

FERRY CYCLING COUNTY FEDERATION

Barstow Dispatch Vol.2, #1

March 2022



Rolling Pierre Lake Road on a freezing grey winter day. February 2022. Photo: John. Transfer: Augustine.

Adieu Février!

Scientifically speaking, February, though the shortest month, is the suckiest for riding. This is especially true in Ferry County, where just enough snow is scraped off the roads to give the illusion of ride potential. But the temperatures are stubbornly low, even at midday. Overdressing is rewarded by sweating out too soon on the early climb so that you can freeze solid on the ride back home. There is no right shoe or glove or top layer. Hopeful visions of 20 or 30 mile rides are cast away as you turn around after 7 miles of slow and cold grinding.

Midday sun reflects off the snow, temporarily blinding you, just as you lean into a shaded corner where sheer ice lays in wait.

Ice: The worthiest of bike foes.

As you approach shaded sections of road where smooth ice stretches across the width of passage, you game it out. The strategy is to pick a line that will require zero deviation in direction or speed. At the moment of truth, your entire body is still and rigid as a deer caught in the headlights. But fully puckered. So often the ice will win. Slow speed or high speed, a fall on ice is weirdly similar: the impact on a sharp bone of an elbow or knee or shoulder, then the frictionless glide and slide with your bike at your side.

As for trails, forget about it. Trails are not on the menu for months yet, buried under a couple feet of snow and topped with an icy crust.

All the while decay persists: each day your body and mind are victim to cruel entropy. Each day hearing you closer to your grave. You convince yourself that even in this shitbox of a month, you still ride because it's fun. When really, February is a month of such epically shitty proportion, that these torturous bike rides are literally the best part of your day.

o March!



Bike on a snowy icy hill in February.

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John @ FCCF
1 Rooner Way
Kettle Falls WA 99141



Summer road work: SBCR FTW!

Long time Dispatch readers know that South Boulder Creek Road (SBCR) is an OG favorite of the FCCF.

SBCR is a dirt road that generally parallels the KCT and connects eventually with Albion Hill road and Highway 20. Along the way, there are numerous diversions for bike-related adventure: up the Jeep trail to Thomson Ridge and Davis Lake, or connecting with Old Stage for a one mile climb onto KCT, or as the rollout from a bomb down Stickpin or Taylor Ridge, or serving as a looped connection onto Deadman Creek for a 15 mile descent back into the Kettle valley. We love SBCR on any bike. So, we're pretty thrilled with the plan

and resulting work that will be happening this summer.

Before we jump in to the details, a bit of history helps set the context. In 1998 a spring melt blew out a huge chunk of SBCR at about 2.5 miles in from Boulder highway. This created an impassable road. The forest service closed the road at Boulder highway and at about 1/2 mile south of the blowout. This did two things that made cycling this section even better. Firstly, it created a dead end for north-bound traveling cars deep into the forest, thereby making about 10 miles of forest road 99% carless. Secondly, after two decades of no car travel along the first 3 miles of SBCR, the forest began to reclaim the narrow stretch that runs along South Boulder Creek.

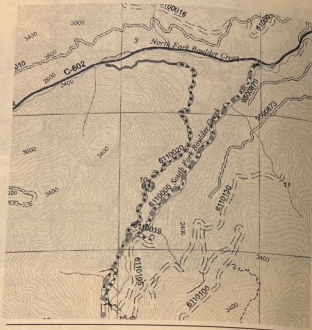
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The "road" in that section became a trail, poached (as expected) by ATV users, but generally it was a beautiful section of riding.

We knew that at some point the forest service would reopen SBCR and the halcyon days of spinning through quiet forest next to the creek would come to an end. This end came quickly with the Bulldog Fire, when SBCR was quickly rehab'd, widened, and graded to handle earth movers, fire fighting tankers, and personnel. The lower section we love so much has been blown out into forest service highway.

But this is only temporary. This story has a happy ending. The plan that will become reality this summer is to build a new section of road just west of the current lower section. This new section will connect with SBCR at approximately the same location where the road was blocked for so many years, a few hundred yards to the bottom of the Taylor Ridge trail.

The lower section will revert back to a non-motorized trail. While we're not generally fans of building new roads in the forest, we like this plan for the obvious reason of restoring the best section of this route. And frankly, we're surprised by this design decision. But the new road was a requirement imposed by following the Inland Native



The plan: 6110020 is the new bit of road. The section of 6110000 shown on the map will revert back to non-motorized chillville. This map is a snapped screenshot from fs.usda.gov site.

