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PEOPLE O³O POWER! UPDATE

Coastal Commission Approves the Arana Gulch Master Plan

— Charlie Dixon and Paul Schoellhamer

In a final decision on the Arana Gulch Master Plan, the California Coastal Commission approved a revised plan on an unequivocal 10–1 vote at their December meeting in San Francisco. In doing so, the Commission put an end to a 20-year campaign by People Power and a broad coalition of allies for the protection of open space AND the creation of a Broadway–Brommer path connection at Arana Gulch. The motion to approve the revised plan was made by Commissioner and Santa Cruz County Supervisor, Mark Stone.

The strong support by the Commission followed equally strong support by the Commission Staff's report, which noted that the plan offered a range of community and environmental benefits including habitat restoration, tarplant recovery, improved access for the public in general and the (Continued on page 7)



New trails at Arana Gulch will provide more access and a safe, pleasant alternative to driving across town.

Membership Survey and Meeting

With approval of the Arana Gulch Master Plan achieved and the Rail Trail design now in planning stages, we have completed most of the goals from our last 10-year plan that was drafted in 2000. What should we focus on for the next 10 years? If you have an active membership as of January 1, 2012, this is your opportunity to help decide.

SURVEY Members who have provided us with an email address will receive a link to the online survey. If we don't have your email address, or if you have a family membership and need an extra survey, call (425-0665) or email us (info@peoplepowersc.org) to get one. **Surveys are due by 5PM on February 6. NOTE: You must be an active member as of January 1, 2012 to submit a survey.**

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING People Power members with active memberships are invited to the General Meeting to give input to our staff and volunteer leaders about our future goals and direction. The meeting will be held at the Loudon Nelson Center, Room #3, 301 Center Street, in downtown Santa Cruz, on February 15 at 6:30PM. Transportation Commission lead staff member Cory Caletti will give an update on rail-trail planning, including a video train ride along the tracks. The meeting will also showcase local bike makers, cargo bikes and trailers, and snacks. Don't miss it. ■

Climate Action Plan: Pleased But Not Satisfied

— Michael Levy and Micah Posner

When the first draft of the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP) came out, environmentalists (including leaders from People Power, Transition Santa Cruz, and Ecology Action), reviewed it and suggested revisions to the document in an attempt to make it cohesive and specific. We are pleased that the latest draft of the plan has many great—and greatly specific—actions to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions. Some will be easy to enact; others will be quite challenging. How serious are we? How well will we carry them out? It's up to the City Council, as the elected body responsible for directing City staff, to insure that the goals of the CAP are taken into account with every decision from here on out. Reading the draft document, it is not yet clear that this is what the City intends to do.

Specifically, the framework set out in the document does not guarantee implementation of the CAP. There is no provision to include citizen oversight of the plan—a critical element given the workload of city staff. And, with car traffic accounting for roughly half of emissions in Santa Cruz County, there is no commitment to tie the key goal of reducing automobile trips to other city planning processes. As it is (Continued on page 7)

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 People Power! UPDATE is published by People Power. Our goal is to educate people and politicians about the advantages of a transportation system less dependent on the automobile. A special thanks to all our volunteers.

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POGONIP MULTI-USE TRAIL: Two Options

Option 1: Through the Pogonip

— Mark Davidson

One of the proposed options for a multi-use trail in the Pogonip is a 1.5-mile natural surface trail from Golf Club Drive to the U-Con connector trail at Rincon Road. The trail will increase legitimate public use and displace negative activities like transient camping and drug use. It will allow for multiple users: bikers, hikers, equestrians and dog walkers. It will be a scenic route to the upper campus through the redwood forest, which avoids the existing glass and junkie infested trail along the rail-road tracks.

In July 2010, the Santa Cruz City Council approved \$25,000 towards trail design and environmental review. In October 2011, the City of Santa Cruz Parks Department's Environmental Study was a Mitigated Negative Declaration. If approved in the upcoming months, the trail could be complete by fall 2012.

Opponents to the multi-use trail have put forward the idea of a rail trail along a similar alignment as an alternative. There is no support for this trail among city or county staff, in part due to the fact that, according to The 2006 SLV Trail Feasibility Study, the cost of the 5.5-mile rail trail would be roughly \$25.6 million. In contrast, the Pogonip multi-use trail will be largely built and financed by the community. The estimated total cost of this trail (including the completed environmental study) should not exceed \$50,000. A volunteer, professionally trained, labor force is available for trail construction. The City will see significant long-term health and economic returns from this small investment.

