. And it's basically downhill to Jackson. I'll never forget that day. By the way we rode the Lewis and Clark trail from St Louis to Cape Disappointment and we rode 17 days in MT - It was the best state by far.

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Riding into Whitefish from the west, dodging aggressive drivers and potholes in road. Terrifying!

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Riding on Hwy 83, a horrible, narrow road from Hwy 200 to Seeley Lake, that is part of the ACA route from Missoula to Glacier. We were terrified as there was no shoulder and the traffic was FAST and full of RVs and logging trucks. It was horrid. Two people of my group stopped and refused to continue. They were able to hitch a ride. Myself and the other person continued on, white-knuckled. We made it to a Seeley Lake and stayed there for a while to regroup our senses. There was also no bike camping at all that day. We had to stealth camp in a full campground as the only other campground that day was closed. There was also no water at the campground. It was an awful day. The one bright thing was meeting Donna Love, author of many books for children about national parks.

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Riding out of out if Saint Mary's was a good climb, but then we had the best day of riding of our 56 day trip. We were flying along effortlessly at 25+mph. Then we came along a herd of wild horses that paced us for several miles. I couldn't help but laugh, it was so wonderful.

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Riding over the going to the sun road on bicycle. So amazing!!

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Riding over the great Divide and taking in the view. Talking to some mountain characters in a out of the way bar. Great time!

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Riding the "Going to the Sun" road

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Riding the Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park

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Riding the Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park. One of the best days I've ever had on a bike.

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Riding the Lolo pass and along the Lochsa River

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Riding the Seeley Swan with my wife and father. Beautiful scenery, rugged, perfect.

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riding through Glacier NP

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RIDING THROUGH THE BADLANDS ALONG THE MISSOURI RIVER. WE TOURED FROM ANACORTES WASHINGTON TO MADISON WISCONSIN. FOR ME, THIS BY FAR THE MOST MEMORABLE DAY OF THE ENTIRE TRIP.

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Riding through the Bitterroot Valley with snow-capped mountains on both sides.

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Riding through the mountains in the northwest and also leaving the mountains after going around glacier national park and heading east.

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Riding thru the Cabinet Mountains, on to White Fish, and the Glacier Park, what a great ride!!!

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Riding up Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park was truly awe inspiring. The views, the camaraderie with other cyclists and tourists in cars, and the sense of accomplishment upon summiting the continental divide all amounted to the most memorable day of our cross country trip. The second most memorable day was when we took a rest day in Havre, MT and befriended a local who took us out gopher hunting on his friend's ranch. That didn't have much to do with biking though.

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Riding up to Logan Pass.

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Road across the country following the Northern Tier from Bar Harbor, Maine to Anacortes, Washington, this summer. Most memorable day was riding the Going to the Sun road in Glacier National Park.

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Road day trip from St. Mary's Campground on the east side of Glacier National Park to Chief Mountain Boarder Crossing via US 87 and highway 17. We then road into Waterton Lakes National Park, Canada.

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Road the Great Divide trail from Roosevile to Seely Lake then paved roads to Missoula, MT. The Tuchuck Mt area was unbelievably gorgeous. The narrow shoulder on some of the paved roads were a bit scary when a big truck passed by.

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Rode from Lolo Pass to Whitefish, via Montana. I loved the big blue skies and the expansive lands. I ended the Montana portion of my trip in Whitefish because of Amtrak station allowed me to transport my bike.

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Rode from Sandpoint, ID via Thompson Falls, to Missoula, then to Avon and Helena, Townsend, White Sulphur Springs, Harlowton, Billings, Hardin and into Wyoming. I most enjoyed the day into Thompson Falls, crossing the Divide from Avon to Helena, going through Sulphur Springs and then checking out the Little Bighorn after Hardin. It was a great trip. Following the Clark Fork river and seeing the river and the trains going by and later riding our bikes up to the Custer Monument. Pretty good stuff!

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Rode the GDMBR. It was beautiful and I met many great, patriotic, friendly, helpful people.

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Rode thru Glacier on Going to the Sun road. it was beautiful and challenging

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Scenery on the trails and forest roads.

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Seeing mountain goats near crater lake after leaving west Yellowstone was cool, it felt like I had truly reached big sky country. If I remember correctly crossing the bitterroot mountain range was in Montana that was an amazing mountain pass descent.

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Seeing wildlife, a bear!

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Since I did the Northern Tier route I think I spent about 10 days cycling through Montana. I loved the open road feeling through northern Montana. People were very nice.

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Since this was the first time I was on a multi day trip, everyday was memorable in its own way. We started in Glacier National Park and finished in Bozeman. Scenery in Glacier was amazing. Spending the night in a tent next to a small roadside store watching and listening to the helicopters taking off to fight fires in the mountains was interesting. Making it through the mountain pass going into Helena without stopping to rest on the way up hill was a personal triumph.