Fish Strategy. Basically, the original SBCR travels too close to the creek and restoring the road would threaten aquatic recovery. There's Red Band in there, don'tcha know! So, in 2023, we'll resume our rides up SBCR. We'll pack our small stream fly rod. And as the years pass, we'll watch the forest slowly reclaim the road once again.



Salty talk

Way back in Vol 1, Dispatch #2 we carried on about salt and the mighty pre-load.

In a nutshell, we financed a double-blind multiyear longitudinal study that proved beyond a shadow of doubt that consuming salt before hard efforts was mostly a good thing. We call this salt-before-ride, The Preload.

Since then, we've maintained our dedication and dogmatic fixation with The Preload and now we've extended salt consumption into the actual ride. Our favorite sodium delivery solution is Lee Kum Kee Chicken Bouillon Powder. This powder packs a 810mg punch of sodium * per teaspoon * ! That is not a typo! You read that right!

In the miserable month of February and the mostly suck-ass month of March, we also pack Lee Kum Kee in our bike-cage-friendly thermos.

Klean Kanteen makes a 16 Oz stainless thermos that fits perfectly in a normal bottle cage and keeps the broth passably warm for a couple hours. We also like that the thermos doesn't attempt the impossible with a silly lid that allows you to drink but then also just leaks at the most inopportune times. The lid just screws on. You can throw it in a backpack (and we do!) and it won't leak (and it doesn't!). We recommend finding one of these thermoses.



My Beater MTB

By Alex Wetmore

I made a big splurge purchase last year and upgraded my 2007 mountain bike to the latest carbon fiber Ibis Ripley. Mountain bikes changed a lot in those 15 years and the new one has been a lot of fun and has rekindled my interest in mountain biking. The only downside with the Ibis is that it's so darn fancy that I worry about letting it out of my sight. An interesting looking RSD Triumph frame was sitting on Craigslist for weeks. It called out to me with nice steel 853 tubing, funky orange and blue paint, sliding

dropouts, and newish geometry.

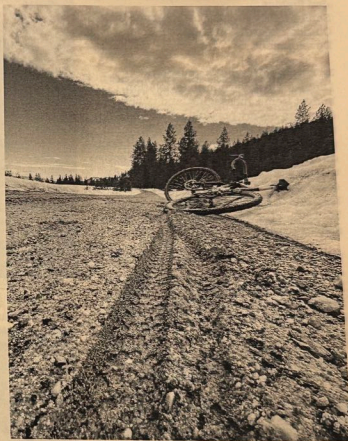
At first I tried to ignore it because it looked like it had lived a rough life. Finally I talked to the owner (who just wanted it gone) and we agreed on a price that was pretty close to free.

The bike was built for 27.5 wheels and 150mm travel forks. I of course only had 29er wheels on hand and

since this was a budget project I didn't want to buy new wheels. John@FCCF came to the rescue with a rear wheel for me, so I decided to build it as a mullet (29er front, 27.5 rear) using my spare 29er front wheel. However I didn't want to slacken the bike at all, because the seat tube angle was already a fairly slack 73 degrees. I did a bunch of math and used Mad Scientist MTB (<https://madscientistmtb.com/>) to confirm that if I ran a 120mm fork with the 29er wheel that I would be able to keep the stock seat tube angle and bottom bracket height. I ordered a 120mm



Marzocchi Bomber Z2 fork (a great fork for the price), a dropper post, and found the rest of the necessary parts from my cache and started assembling it. The bike was fun, but I really liked the slacker head tube on my Ibis and wanted to replicate that. A few companies make special headsets that let you change the head tube angle, so I -2 degree angle headset from Works Components in the UK. This dropped the head tube angle from 68 degrees down to 66 and slightly steepened up the bike too (a good thing in my mind). One of the first rides on the new bike was with John when we did back to back rides at Raging River and Grand Ridge just outside of Seattle. It was fun trying both bikes on the same ride and getting to compare them. The orange beater turned out to be a great bike and a nice complement that keeps up with my Ibis - though the Ibis is still the better all around bike. I'm happy to have a beater back in my life that I can use for silly rides on the salty tidal flats, playing in the rare Seattle snow, loan out to friends, or taking with me on public transit to explore some of Seattle's new urban MTB trails.