The Police Department, the Fire Department, Take Back Santa Cruz, and four City Council members endorse the multi-use trail through the Pogonip. Mountain Bikers of Santa Cruz has raised over \$11,000 to donate for construction of the trail. If you support this option, you can sign the petition at mbosc.org/local-parks/pogonip/petition. ■

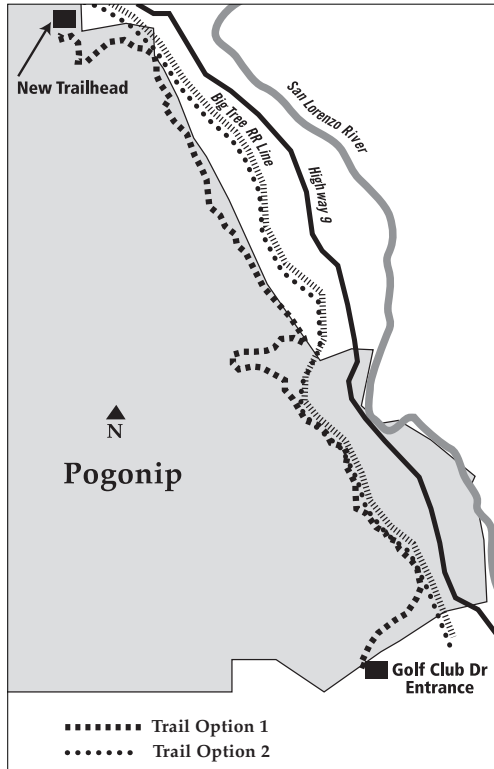
Option 2: Along the Rail Line

— Bruce Sawhill

The idea of a multi-use trail in the Pogonip has generated considerable controversy, with mountain bike activists claiming increased access and reduced crime and hikers claiming that the park will be overrun with kamikaze riders. The multi-use trail would provide access to the U-Con trail, and from there riders could access UCSC and Wilder Ranch. But there are other ways to achieve this same goal: The U-Con Trail starts off of Highway 9, near where the Big Trees Railroad Line crosses the road. Trains like gentle grades and curves, and these turn out to be nice for bicycles too—and not just for mountain bikes, but for commuters and families as well. In fact, a rail trail up to the U-Con Trail would be a much easier, gentler ride for cyclists while providing the same access to mountain biking. It would have the same potential to deter crime, and it would create much less damage to the sensitive habitats of the Pogonip. In addition, it would be good for the sensitive relationship between bicyclists and the people trying to preserve those habitats. It would retain the Pogonip for nonmechanical uses while preserving most of the functionality generated by a Pogonip multi-use trail. This may just be the right proposal that heals the growing rift between walkers and cyclists.

The idea of a bike path along the Big Trees right-of-way was presented in a 2006 County study exploring bike access to the San Lorenzo Valley. In the study we have both initial designs and cost estimates. At that time, the Big Trees was receptive to the idea. Though this was for a path all the way to Felton, there is a real possibility that Big Trees would also be open to this shorter path.

Personally, if there was a trail through the Pogonip, I'd probably be riding on it. But I think it's better for all concerned to study the rail option first. ■



A map of the Pogonip showing the two trail options.

Climate Action Plan

(Continued from page 1)

currently written, the CAP would call for reducing such trips while other city projects support their increase.

2012 could be remembered by future generations as the year that engaged citizens made it clear that we will not tolerate the business-as-usual approach that continues to ruin the climate. For this turnaround to happen, however, we will all need to stretch beyond our comfort zones. This includes City Council members who need to make two significant changes to the CAP to insure implementation:

- 1. Plan for fewer car trips.** The CAP's first draft called for a 30% reduction in car trips by 2020. The new draft lowers that number to 10%. This is in addition to CO2 reductions based on higher efficiency and electric vehicles. To achieve this goal, city planning for automobile traffic reduction must be consistent. For example, spending millions of dollars to widen roads contradicts the goal of 10% less automobile traffic. If we are planning on MORE trips via alternative transit, we should devote resources to that.
- 2. Assure implementation of the CAP through community oversight.** The CAP includes a number of good proposals for involving the community in carbon reduction. But it doesn't provide for any sort of citizens' commission to provide regular input and monitor how the CAP is being carried out. The staff and City Council will need the perspective of thoughtful bike and bus advocates, drivers, pedestrians, homeowners, renters, builders, and others in order for the Plan to succeed.