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Single track on the Great Divide route between Condon and Seeley Lake. Whoohoo! (Day 4 of the Adventure Cycling Great Divide Montana Ride.)

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Sixty miles of relentless uphill interspersed by brief downhill moments of respite against a bright blue sky and the forest of my grandfather's dreams.

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South on adventure cycling route into Great Basin.

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Spent over 20 days cycling and camping in Montana while traveling the Lewis & Clark bike route (Adventure Cycling) west to east (Portland to St Louis). Everyday was unique; cycling across such a large and diverse landscape makes it is difficult to pinpoint a "most memorable" day. Strong headwinds kept me in Jordan, MT for a couple of days and I enjoyed thoroughly my stay there. The residents of Garfield County are still quite proud that Life Magazine many years ago named Garfield County "the most isolated county in the US" -- this was prior to Alaska becoming a state. Cycled through hailstorms twice as there were no places to take cover in the wide open spaces of Big Sky Country. First hailstorm was almost exactly where Lewis & Clark ran into one on their return trip near Lolo Pass; the second hailstorm caught me in Geyser as I was pedaling like a maniac trying to outrun the ominous storm to my back. Great state, but I could never fathom living there from Oct to April.

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Start riding Going-to-the Sun Road in 2011 at 4:30am to a blue sky sunrise, and meeting 3 other riders and wildlife at the top. Riding Oregon Coast from State Park Hiker-Biker camp site to the next Hiker-Biker site Sept 2013: \$5/night, free hot showers, amazing scenery, whales, and other long distance riders to appreciate your stories. Cuba is the best riding tho. 7 weeks from east end, Baracoa, to the west end, Maria la Gorda. A most wonderful ride in 2013 staying in private homes and traveling the northerly roads.

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Started in Missoula and rode up to and through Canada, then returned to Missoula. The most exciting experience was when the grizzly ran across the road in Glacier NP. I was within 35 ft of the bear.

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Started the day at Holland Lake Lodge. Climbed up on some isolated fire road to a scenic saddle and descended on the most epic single track. Camped at Seeley Lake after a delicious dinner of burgers and beers in town.

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Starting in AM from beautiful campground in boggy upland @ May's Creek on Route 43 through the incredible Big Hole Valley with impressive scenery and wildlife. On to lunch in an old general store in Jackson at the peak of the Rainbow Festival. Both the mosquitos and the folks brought a lot of attention!! Best of all hitting 54 mph after the Big Hole pass and the most impressive scenery of our trip at the Grasshopper Creek intersection looking westward up the valley.

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Staying in the small towns on Highway 2

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Successfully climbing the Going to the Sun Highway Eastbound

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sunshine, smooth roads, water, mountains, friends

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Taking two hours to ride the last 18 miles to Jackson Hot Springs while battling a 50 mph headwind. That was after climbing up from Darby over the Chief Joseph Pass.

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That will be hard as I am from a plains state riding the Trans Am. I would say riding in the Bitterroot Valley(?) and turning north heading for Missoula. West Yellowstone to Missoula was spectacular riding. I spent two nights in Missoula visiting ACA and staying with a friend and off-loading some \$ weight at Bike Works (?) Bike shop south of headquarters and a fine restaurant in its own building in the middle of a neighborhood. With more time I would have done more sight seeing in Missoula. Perhaps when I do Cycle Montana! Missoula seemed to be a vibrant place. Also went to a bike club cookout and met some fine folks along with two brothers riding Canada to South America from Spain.

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That would probably be the Going to the Sun Road. We started in St. Mary on a nice sunny morning in July, and finished that day in West Glacier. Beautiful day, beautiful scenery, ice cold at the top of the mountain. Very nice descent!!

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The amazing beauty and sense of accomplishment of riding Going to the Sun Road! (This is not the trip from 2012.) On this trip it would be finishing in Missoula to a festival and touring the ACA offices and meeting the staff.

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The beautiful scenery and relaxed atmosphere was apparent each day. I especially enjoyed doing some time in Whitefish.

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The beauty every day.

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The beauty of the Yak valley, rolling terrain, no cars, great Nat. Forest campgrounds and great

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restaurant in Rexford for a milk shake at the end!

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The best day was biking on Going-to-the-Sun Road, hands down (although it was miserable once we left West Glacier and were on the side of a busy highway).

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The best days were along the Bull Pine River and Clarks Fork River. The scenery, roads, weather and lack of traffic were near perfect. We loved staying in Whitefish and had great riding conditions all the way to West Glacier.

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the Big Hole is a spectacular low traffic kind area to bike in MT.

