



SLO Coaster

San Luis Obispo Bicycle Club Newsletter

To promote safe and legal riding of bicycles and encourage bicycle riding as an acceptable mode of transportation



The Presidents Message

by
Frank Mullin

**Greg Bettencourt
and
Adam Fukushima**

Two organizations which do a great deal to promote bicycling and bicycling related issues are the Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers (CCCMB) and the San Luis Obispo County Bicycle Coalition (SLOCBC). The following is a brief history of the two organizations and the club's involvement with them.

CCCMB. The CCCMB was founded in 1987 in an effort to keep the Montaña de Oro area open to mountain bikers. Once that goal was accomplished, the group decided to organize volunteer efforts to maintain the local mountain biking trails. This work caught the attention of the SLOBC in 1993 and we began making contributions to them. Many of our contributions were used to purchase tools that were left along the trails to allow riders to do minor maintenance. In recent years, their projects have shifted from trimming back vegetation and making minor repairs to major projects involving a complex process of considering environmental factors, terrain, rainfall, soil characteristics, trail materials, planning and volunteer management. They have gotten so good at this that the cities, county and state now come to them for the planning and redesign of trails. During 2008, they delivered nearly 2000 hours of volunteer effort on maintaining trails. They were also asked by the city of San Luis Obispo to design and construct a system of new trails on its Johnson ranch property. Most recently, they have been asked to help the State Parks to find a route for the proposed new section of the California Coastal Trail that would connect Montaña de Oro and Avila. This will require the coordination and approval of multiple agencies including State Parks, County Planning and the Coastal Commission.

Bicycle Coalition. In 2001 local physician and triathlete (Jim Hannah) initiated an organization effort for the coalition which he funded with \$5,000 of his own money. A short time later, 20 cyclists and activists met at Hostel Obispo to form the coalition. I remember when the

club first struggled to make a contribution to this fledgling organization – we were going to make a large contribution (for us at the time) to an organization that had accomplished nothing and had a very uncertain future. During the early years, most of the effort of the coalition was just to justify its existence and to get people to believe in its potential. But by 2004 they had begun to exert some positive influence in San Luis Obispo and the county. In the last few years, however, that influence has ballooned with the coalition getting the city to make more bicycle friendly decisions, winning grants supporting the development of several bicycle trails (including the Morro Street Bike Blvd, the Bob Jones Bicycle Trail, the Cambria Cross-Town Trail and the Railroad Community Trail) and getting improved maintenance and cleanup of class 2 bike trails. They have also made trips to Washington and Sacramento to lobby in favor of bicycle friendly legislation with our representatives.

Movers and Shakers. Recently, Greg Bettencourt attended a board meeting and club meeting to thank us for our support of the CCCMB. He told us that he believes that the CCCMB has reached a tipping point, going from being an advocate to becoming part of the establishment. No longer do they have to go to the establishment to ask for support, now the establishment is coming to them to help things get done. At the same meeting, Tom Nuckols of the Bicycle Coalition indicated that they are also enjoying the same transition with the city and county asking for their help on all issues involving bicycling and pedestrian traffic.

They both indicated that our contributions to them played a big part in their successes as it allowed them to focus their efforts on their mission rather than on raising funds.

I'm sure we're all very proud of the part we may be playing in the success of these two organizations. But, the truth is, the key to their success has been the truly outstanding leadership they have had at the top. Both Greg Bettencourt and Adam Fukushima have learned how to influence the governments and agencies that make the decision affecting the projects we support. The result is a much more bicycle friendly city and county.

It is for this reason that I presented the 2008 President's Award to these two individuals.

Thank you, Adam and Greg!

Reminder: The January meeting will be at the Ludwick Center. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, January 8. The Ludwick Center is at the corner of Santa Rosa and Mill.