The City Council will hold a workshop on the CAP during their meeting on Tuesday, January 24 at 7PM. On Thursday, January 19, People Power and Transition Santa Cruz will host a public meeting to help formulate a community response to the CAP. We invite all interested to attend at 7PM at the Ecology Action office, 877 Cedar Street. THEN, join us for the Underwater Tour of Santa Cruz on January 24. (See article on page 3) ■

Rail Trail Planning Going Well but Purchase Hits a Detour

Draft alignments of the rail trail looked usable and practical at a series of public workshops presented by the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and their consultant, RMM Design Group. The draft plan calls for the rail trail to run almost exclusively on the right of way and over all the trestles. The rail trail would form the spine of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail Network. This is good news and the first official word that the rail-with-trail facility long proposed by People Power and Friends of the Rail Trail is entirely practical, contradicting longstanding claims by opponents. Though the trail cannot be built until the purchase of the line is completed, finishing the initial designs prior to the completion of the purchase will hasten the construction of the first segment of trail.

Unfortunately the purchase hit a significant hurdle a month ago when Sierra Northern Railroad ended its commitment to run freight and tourist rail service in the county. Apparently, Sierra was unwilling to continue losing a small amount of money on the line unless Union Pacific gave it a lucrative contract in South Sacramento. This action by Sierra (who had been an important ally for the purchase and trail) has created another problem for the RTC staff working hard to close the deal.

The good news is that the RTC staff has publicly affirmed their commitment to the purchase and Union Pacific has already stepped in to continue freight service. While the negotiations are not public, we assume that the RTC staff are hard at work to find another passenger rail provider and/or to work with the state and federal agencies to insure that the purchase goes through. They deserve our appreciation and support in this endeavor. ■

Arana Gulch

(Continued from page 1)

mobility challenged in particular, and new opportunities for environmental education programs at Arana Gulch. These benefits are made possible in part by the proposed multi-use path.

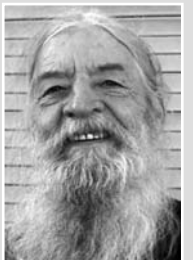
Approval of the plan was the result of two decades of hard work by City staff and a range of citizen's groups that included mobility-challenged people, seniors, educators, advocates for alternative transportation and other environmentalists.

With all planning, preliminary design and environmental reviews completed, and all legal challenges exhausted, the next steps are for the City of Santa Cruz to submit studies to the Commission staff, and then proceed with final design. With funding in place (mainly from state and federal sources plus some from the last of the county RDA funds), the Arana Gulch Master Plan will head into implementation within two years. ■

In Memoriam

Richard Snow (1940 – 2011)

People Power was sad to learn of the passing of community activist, friend, and cyclist Richard Snow. A familiar presence around town on his bike, Richard was a long-time volunteer for People Power. We will miss him.



California Bicycle Coalition Meets in Los Angeles

In early November, Green Ways to School coordinator Tawn Kennedy and People Power volunteer Owen Gorman traveled to Los Angeles to attend the California Bike Coalition's Statewide Summit. Over 140 representatives from advocacy organizations, cycling clubs, and industry met over three days to review this year's statewide accomplishments, hear from national leaders, share resources, and strategize for the future.

The first morning of the summit, Gorman and Kennedy attended a ride organized by the LA County Bike Coalition exploring local bike infrastructure, including the Bicycle Kitchen, a small volunteer-based bike coop, and the beautiful LA River Bike Path. The rest of the weekend was filled with inspiring presentations, reports on challenges and successes, and workshops addressing best practices in bike advocacy. Both attendees came away inspired, particularly in terms of supporting youth bike culture and advocacy. "While there are a number of organizations working throughout the state to support youth bike-safety education and access to bikes, there are relatively few working to support young advocates. I was inspired by the success of

Recycle a Bicycle's NYC Youth Bike Summits, so I proposed that the CBC sponsor something similar for California" says Kennedy. "We later met to discuss how to make a Youth Summit a reality." Attendees at the conference agreed that a Youth Summit should be a top priority, and the CBC will be supporting their efforts in the coming year.

"It felt good to share what we are doing in Santa Cruz, although it was also humbling" said Kennedy. "We can do more. Long Beach inspired me with their 'Bike Friendly Business District,' which has shifted previously anti-bike merchants to the other side by showing them how profitable welcoming and accommodating cyclists can be."