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The Continental Divide from north of Helena to Lincoln

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The day I approached the Glacier Park region. The scenery was great and the anticipation of riding the Going to the Sun road was immense. The ride on that road was wonderful.

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The day I left Missoula was a beautiful ride through a wide valley.

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The day I left Missoula was pretty gnarly. It was raining, windy, and cold. I made it over Evaro Hill and into Evaro (which consists of a bar, pretty much, and little else), not being able to feel my damn toes anymore. I went into the bar to warm up. The bar was pretty dead, but the bartender was this cute girl (let's call her Juliet) who was very nice to me - she put on a pot of coffee and let me raid it for free, and she gave me half a grilled cheese sandwich for free. She also let me have the remote control for the TV, since nobody else was there. So I hung out for a while, talking to her a little, wondering how the hell I was going to get to St. Ignatius. Juliet eventually told me about a guy up the road who ran a place (Orange Acres) where he just lets people from the road crash for free - she texted him ahead of me, so that's where I ended up staying. It was completely awesome, and I had a good time and met some cool people. Very memorable!

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The day we arrived at Glacier National park and riding the Going to the Sun road. It was fabulous!

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The day we came over Lolo Pass, ending at Lolo Hot Springs. The climb to the border followed by the descent was a lot of fun, and the hot springs were a nice finish. We ended our tour the next day in Missoula; most of the trip was in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. (Overall, the most memorable was the ride up the Clearwater and Lochsa rivers in Idaho).

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The days of thunderstorms that greeted us when we crossed into Montana from North Dakota! We got caught in a couple of them and once had to take shelter with a retired farmer living on a quiet frontage road. There were very few houses on that stretch, and the lightning and thunder were starting to worry us since there wasn't much tree cover, so we knocked on his door and he gladly invited us in. We stayed for an hour or so until the rain let up a bit - the people you meet are always the most memorable. He didn't seem surprised to see us, though I think we were the first cyclists who knocked on his door.

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The first 70 miles was amazing, when we went past Quake Lake. It is a hard choice between that and the day we went from Wisdom to Hamilton. That day we woke up with frost on our bikes in July, and made really good time following the river downhill after the first pass (which was AWESOME). Hamilton to Missoula was also an amazing day because there was a bike trail off of the road the whole way!

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The glide down Lolo pass was a beautiful entrance to the state!

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The Great Divide Mountain Bike Route - spectacular ride through the mountains. But you have a lot of mosquitoes.

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The most amazing five days of my life. Biking threw Glacier NP. Going up going to the sun highway and going down hill for almost 2 hours :).

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The most beautiful stretch of road I saw in a cross country trip was the Pintler Memorial Hwy and I took that up to Georgetown Lake and down into Anaconda and ended in Butte. It was a relatively safe ride and gorgeous and had fun stops at the lake and in Phillipsburg. The next day, from Butte to Bozeman, I crossed the continental divide, toured the Lewis and Clark Caverns, and had the longest single day of my 5000+ mile trip. It was extremely challenging but a true highlight of my 3 month trip.

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The most difficult day! It was a 75 mile day, with a 4,000 foot climb up Lone Pass and then on up chief Joseph pass. We then road through The spectacular Big Hole Valley which had tons of mosquitos and a head wind to beat the band. And then i road through a hail storm. But the bar at Jackson Hot Springs was hopping when I arrived (I was the last one I out of 69 riders). And I did not sag in! It was a fabulous day.

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The most enjoyable riding was riding along Hebgen and Quake Lakes along 287.

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The most memorable day cycling in Montana was climbing up to the town of Wisdom, and spending the night in that location. It was not one of the largest climbs of the trip so far, but we were unsure whether the snow had melted from the previous night's storm up top. When we arrived the snow had indeed melted, making it safe for travel with skinny tires. The town of Wisdom and the absolutely breathtaking scenery was the most memorable experience of the 3 month cross country trip.

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The most memorable day on our trip was from Ennis to Twin Bridges, passing through Virginia City. We met up with an Adventure Cycling group so had more riders to share with, the scenery was amazing, the terrain was challenging but rewarding, the weather was perfect, Virginia City was interesting, and there was wildlife. It was Montana at its best.

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The most memorable day was from Seely Lake to Lincoln. It was a great mix of traveling through mountains and open valleys, with some challenging terrain and some easy spinning. It was also a very pretty day; that always helps.

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The most memorable experience I had in Montana was riding from Dillon, MO to Hamilton, MO. It was an extremely long day - I started at 5:30am, as the sun was rising, and rode over two passes before breakfast. There was a 20 mile stretch where I had a nice tail wind going, and then I headed up Chief Joseph Pass. The worst part of Chief Joseph wasn't how challenging the ride was, but the persistent flied that WOULD NOT leave me alone. After climbing the last pass, I thought I would have a nice long, gradual decent, but got hit with a pretty bad headwind. I was really impressed with the natural beauty of the national forests in Montana, and I particularly like the area around Chief Joseph pass.

