

Gravel cycling takes people around the county

Dirty Freehub provides routes online

By **BILL BRADSHAW**
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA COUNTY — An online nonprofit group that promotes gravel bicycle routes is taking advantage of the many miles of gravel roads in Wallowa County, as well as the history and beauty of the county by establishing routes for gravel cycling.

The Bend-based Dirty Freehub maps out routes it shares with cyclists. The group has a guide to more than 8,000 miles of gravel bike routes across Oregon, Washington, California, Arizona and Tasmania.

So far, the group has mapped four five-star routes in the county, according to Executive Director Linda English.

“One will go through Zumwalt (Prairie) Preserve,” English said in a press release. “We will have one that starts in Enterprise and uses Hurricane Ridge, another that starts in Imnaha and another that uses logging/forest roads up toward Hells Canyon Lookout.”

Dirty Freehub’s purpose

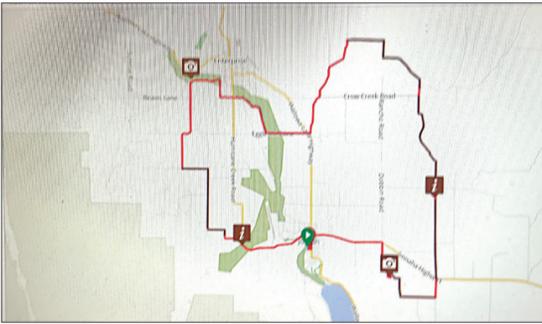
English said the group’s goals are multiple.

“We’ve been providing five-star gravel bike route guides since 2014, but becoming a nonprofit better reflects our mission,” English said. “While cyclists use our website to



Linda English/Dirty Freehub, Contributed Photo

Gravel cyclists traverse a route between Enterprise and Joseph recently. From left, are Kevin English, Chris Kutach and Kelly Kutach.



dirtyfreehub.org/Contributed Map

This map, from Dirty Freehub’s website, shows a gravel bicycle course in the Enterprise and Joseph areas.

find routes, our real mission is to connect cyclists to the places they ride.”

The group also has other missions.

“We have a bunch of

social missions: inspiring people to get outside and ride, utilizing existing roads but trying to keep cyclists off busier roads,” English said in an email.

“Economic development for areas that depend on tourism, inspiring cyclists to become donors, volunteers and advocates to organizations that preserve these areas.”

She said Wallowa County offers some unique opportunities for cyclists.

“To connect a cyclist to where they ride, we can use a variety of approaches,” she said. “The stories about the granges are fascinating. The history of Joseph, information about the fish hatchery and environmental info from organizations that work to protect the beauty of the area, the ecosystems, etc.”

Dirty Freehub also is

focused on how to utilize technology to help cyclists find the best routes.

“I’m so impressed with the range of technology they have implemented,” said Chuck Allen, a board member and retired Microsoft executive. “They offer downloadable routes with turn-by-turn directions, a searchable database and mapping overlays that let you look at multiple routes on a map in one area. With media, they have pictures, videos, and now podcasts. They are really changing the game of route guides.”

Another board member, Mike Hobson, said the group’s goals fit right into places like Wallowa County communities.

“Farming towns ... are just a blast to ride,” he said. “I love the big views of the mountains and quiet roads.”

He also noted that this means tourism dollars to communities that could really benefit.

And what about e-bikes? Dirty Freehub fully supports gravel e-bikes, with each route clearly tagged as e-bike friendly.

Dirty Freehub’s past

Dirty Freehub has a long history with gravel cycling.

“Back in 2014, Dirty Freehub founders Linda and Kevin (English) were enthusiastically convincing me that gravel was going to be the next big thing in cycling, they were on the forefront of the gravel scene with a pointed vision to start creating routes for their community to enjoy,” said Nicola Cranmer,

founder and general manager of TWENTY24 Women’s Pro Cycling Team and Dirty Freehub adviser. “They were so passionate about riding gravel, who could have foreseen the explosion of events, culture and participation in the years that followed, they were such visionaries.”

English said she’s particularly eager to get cyclists around Wallowa County, with which she’s become familiar.

“We also love to help with dispersing people; we worked on routes that used roads up toward Hells Canyon Overlook and saw absolutely nobody,” she said. “Same thing with the road up Zumwalt, which was spectacular. There are loads of great farming roads around Lostine and Enterprise. Same thing around Imnaha.”

Regarding the future of Dirty Freehub, Linda English said, “We will keep adding route guides. Right now we are focused on Oregon, California, Washington and Arizona. We are also adding information to the existing route guides including 2-minute videos that provide an amazing feel about the route and podcasts that tell stories about the history, culture, or environment of an area. We will add to our bike packing routes and continue to learn more about supporting e-bikes.”

For more information about Dirty Freehub, go to www.dirtyfreehub.org, email info@DirtyFreehub.org or call English at 541-550-8930.



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CLUES ACROSS

1. “___ making a list ...”
4. Bedside fixture
8. The San Diego Chicken, e.g.
14. Number not found in “The Twelve Days of Christmas”
15. ___ fresca (Mexican drink)
16. Bird that may be black and yellow
17. Study of government revenue?
19. Sent an emoji, say
20. Classic sporty Ford, informally
21. Be worthy of
23. Ultimatum word after “or”
24. Study of “Bodak Yellow” rapper B?
30. Inverse of addition?
32. Feeler
33. Give a ticket to
35. Former student, briefly
36. Study of supermarket conveyances?
41. Slightly open
43. Core, or meat
44. Coped
48. Writer’s block?
53. Study of the Punxsutawney groundhog?
55. Relative of Hindi
56. Stomach woe
57. Gradually exhaust
58. Word after “physical” or “mental”
62. Areas of study, and a hint to 17-, 24-, 36- and 53-Across
65. “Let me get back to you”
66. Peach or beech
67. Youngster
68. Shower problem
69. Toy that isn’t fun in the summer
70. Full show letters

CLUES DOWN

1. More popular
2. Allow
3. What the Equal Rights Amendment combats
4. Come down

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13			
14				15										16			
17				18										19			
20									21	22							
23						24	25					26	27	28	29		
30						31				32							
						33				34				35			
						36	37					38	39	40			
41	42									43							
44						45	46	47				48		49	50	51	52
53										54						55	
										56						57	
58	59	60	61							62	63	64					
65																67	
68																	70

5. Previously
6. It’s the word, sometimes
7. Single-___ system
8. Pain relief brand
9. Playground taunt
10. Half a dozen
11. Simple place to sleep
12. Spanish cheer
13. Kind of talk on the internet
18. Layered cookie
22. Org. that approves toothpaste
24. “I Am ___” (Jenner’s former reality show)
25. Voice below soprano
26. She and her sister married Jacob
27. Nothing but
28. Antelope seen on safari
29. Thanksgiving root
31. TV adjunct, once
34. Food that might be juggled
36. “Pretty please?”
37. Disappearing sea in Asia

38. Well-off
39. Like a dirty fireplace
40. School meeting grp.
41. Sound booster
42. Rastafarian deity
45. Tony Stark’s beard
46. Shun
47. Quote from Homer
49. Like distilled water
50. Real estate developers’ plots
51. Person who may read a book many times
52. Reaches a total of
54. Pains in the neck
57. Spun some records
58. That tomcat
59. ___ Lilly and Company
60. Everyone
61. Trip essential?
63. www address
64. Insect like a drone



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