Gorman concurs. "I met alternative transportation advocates from cities more and less on board with the green trends we see in Santa Cruz and was inspired with how hard they worked to create meaningful progress on a local scale." To find out about the National Bike Summit in Washington DC this March, go to bikeleague.org. For more information about the California Bicycle Coalition, go to calbike.org. ■

Green Ways News

The past few months have been a busy time for Green Ways to School. In October, Green Ways co-hosted "Bike Fresh, Eat Local," a community ride in Watsonville celebrating healthy food options and downtown bikeways. Youth from Jovenes SANOS and the Brown Berets joined staff members from People Power, Green Ways, and Trips for Kids, and the mayor of Watsonville to ride along the river levee and on city streets,

eat a delicious meal, and discuss the good, the bad, and the ugly of biking in Watsonville. "We are so happy to see the enthusiasm for biking that is growing among young people in Watsonville," says Green Ways director Tawn Kennedy. Green Ways continues to work with South County youth to advocate for better bike options and support emerging leaders. In December, Green Ways youth attended the Regional Transportation Commission's Rail Trail workshop in Watsonville.

In the North County, Green Ways youth have gotten involved supporting the Arana Gulch Master Plan, promoting a once-a-week pedestrian mall on Pacific Avenue, and finding creative ways to ride more visibly during the long nights of winter. Green Ways hosted a well-attended Style My Bike safety workshop in September, providing bikes, lights and creative visibility options for area youth. Concurrently, People Power intern Zoe Altenberg



Youth from Kirk Bernhardt's Bike Tech Class join with Green Ways for a Watsonville bike adventure.

and a host of other young artists and writers worked to complete the inaugural issue of Spoke, the Green Ways to School zine. This publication about biking, skating, and walking by and for local youth is now available, thanks to the generous support of Community Printers. To request copies, please contact Zoe Altenberg at info@peoplepowersc.org or (831) 425-0665.

On January 19, Green Ways will coordinate the Underwater Tour of Downtown Santa Cruz in 2100 as part of a response to the City's Climate Action Plan (see articles on pages 1 and 3). We also are excited to announce our Second Annual Art and Essay Contest. Submissions are due Monday, April 2nd. Watch for more information in a forthcoming People Power action alert in early February. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Tawn Kennedy at greenways@peoplepowersc.org or call him at (831) 425-0665. ■

Welcome to People Power's New High School Intern

People Power welcomes our newest high school intern, Soquel High student Bianca Greenfield. "I enjoy the atmosphere at the People Power office and I love helping out with campaigns because I know it is making a difference. I believe that people should ride their bikes for economic, environmental, and health reasons. I know I am helping not only Santa Cruz, but also the earth, become a safer and healthier place." ■



THE BIKE CHURCH – upcoming classes All events are free (donations accepted)

Hands-on learning in a supportive environment. No prior experience necessary! For more information about classes or volunteering, send email to bikechurch@santacruzhub.org.

INTRO TO BIKES, MAINTENANCE, AND THE BIKE CHURCH

Sundays: Feb 12 & March 11.

Time: noon–2PM. PLEASE BE ON TIME.

A practical overview of the bicycle, from brakes to shifting to proper tool usage. This class will cover basic anatomy and function of the bike with an emphasis on safety, and include hands-on fix-it time for attendees. This will also be a useful introduction to our shop for newcomers.

WOMEN/TRANSGENDER/FEM BIKE WORKSHOP (WTF!)

Sundays: Jan 15, Feb 5 & 19, March 4 & 18

Time: noon–3PM. DROP IN.

Bicycle maintenance has traditionally been an overwhelmingly male-dominated area. Our goal is to provide time for individuals who may have been marginalized or intimidated in this setting to be supported in being knowledgeable and confident in cycling, mechanics and tool use. This workshop provides a safer space for women, trans and fem folks to work on their bikes and learn new skills. Taught by women/queer mechanics.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

Mondays: Jan 16 & 30, Feb 13 & 27, March 12 & 26.

Time: 7:15PM – 8PM. PLEASE BE ON TIME.

Want to become more involved in the Bike Church? Potential new volunteers will be introduced to the shop and our collective process. We require new volunteers to attend an orientation prior to helping patrons during open hours.