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The most memorable rides I had were on dedicated bicycle paths notably the Jenny Lake to Jackson, WY bike path and the Trail of the Coer d' Alenes in Idaho. While riding in most of Montana was fairly pleasant, its' sadly lacking in bicycle infrastructure.

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The most memorable was seeing buffalo outside of Lolo and the reaching Missoula to discover an awesome downtown with fun stuff going on.

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The ride along the Madison River up to and thru Earthquake Lake Area

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The ride from Missoula over Lola Pass to Lochsa Lodge was fantastic.

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The ride from Wisdom to Darby. The day began with a visit to the Big Hole Battlefield National Monument and then a climb up to Chief Joseph Pass followed by a fantastic 8-mile, 6% screaming downhill!

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The ride over Logan Pass, Tough ride up, great weather and fun ride down! Beautiful.

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The ride up Going to the Sun Road was an amazing ride that I had wanted to do for a long time. It exceeded my expectations.

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The Road to the Sun - trying to get over the summit by 11:00 am :)

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The Route of the Hiawatha was amazing - now that we have done it once and know what to expect we are hoping to go back and do more around that area

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The route south of Missoula, via Jackson and Big Hole, was as beautiful as on our previous visits. I long to return.

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The scenery everyday was memorable

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The scenery. Loved the "going-to-the sun" highway.

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The stop over and help at Adventure Cycling. They directed us north through a beautiful valley.

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The three of us who are here today all agree that the open scenery with the mountains on both sides as we headed south out of Missoula to Hamilton and then from Hamilton to Sula was great. I also like the gradual climbs and then the long downhills over the passes between Missoula and West Yellowstone.

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The time I spent in Montana was part of Adventure Cycling's Trans America route. The camping was great, the route was beautiful, and the road service good.

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The town of Hamilton was a wonderful stop for us. The people were very friendly and we found good food and services. Farther along the Trans Am trail we reached Ennis as we rode along the beautiful Madison River.

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The views of the mountains. I can't tell you how many times we would stop and say, "We actually live here!".

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The whole trip was beautiful. I see why Montana is called the Big Sky state. But my most memorable day was our second day when we climbed over St Joseph pass and descended to Jackson. The passes were high, and that was difficult because I wasn't acclimated, but the climb was still a good one. But what I really found memorable was the road down to Jackson. There was a serious 20mph crosswind, and weather was building in from the south. I could see the storms moving and forming. I had to ride through a brief storm with rain and hail for about 5 minutes. It was very dramatic, but I was glad to be in Jackson a few minutes later. I enjoyed the Jackson Resort, it was authentic, had good food, a great atmosphere. This was the only rain on our tour!

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The whole week was awesome, but the ride from Butte to Three Forks, along the Lewis and Clarke trail was especially beautiful. Also Dillon to Wise River.

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The whole week was very memorable. Crossing the Continental Divide was probably the most memorable. This ride was with Adventure Cycling's Cycle Montana tour

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There were several memorable days spent biking in Western Montana. Here are a few of them. 1. Biking through the national forest on SR 43 up to Lost Trail Pass, then biking down from the pass towards Missoula on US 93. 2. Biking between the Mission and Swam Mountain ranges between Seeley Lake and Swan Lake. 3. Biking to Logan Pass on Going to the Sun Road.

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They were all memorable, but maybe one of my favorite days was riding out of West Yellowstone along a bunch of lakes and rivers. it was so beautiful, so many great hills, and we even ran into a ram grazing on the side of the road.

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They were all memorable.

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This ride was part of a solo TransAm. One of the most memorable days of the whole trip was riding down from Lolo Pass along the Lochsa River. It was late June, a beautiful day, and I met many touring bike riders who were coming the opposite way and were only too happy to stop for a chat (and a

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rest).

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This was part of a cross country tour from west to east. We were in Montana for about 10 days. The roads were generally good & the weather was great. Most memorable day was the day we climbed Fletcher pass on the way to Helena - a very cool town with wonderful beer.

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This was part of a longer tour through Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, Alberta, Montana, and Idaho. I entered Montana at the border north and east of Glacier Park and I traveled south to Darby and over the pass to Salmon Idaho. The best part of Montana was Glacier NP, Going to the Sun Road and back down from the east side of the park to the west side.

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This was the off-road portion of a 4 day solo trip from Bozeman to Missoula. I rode the Rock Creek Road for 40(ish) miles along the river and it was fantastic!