An unrelated picture. Welcome, then, to March. Better than February, but challenging in soft road ways.



Profile

Jon Snyder
Senior Policy Advisor to Governor Inslee:
Outdoor Recreation and Economic
Development

In a nutshell: what's your job?

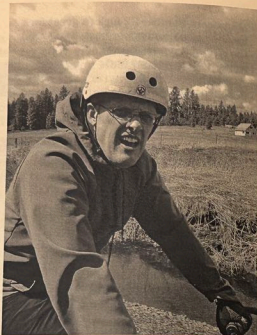
I advise the governor on legislation, budget items, messaging, and policy direction for my portfolio area. The outdoor rec and economic development area kind of covers everything that people do outside. For example it includes active transportation—biking and walking. And to some degree, environmental education. I help one of my colleagues with that too. Tourism. Pro, college, and high school sports are also in my portfolio area.

That's crazy. That's a huge swath of stuff.

It's small compared to others. I have a friend who does K-12 education. It's one area, but it's a massive space. Another colleague does housing policy. Oh boy. That's a big area. So while my area has many facets to it, the policy area is not as large as those like K-12 education, public safety, housing. And my area is not constantly on fire. The biggest drama in outdoor rec in the last year does not compare to the issues in housing and education.

How did you get here? How did you end up in this job?

It's a weird job. I didn't know this job existed until someone sent me the job listing. The job required a mix of public and private experience. There are people



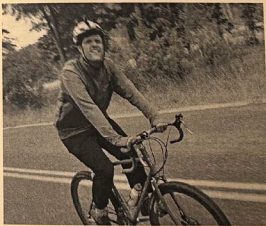
Jon has been a buddy of mine for many years. All pics here are mine, except where noted. (And to keep the streak alive: That's a swerve jacket he's wearing there, by the way.)

in Olympia who have never held a job outside of government. A lot of people in the private sector have never worked in the public sector. I had done both by virtue of being on the Spokane city council and owning my own business and being in magazine publishing for over 20 years. I was appointed to my current job in 2016.

In the economic development and recreation contexts of your role, how do you think about Ferry County?

It's a beautiful, beautiful area. Lots of public land. Not a lot of people. Far from the major population areas. And one of the most amazing resources up there is this trail right-of-way. You have folks that live close to that resource who are very excited to develop it.

It's an area that developed thorough mining and timber. And many of those jobs just don't exist any more. Some may see tourism as displacing those jobs. But those legacy jobs that no longer exist have nothing to do with tourism or outdoor recreation. Those jobs are gone because of automation. The number of people it takes to harvest trees today compared to 50 years ago is insane. It just take way fewer people. It's the same with mining and ranching. So these are jobs that are just not coming back. So part of the economic development is asking the question, "Could something like a trail



Barstow-Orient loop. July 2011

help with this equation?" Can we replace some of those jobs with tourism jobs?" I think the answer is yes. People love the trail. People want to check out Ferry County.

There's certainly resistance from people here who don't want that vision of Ferry County. How do you handle being the guy from Olympia pitching these plans?

Yeah. That's an honest reaction. And this is by no means unique to Ferry County. You see this in Spokane, in Seattle, in Tacoma, where ever. People sometimes feel like the place where they live shouldn't ever have to change. But I'm sorry. Things change. And they change faster than they did 30 or 40 years ago.

What's interesting, specifically about the trail in Ferry County, is that it's been the opposite. We use that trail as the example to other counties in the state. Because the trail is a homegrown effort that had amazing vision, amazing volunteers, and amazing implementation. It really serves as a model for other projects. So in a sense, we're not importing Olympia values into Ferry County, we're exporting Ferry County values to other places. Part of this is intrinsic: Some of the money that funded the trail, which came from the state, require a city or county recreation plan. That means you have to show that the community embraces the project by including it in the rec plan. There's value in that by the time Olympia does get involved, there's already community buy-in.

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~~~~ Profile Intermission ~~~~

Jon-as-public-servant is a fine profile, but as with all of us, one's job often describes just a single dimension of our lives. Jon is a dynamic dude. This picture, whose authorship is unknown to me, shows Jon racing his first criterium in 2012, as Spokane City Councilman. Because, why the hell not? There's a race? He's in. I've seen him race mountain bikes on a wreck of a bike. I've ridden ungodly trails at elevation (Thomas Ridge in Ferry County - serious goat trail shit) with Jon where he was riding a fully fendered, racked, commuter bike. He's happy and smiling the whole way.