703 Pacific Avenue (Entrance is on Spruce Street)
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UNDERWATER TOUR: Downtown Without a Climate Plan

Prior to the City Council's Community Meeting on January 24 (see article on page 1), take a tour of Santa Cruz's future *without* a strong, implementable Climate Action Plan. As the City Council prepares to review the updated Climate Action Plan, local environmental leaders and the City's climate team are joining forces to provide a humorous look at a future in Santa Cruz without a specific, powerful plan. Join city climate czar Ross Clark, tour guide Fred Keeley, People Power, and Green Ways to School youth as they lead a walking tour of the future as it might be unless we do something now.

Pedal Now



Or



Paddle Later

The tour will be held on Tuesday, January 24, starting at 4PM in the City Hall courtyard. The tour will follow a route consisting of stops around downtown with local celebrity speakers and vignettes. We will look back, from the future, on what led up to Santa Cruz 2100's state of affairs. Participants are encouraged to dress in "underwater" attire. Bring snorkels, rubber duckies, boogie boards, life jackets and wetsuits.

SEE: Denizens of the sea, as they rise from the watery depths to join our evening.

MEET: Citizens of the North Pole attempting to relocate.

ENJOY: A romantic boat ride down Pacific Avenue.

As the tour arrives back to 2012, celebrate the real steps that our City, the local environmental community, and our citizens can take to address this complex issue. Then join us at the City Council chambers at 7PM to support the adoption of a Climate Action Plan that will make Santa Cruz a local and national leader in tackling climate change.

If you are interested in volunteering, have costumes to loan, or would like more information, contact Green Ways to School at (831) 425-0667 or greenways@peoplepowersc.org. ■

Next Segment of Highway Widening Goes Forward Despite Opposition

Like anyone, People Power likes to talk about our victories as an organization and as a movement. For the sake of honesty and to give our members perspective, we also need to talk about defeats.

Starting in February Caltrans construction crews (working on behalf of our Regional Transportation Commission—the same RTC that is doing excellent work on the rail trail), will begin cutting down trees along Highway 1 between Morrissey and Soquel. Working together with the Campaign for Sensible Transportation, we've tried everything we can to stop this senseless destruction and waste of \$21 million. It appears that nothing will stop the project at this point, short of direct physical intervention. Even worse, at the RTC's November meeting they voted to spend \$4 million towards another phase of highway widening between Soquel and 41st Avenue.

"How can they do this when we voted against it?" is the most common question people ask us about highway widening. It is true that a 2004 measure to raise taxes to widen Highway 1 was defeated by a 2/3 vote. Although this reflected the voters' lack of support to raise sales tax for highway widening, Measure J didn't prohibit the government from *(continued on page 5)*



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2011 Fundraisers — Steve Schnaar

As most members know, People Power is a grassroots effort, running on a small annual budget of less than \$50,000. We rely on dozens of volunteers for everything from campaign work and valet bike parking, to carpentry and maintenance at the office. This abundant volunteer energy—along with the support of hundreds of individual and dozens of business members—keeps us going. Though we spend relatively few resources on fundraising, we do hold a few events every year that also help pay the bills. In 2011, our two main fundraisers were both fun and successful.

In October we expanded our annual Burn Fat Not Oil ride from a tour of local bakeries to a "harvest ride" celebrating the bounty of fall and adding some farms to the itinerary. It was a great ride, and also raised over \$800 for People Power, all of which went to our organization thanks to the generous support of event sponsors Companion Bakeshop, Homeless Garden Project, Staff of Life Market, UCSC Farm, and Caffe Pergolesi.

People Power also marked our 20th anniversary with an event doubling as a birthday celebration and our annual fundraising dinner. Held at the 418 Project, we had about 100 attendees throughout the evening. To commemorate our two decades of successful advocacy for human-powered transportation in and around Santa Cruz, Dave Snyder, founder of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition and current director of the California Bicycle Coalition in Sacramento, gave a keynote address. Thanks to the generosity of chef Jozseph Schultz, local farms (including Route 1 Farms, Blue Heron, TomKat Ranch, and Fogline Farms), and dozens of other individuals and businesses who contributed to the dinner and the silent auction, People Power brought in over \$4,400. Only a small fraction of that amount went to cover costs of the event itself.

Thanks to everyone who participated in and/or helped to put on these two great events. ■

People Power Website Upgrade

People Power is happy to roll out our redesigned website at www.peoplepowersc.org. Recent improvements will provide new services and make it easier for members and the general public to stay informed on current issues related to transportation, the environment, and sustainability. We invite you to explore the new website and send us feedback. You also can now follow us on Twitter, Google Plus, or Facebook.