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Too many epic rides to hold to 1-most recently we rode up to Libby then rode Le Toure de Kookanusa and afterwards went to the Blues festival that night. The road cycling was great because we did a fair amount of climbing and the car traffic was almost non-existent...nice for descending. Low traffic is essential for me to enjoy a road ride.

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Tough question. I crossed Montana west to east and had some amazing experiences. Big skies, beautiful scenery. Great Falls was super.

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Townsend to Harlowton via Deep Creek Canyon and White Sulphur Springs. Beautiful climb up the canyon, then a descent at over 40 mph. Saw a black bear in the woods east of Bair Reservoir. Folks in Harlowton were unbelievably friendly.

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Trans - Am Trail cross country. Enjoyed Big sky country roads. Missoula was great. Took one of our few rest days in Missoula. Visited Adventure Cycling's headquarters. Evening concert was fun.

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Traveling from Darby, MT to Missoula, MT was my most memorable day while cycling in Montana because our route followed a bike path for 30 miles! It was really nice to not have to ride in the road. The Bitterroot Valley was absolutely gorgeous and the terrain was kind to our legs :) Along the way we stopped at a small diner for breakfast and another for lunch, and we were also grateful to have gas stations at which to take breaks, get water and use the restroom. Once in Missoula we took a tour of the ACA Headquarters, enjoyed some ice cream at The Big Dipper, and had dinner at Bridge Pizza. Loved the college town atmosphere. Didn't get to enjoy the rest of the downtown area but I would've like to!

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Two come to mind. One is biking through Glacier on Hwy. 2 near Marias Pass. A truck coming the opposite direction stopped me and said that there was a grizzly bear on the road a mile or two up the road from me. He showed me a video on his smartphone and asked if I wanted a ride the other way past it. So he threw my bike in the back of his truck and gave me a ride in the opposite direction he was going, past the bear and (unfortunately) past Marias Pass! (The bear was right outside the parking lot entrance). So I never go to bike over the continental divide, but I did avoid a grizzly on the road! The other is in Saco, MT, on U.S. Hwy 2. On the beautiful plains in north-central MT. Biking east, I decided to push past Malta and try to make it to Saco that night. Then I realized the sky was turning looming dark and threatening, and I hoped to make it to Saco before the rain. Luckily there was a simple and cheap motel in Saco where I got a room for \$40, and I spent a great night at the bar next door. It was a late night of juke box songs, stories, and cheap Old Milwaukee's with folks from the area in a crowded bar, then a relaxing sleep-in during an overnight rainstorm. Small towns in Montana are the best, and racing a rain storm sweeping in across the prairie was a really nerve-wracking and memorable experience!

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Up and over Going to the Sun road. But, the prior 2 days camping at Waterton Lakes was even better!

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Visit to Bannack and the Big Hole battlefield plus the wide open space

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Visiting Adventure Cycling Associations headquarters. The people and the mission, the history, the activism, are all very inspiring. As an optimist on a bike, I believe we can change the world for the better with bicycles. Not only reducing climate change and pollution, but increasing endorphins and exercise. People on bikes make a better, friendlier world!

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Visiting Adventure Cycling Headquarters and seeing Missoula by bike. The bike trail into town was awesome.

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Visiting Adventure Cycling HQ. Conquering Chief Joseph pass and visiting Big Hole National Battlefield.

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Visiting Missoula especially the Adventure Cycling Office. Loved the cycling infrastructure.

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Visiting the American Adventure Cycling association.

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We bicycled across Montana on the Northern Tier route. My most memorable time, though those times are numerous, would be when we left Saco to ride the extra 14 miles to Hinsdale which made the day just under 100 miles. We were met by Leona who offered us sanctuary from the rain in the Lutheran Church basement. Good meal in town besides and friendly folks all around.

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We bicycled the Lewis & Clark trail mostly, then angled south and picked up highway 12 heading east to miss truck traffic. The local folks were the best part of our trip

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We biked in and around Glacier NP as well as the TR Roosevelt NP

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We biked the CDT from Fernie to Missoula. Fantastic ride. I really liked the section just outside Seeley Lake. The tree branches could have been cut back a little on the single track, but the views were incredible!!

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We came in from the west, following the ACA route towards Glacier. Earlier that day we both lost it, erupting in the worst argument of a several thousand mile trip. Just ugly conversation and yelling, deep cuts. After a great deal of silence, the pointy peaks started to show themselves. Arriving in the park that day shook us more than petty fights, and by the end we both asked for forgiveness.

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We cycled from Glacier to West Yellowstone. Our most scenic day were the days traveling near Virginia City and West Yellowstone.

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We cycled from Missoula through Lincoln to a campground to the east of Lincoln. It was the only night on a 21 day trip that we put our food in a bear bag and hoisted it from a tree. It rained that night and everything got wet, no bears, however. The rain finally lifted about 9:30 a.m. and we had breakfast in a little town before climbing up and over the continental divide on our way to Great Falls. It was a great ride and a 70 mile day.