(Commuter bike story is cool - <http://www.johndogfood.com/john/BT-Fall2010-Speare.pdf>). Interesting tidbits that just didn't fit into the official profile: Jon came up in publishing Star Wars fan magazines. In college he was deep into punk and emerging NW rock scene of the 90's. His photos of Nirvana playing at Evergreen State College have been published in fancy books. He started Out There Monthly, an outdoor magazine that still publishes today in Spokane.

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### E-bikes. Where's that issue on your radar?

One of the reasons I like working for the governor is that he is the one elected official that must be thinking about every single person in the state. He represents the trail folks, the equestrians, the loggers, everybody. Whether or not someone voted for your boss has no bearing on how you represent them. E-mountain bikes is a great example of this. I've stepped back from the discussion a bit so I'm not putting my thumb on the scale when there needs to be good stakeholder interaction and debate.

So there's a bill that the governor signed that created a taskforce study bill for e-bikes. They've been working on it for about a year. I think it should be wrapped up soon. The goal is to come up with a recommendation that could be a new law.

### What are your priorities for 2022?

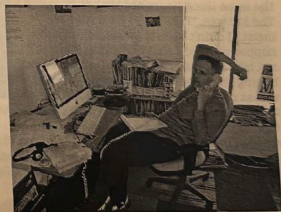
Equity. Camping. Trails. That's it. Equity is a big area with a bunch of different aspects. From representation on boards and commissions, to better hiring practices at our agencies to ensure a more diverse work force. Or when we put in new campgrounds, we put in bigger loops to better serve larger extended families. We are studying barriers to outdoor recreation for black Washingtonians. How do we dismantle those barriers so everyone can enjoy outdoor recreation in Washington? Equity also includes our tribal partners and how we are interacting with them as sovereign nations.

Camping: we just need more camping. We're talking with forest service to partner in bringing back campgrounds

that have gone out of commission. We have new state parks that we're building. We're giving out grants to some of the counties. Camping continues to be one of the gateway drugs to outdoor recreation. And not enough diverse communities feel comfortable taking advantage of the camping opportunities. We need more facilities.

Trails are not flagging in popularity in one iota. It's just the opposite. More communities more often are seeing the benefits of having trails. So how do we help them plan and develop the trails that they want. Any trail: everything from Centennial Trail, a paved multiuser trail through one of the most urban areas of the state -- to back country trails that are remote and only used by a handful of folks. People want more connections. So, the Palouse to Cascades trail is going to be a spine for a cross-state trail and trail network in the state. It's like the "active transportation I-90".

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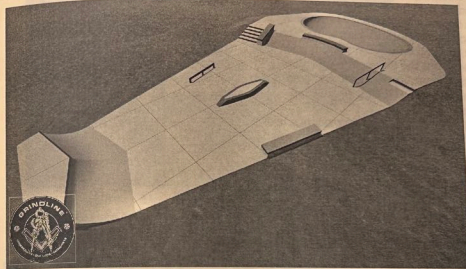
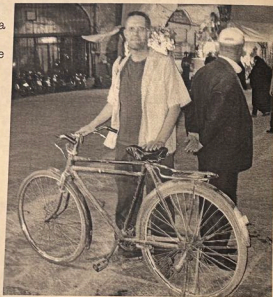
**Best bike experience ever?**

One of my most memorable bike experiences was in Isfahan, Iran in 2009. We were there for two weeks and all I wanted to do was to ride a bike. I wanted to say I rode a bike in another country. We just couldn't find an opportunity. There wasn't places to rent one. It wasn't happening.

Then we were in this big square in Isfahan that's really famous. It has one of the most beautiful mosques in the world. At night, these public plazas, instead of draining of people in the evening, they fill up. I somehow got in a conversation with a young kid who had this bike -- just an antique. It was one of those big steel, made in Hong Kong, 1950's bike. And I was telling this kid, "that's so cool!"