The website has been donated and funded by Steve Piercy, a local website developer and designer and People Power Steering Committee member. Steve offers members a one-hour free consultation to discuss how technology may be used to accomplish the goals of your organization or business. Contact Steve at web@stevepiercy.com for a consultation. ■

Highway Widening *(Continued from page 4)*

spending other funds to do so. Since 2004, incremental highway widening has been paid for with transportation funds that could have paid for alternative transportation and road maintenance.

This is not to say that the widening has strong support, even on the RTC. In fact, the Commission's last vote for highway widening passed by 1 to 3 votes—depending on how you count which procedural vote. While use of the Highway had been decreasing over the past 5 years (a trend that is expected to continue over the next decades due to rising gas prices), rural roads continue to deteriorate. Even though more people are bicycling, walking and riding the bus, funds supporting these modes of transportation are being cut.

Led by Supervisor John Leopold, the County Board of Supervisors appears to oppose large-scale spending on the

Aptos Bike/Ped Bridge

— Yasmienne Mabrouk

In 2007, the Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) received \$7 million in state funds for a new bike/ped bridge to connect sections of Mar Vista Drive over Highway 1 in Aptos. The bridge is part of the proposed Highway 1 widening project. While the highway widening has taken a long time and has hit various hurdles, funding for the bridge is already in place. We would like to see the bridge separated from the \$600 million highway widening and get it built without further delay.

People Power believes the bridge is a very important addition to our County's bike infrastructure. It would connect the Seacliff neighborhood to Soquel businesses and provide a safe crossing over Highway 1 for students to Mar Vista Elementary School and Cabrillo. The bridge would also connect to a future rail trail. Now, anyone walking or biking from the Seacliff neighborhood must take State Park Drive, which is not pedestrian or bike friendly. We have been working for over 20 years to make Santa Cruz County a safer and more convenient place to bike, skate, and walk. This bridge would be one more improvement toward that goal.

In late 2011, the RTC suggested shifting funds from the bridge to another project. Supervisor Ellen Pirie was a great ally in making sure the funding stayed with the bridge. People Power organized a meeting with Pirie and members of the Aptos community, including members of the Seacliff Improvement Association, the Cabrillo Bike Co-op, Mar Vista Elementary School and the Seacliff Neighborhood Association. Everyone expressed their enthusiasm for the bridge. With such broad support and with funding already approved, we want this project to move forward sooner rather than later. To help make the bridge a reality, contact Yasmienne at yasmienemabrouk@gmail.com or (402) 213-4312. ■

highway by a margin of 4 to 1. Ironically, the swing votes for the highway widening continue to be representatives from the Metro Board, who maintain that a carpool (HOV) lane would help the bus system. At the same November meeting, however, a report from RTC director George Dondero indicated that the carpool lane project is no longer feasible, given the new economics facing all levels of government and the lack of support for raising taxes to pay for it. Thus, the incremental widening will simply create a few new miles of lanes, without encouraging either carpooling or bus use.

Because highway widening draws scarce funds away from alternative transportation and maintenance of existing roadways, and because it encourages and subsidizes additional automobile trips, People Power will continue to work with the Campaign for Sensible Transportation, Supervisor John Leopold and other elected representatives to stop it. We don't always succeed. ■

EVERYDAY HERO BIKE RIDE Celebrate Cycling—Rain or Shine!

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Popular
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**Sunday, February 5th
10AM – 2PM**

**\$6 includes a simple homemade lunch.
Ride departs from the UCSC Recreation Office porch.**

February 5th is, on average, one of the rainiest days of the year—perfect for a bike ride! Join People Power director Micah Posner for a celebration of all-weather cycling for transportation. This slow and easy 8–10 mile ride will feature safe, lesser-known routes to town and around the Westside and demonstrate effective rain gear. Lunch and a free bike map will be provided to each cyclist. Bike or bus back up to the University. A perfect ride for new cyclists!

**You will need a bike in good working condition,
helmet, and rain gear. (Rain gear can be rented at OPERS.)**

**To sign up, go to www.ucscrecreation.com
For more info contact People Power at
425-0665 or go to info@peoplepowersc.org.**



Co-sponsored by the UCSC Transportation and Recreation Departments.