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We departed my home in Bonners Ferry, ID riding to East Glacier Park and then over Going to the Sun Road and back home. Logan Pass is a true bucket list ride.

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We did a portion of the Great Divide Route. Leaving Butte was a pretty long uphill but the ride to Wise River was absolutely gorgeous.

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We did the Cycle Montana trip in June of 2012; we had a terrific trip, beautiful scenery, challenging rides, etc.

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We did the Great Parks ride from Jasper AB to Jackson Hole WY. In MT, we rode from Waterton NP to Glacier NP, over Going to the Sun, to Whitefish to Flathead Lake to Missoula to Sula to Jackson Springs to Dillon

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We followed the ACA's Transamerica trail through Montana. It is a state I long to revisit and explore some more.

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We had a bunch, but everything from Missoula to Glacier was amazing. I guess riding down Going-to-the-Sun Road was probably the most memorable.

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We had beautiful weather with sunshine and cloudy days and cool nights. Riding through tree covered hills was invigorating and relaxing. The most memorable day was riding the last few miles of the day where camp was located on the soccer field of the university. We were riding along a hard packed trail rather than pavement, and we watched thunder clouds begin to form. The rain began and wind picked up rather rapidly which found riders looking for shelter along the route. I rode into camp just as the dining tent blew down and a few tents were being relocated by the wind. A handful of us ran for cover under the rental truck. That evening tents were staked down very securely and the goal posts served a half dozen tents as well. The storm blew over, the dining tent set up once more, and a spectacular evening was had by all, complete with a sunset and stars overhead!

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We had many: climbing Chief Joseph Pass, cycling through the Big Hole valley especially in Wisdom and Jackson, staying in Twin Bridges at the cycle camp and attending the local rodeo were foremost.

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We have ridden across Montana on 6 occasions in the last 20 years usually running north to south along the mountains. On the whole the riding is good. The area around Swan Lake is one the worst places I've rode in awhile; bad traffic, bad road, and very rude inconsiderate drivers. In general we've found that the more rural areas are good riding and the more metropolitan areas increasingly tend to have a pickup truck get the hell out my way mentality. I've probably logged 6-7000 miles in Montana over the years. I probably will take the train in the future. Favorite places, The Big Hole, Chief Joseph Pass, Bitterroot and alas Glacier.

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We hitched a ride with an elderly gentleman from Whitefish to Glacier National Park. He provided us with a colorful description of growing up in Whitefish and the history of the region. He most kindly used his senior citizen card for us to gain entrance into the park without paying any extra fees. Upon arrival to our unloading zone, he got down from his truck, and wished us a heartfelt goodbye and good luck. Days later, we hopped on an Amtrak train in Havre to Fargo. During our train ride, we shared dinner with an elderly couple that shared their life history with us. The gentleman grew up on a farm as one of fourteen children in a home with no running water or electricity. He stated it is a fact, not a complaint. He was a three time cancer victim survivor and was on the trail a year and half with the re-enactment of the Louis and Clark Expedition. Those two couples help keep my faith in mankind and made a real difference in our trip. Two colorful characters that we're extremely nice, generous with their life stories and touched our hearts. I will never forget Montana as the most beautiful part of the trip.

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We like to ride on paths, trails, bike routes that are separated from automobile traffic, such as the highway 93 bikeway from Lolo to Hamilton, or the Hiawatha trail (which starts in Montana (East Portal)). Sometimes frontage roads give that separation, such as the frontage road along the Little Prickly Pear/Wolf Creek canyon between Helena and Great Falls. At our age there is no one "most memorable day" as those experiences tend to merge together. I'm using all my memory power to not forget things such as where I put my car keys or whether I am wearing socks today.

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We passed through Montana on a cross-country ride on the TransAm route. My favorite day was riding from W. Yellowstone to Ennis - past Hebgen and Earthquake Lakes and then up the Madison River Valley. However, I very much enjoyed every day in Montana. It's clear why Montana is called "Big Sky Country". Beautiful scenery with mountains in sight everywhere we went. We also appreciated courteous drivers and good roads for cycling.

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We rode along the GDMBR from Banff to Whitefish. Visiting Glacier National Park was excellent, even though the Going to the Sun Road was closed because of a massive landslide. While in Whitefish we had a great time doing some day rides on the relatively new Whitefish Trail.

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We rode from Lost Trail Hot Springs below Chief Joseph to Missoula in one day. We had planned to stop half-way, but it was downhill and pleasant weather so we rode the full 90 miles. We then had an amazing stay in Missoula and were hosted by a local who fed us, showed us around town, etc. We met through warmshowers.org. The only downside were the fires burning near route 12 that detoured us to the north, but there was a silver lining there as well since we ended up on the Coeur D' Alene Trail which was incredible.