If you've never been to a Persian country it's hard to describe this thing where they demand that you take things as a matter of courtesy. So if you make a remark, like, "that's a nice croissant that you've got there." They're like: Boom. "Here, it's yours. Take it. Have it. No! It's yours." So the same thing happened with this bike. The kid was, "Take it. Go for a ride. I insist." I didn't have to be asked twice. I hopped on. And I had this shitty Blinky red bike light that I'd brought with me, just hoping I'd be able to get on a bike -- and if it was at night, I'd be ready. I rode for about 20 minutes around this huge plaza with this blinking light on my backpack. And I stopped in front of this famous mosque, where a security guard stopped me and

said, "you can't come in here with that." He was talking about my backpack. My traveling companion later translated for me and told me that the guard thought I had a bomb or some device, because of the blinking red light on my pack. But it was incredible -- I took this little ride on this cool bike in an amazing city with a beautiful sunset at night. It was super short but it was one of my favorite biking experiences ever.

**Inchelium Skatepark**

Plans are afoot in Inchelium to apply for a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (RCO) Grant to finance a new skatepark.

If this sounds Ferry County-familiar, then you must have heard of the recent news that the same grant was won by Republic last year. The Republic skatepark will be breaking ground this summer and is expected to be completed by fall.

The catalyst for these projects is the same guy who sparked and pushed the Ferry County Rail Trail into existence: Bobby Whittaker. There's a lot to say about Bobby. We'll talk with him for a future profile. In the meantime go the internet super highway and find the documentary, "Return to Mount Kennedy." Bobby gets stuff done.

He's also quick to deflect all attention to the community members who are doing the work, planning, and grant-writing to make the Inchelium Skatepark a reality.

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While FCCF is partial to bikes, we appreciate the importance of skateparks, which can be a central social fixture in small communities like Inchelium. Take a spin through Kettle Falls on a summer day and check out the skatepark there to witness a community of kids and adults hanging out, moving, and getting rad together.

A draft concept plan for the park has been created by Grindline, which also designed the Republic park. "Draft" is a key concept here. Bobby made a point of telling me that final design is a work of collaboration with the community in general, and the local kids specifically. Another design element within the Inchelium Park is a feature that resembles a sturgeon nose canoe. Shawn Brigman, an expert canoe craftsman from Spokane Tribe, is collaborating with the project for this element.

This project doesn't happen without winning that RCO grant. And that RCO grant is very competitive. What can you do to help land it? Write a letter. You don't need to be a skater. You don't need to be Native. You don't even need to live in Ferry County. This is a numbers game: Write a letter and talk about why having a skatepark for kids in a deeply rural area is a good idea. Talk about fun. Talk about exercise. If you have a kid, ask them to send a letter. Even better if they can include a drawing of someone getting rad on a skateboard.

Send your letters to Pam Phillips, Inchelium Boys and Girls Club, # 9 Community Center Loop, Inchelium, WA 99138.



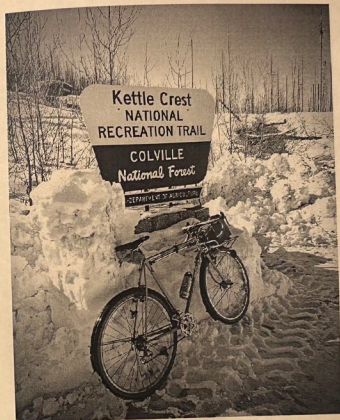
I recently revived a bike that had a cracked frame. The bike was out of commission for about 6 years. I'd forgotten about the decal that was on the downtube of this bike.

It's the phonetic spelling of Shonitkwu, which is one of a number of spellings for the Salish word meaning "noisy waters." In the regional context, this was the area referred to by the Europeans as Kettle Falls.

In Vol 1, Dispatch 2 I spent the better part of the issue trying to make sense of this important landmark in historical context and my relationship to it. If you would like a copy of that issue, please let me know and I'll get you a copy.

When this decal was given to me, over a decade ago, I applied it to my bike without a lot of thought. I had mostly forgotten about it.

Now, I am sort of awe struck by it. And that it had found its way on my bike. I look forward to pedaling this resurrected bike around region once in earshot of Shonitku.



### Bonjour Mars!

And now early spring. It's hills season. Or as we like to say, "hills hills hills."

Slow and steady. Lots of hills.

All hill climbing is in service of KCT rides starting in mid-late June. That is the point!

This year, we were able to get to the top of Boulder on March 8th, beating our 1st ascent from last year by a month. Getting to the top that early was a bit of luck. It's likely we'll see it snowed out once or twice before the end of April, but with the warmer temps, it should generally be rideable, if not to the tippy top, at least most of the way.