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We rode into Montana from Idaho and spent a day relaxing in Whitefish before riding into Glacier National Park. Riding up Logan pass in the early morning was one of the great experiences of my 30 year life as a cyclist. Breath-taking! We spent the night at the campsite on the other side of the climb and then rode up into Waterton. We plan to explore more of the state by bike in coming years.

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We rode on Memorial Day weekend in the snow. A wonderful motel manager got us warmed up in Ennis.

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We rode on the Great Divide route. Every day was spectacular, but also very difficult.

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We rode the Northern Tier and Lewis and Clark routes. I think the most memorable day was crossing the continental divide.

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We rode the TransAmerica route from Yorktown, VA to Astoria, or. The most memorable day in Montana was the day we got to Missoula to stop at Adventure Cycling headquarters and cycling friendly Missoula. I loved riding along the Madison River and following sections of the Lewis & Clark route. Big Hole? We hope to return soon.

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We spent a few days travelling around and through Glacier National Park, making time to eat pies, go on hikes and of course climb Logan Pass. My favorite day started in a hiker/biker site in Glacier National Park before sunrise, and climbing Logan pass as the sun rose. I love the mountains, and Montana's Rocky mountains are unrivaled in the continental US.

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We spent a night in Lolo pass by accident. As soon as we arrived there it clouded over and started raining so we decided to sleep there as no drivers would be able to see us well. Our most memorable day, we woke up at 5am, packed up our tent and rode down to Lolo in a 33 degree morning. We met up with a friend who was in Missoula and went to Adventure Cycling group. We also ate a lot more than usual and slept in a nice hotel.

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We spent a week riding Adventure Cycling's Great Divide Route from Beaver Dam CG to Warm River CG. The day we rode from Upper Lake CG to Big Springs CG we rode along the Centennial Mountains for a time, then at right angles to them near the head of the valley for a while, then up and over a pass into Idaho, The whole time the views were gorgeous. It was a blast.

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We were actually part of a cross-country bike trip and spent 16 days riding through the beautiful state of Montana. Off the top of my head I can remember stopping in the following cities, in no particular order: St. Regis, Helena, Miles City, Plevna, Missoula, Bozeman, Billings, Hardin, and Big Timber. Honestly, Western Montana was absolutely stunning and I had an amazing time there, however, Eastern Montana became increasingly less stunning as we progressed further east. My best memory on the bike from Montana was the century ride we had from Helena to Bozeman.

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We were biking the Continental Divide Trail and we entered Roosville, MT on the Fourth of July. Stayed at a tiny campground/RV park and listened to live music at the town's only bar (as far as we could tell). It was magical. We also stopped a few days later in Bigfork and met some fellow cycle enthusiasts at a GREAT small local bike shop. The owner's name was Cameron. They were extremely welcoming and invited us to a barn dance at a lodge near Flathead Lake. Again, incredible experience. We LOVED Montana.

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We were in eastern Montana, heading into ND. Loved the small towns and diners!

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We were on a coast to coast self supported tour. We entered via Lolo Pass and proceeded North stopping in Missoula for 2 nights then continuing North to Glacier Park then east across the state leaving east of Glendive via the interstate. Probably the most memorable day was our journey up and over Marias Pass. While the Going to the Sun Road was open, due to the low clouds and rain we opted for Maria Pass route.

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We were on a forest road outside Seeley Lake and rode a single track down the mountain to the lake. Best ride I have ever had, and I am not a very experienced single tracker.

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We were to ride the "Going to the sun road" (and more) with a tour group. We shipped our tandem bike out and went to Whitefish a couple days early. We wanted time to test that the bike had arrived and was in good condition. Oh, and to test ourselves at that altitude as well. We rode from Whitefish up to the ski area. With out doubt, this was the steepest, longest road we'd ever ridden. It has hard. We had to take a rest between each switchback. But we made it. We had read that if you can do this, that you'll be able to do the Going to the sun road. So we felt great. We took the ski lift ride to the top and got lunch there. We marveled at the view, all those mountain tops and we were bike riding! We watched folks do the alpine slide. Then we tested our new brakes on the way down the hill. We stopped at a park on the lake and had a swim. At the end of this day we felt a real sense of accomplishment and that just maybe we would be able to do the Going to the sun road. Funny how this little test or preparation ride takes such a strong place in my memory. We did to the Going to the sun road. It was hard. There must have been some sort of vacuum formed that day - there was no air, not until we stopped at the summit anyway! Additional pressure came because we had used it as a fund raising event. We just made it by the time limit (on our tandem). There was a flood of relief when we finally got to the top. Yes, this was the bigger ride, more notable ride, more important ride. But it's the little ride to the ski area that sticks in my mind and won't let the big ride push it aside.

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We woke up in the park in Wisdom, Montana at 6am. To our surprise, ice had covered our bikes, gear and the top of our tents. We knew it would be chilly overnight in Big Hole, but we certainly did not expect frost in July. The ride up Route 43 was incredibly and the long descent into Sula on Highway 93 for breakfast was great fun. It also happened to be on the same day the "Ride Montana" group was climbing Highway 93. Passing 300 or so riders going the opposite way was affirming, plus, we felt like rock stars with all of our gear strapped to our bikes, since all of the Ride Montana riders were unencumbered. We ended the day in Hamilton, getting their early enough to eat a late lunch and still have room for a small dinner later. Hamilton itself was a cute little town and was a great end to one of our best days on our trip from Yorktown, VA to Florence, OR.

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Well it was leaving Montana on the way to Yellowstone when I was verbally accosted by a guy with Montana plate who told me we should not be on the road. Even though we were on a road with NO other traffic that was 2+ lanes. This happens too frequently in MT since I have been through there about 4 times and each time I have had at least one of these vehicle encounters. I think the issue is that even the state police think this is something that is routine. It would be a good investment of tourist dollars to get up a program against this type of behavior. They had that issue in ID as well but I understand the restaurant and hoteliers have decided it was beginning to cost them too much lost business and hence the state lost tax revenue.

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Well, this may not help you, but my most memorable 24 hrs. started when I rolled into mosquito-infested Wisdom on the evening of my birthday. There I met up with 6 other bicycle tourists who are traveling the same direction as me on the Trans-Am route and who I had "bunked with" on multiple previous occasions. We were joined by 3 other bike tourists and we all spent a long evening in the wonderful restaurant "The Crossing", eating, drinking, and singing until well past closing time. The food, the staff, and the company were excellent and we all had a ball. The next morning I cycled through the beautiful high country W of Wisdom; stopped at the excellent Big Hole Battlefield museum; and thrilled down the gorgeous screaming descent of Chief Joseph Pass.

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West Yellowstone...

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What the Hay Festival... Huckleberry Festival... and Glacier (Road to the Sun Rd)

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When we arrived in the zoo and started drinking cold smoke whenever we pleased. Welcomed by friends and a nice place to stay.

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While bicycling through Dillon on the "Lewis & Clark" route, an older couple whom we had met on a previous trip invited us to join them on a bus tour with a Lewis & Clark Society to Lemhi Pass and "pitchfork barbeque" later in the stables of a ranch near the Clark Reservoir.

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While on our year long tour around the US, Alaska, and Canada, we were actually broken down in Missoula Montana. It was Memorial Day Weekend, so the shipping of our new bicycle wheel was quite delayed. We ended up staying in Missoula for almost 2 weeks!! It was very stressful to be broken down, but we really got a chance to see and get to know Missoula, so it actually ended up being very nice! This time we were broken down in Missoula ended up being the longest time we spent in any one place throughout the entire 13 month 14,630 mile tour. My husband and I grew very fond of Missoula and tried to do as much as we could there- we climbed up to the big "M", enjoyed concerts at the Warm Shower's house we were staying at (Daly Jazz), went for REALLY long walks, went to the movies, and to the memorial day festivities. It's hard to pick just one memorable day from a year long trip, but I would have to say that our time spent in Missoula Montana was one of our favorite memories while in Montana, even with being broken down and having to put our adventure on a stand still, we still enjoyed ourselves. The day we crossed into Montana was also special as we had just come out of Yellowstone NP.

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While riding along the eastern shore of Flathead Lake, the World Rainbow Bicycle Caravan and I enjoyed a dip in the clearest water I've ever seen and enjoyed a good deal of gleaning and foraging the best cherries and huckleberries I've ever eaten.

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While riding on the west side of Lake Koocanusa I saw more deer than cars--plus a once-in-a-lifetime sighting of a mountain lion and its cub. Combine that with ideal weather and the beautiful scenery and the result was a most sublime day.

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Whitefish to Glacier National Park. Very pretty cycling into Whitefish from west on Adventure Cycling's Northern Tier Route and also very beautiful, with many bird/animal viewings, on my way into and over Glacier National Park's Highway to the Sun.

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Whitefish to Helena on GD route. Helens to White Sulphur Springs Mt through Confederate gulch. Roosevelt to Fernie via GD route & wigwam. Roosevelt to elkford via GD route. Whitefish to Sandpoint, ID via Libby & Trestle Creek.

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Wind at my back, one of the few times in 71 days. Also loved the city of Missoula, like Hamilton, Dillon, the big sky of the state.

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Yellowstone park

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