

2012: Banner Year for Bicycle Travel and Adventure Cycling Association



Adventure Cycling Association

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2012

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North America's "bicycle-travel expert" notches new records for members, sales, revenue, tours, charitable contributions, and opens an expanded, renovated headquarters

Missoula, Montana — [Adventure Cycling Association](#) today announced a strong financial and program performance for fiscal year 2012 (October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012). The organization now operates with a \$4.95 million dollar budget, up 17% over last year.

"It's been an incredible year and we are grateful to our members and supporters," said Jim Sayer, executive director of Adventure Cycling. "Not only did our programs and income grow substantially, but in July, we unveiled our expanded headquarters, and in September, our membership hit an all-time high of 45,225 members."

As North America's largest membership nonprofit cycling organization, Adventure Cycling's income and staff support the organization's efforts to inspire and empower people to travel by bicycle and improve conditions for bicycling and bicycle travel across the U.S.

New Maps and Sales Growth

In February 2012, Adventure Cycling released the second section of the [Underground Railroad Detroit Alternate](#), a new routing option for cyclists wishing to travel between Oberlin, Ohio, and Owen Sound, Ontario. With the addition of this map section, the Adventure Cycling Route Network now encompasses 41,420 miles — the largest mapped network of bike-friendly routes in the world.

Research for Adventure Cycling's next long-distance route, [Bicycle Route 66](#), was finished this year as well. The complete route will be approximately 2,500 miles in length; maps will be available in late 2014. Research also began on a new dirt route connecting Idaho hot springs.

The organization's popular bicycle-touring maps are available from its [Cyclosource](#) store and catalog. In 2012, map sales increased 4% with a total of 33,500 maps sold, and, for the first time ever, total Cyclosource sales topped \$900,000, an increase of 7%, with sales to members and non-members alike hitting record numbers. In the last decade, Adventure Cycling's map sales have grown 66%, and total sales revenue has grown 90%.

"We're thankful to be growing our sales revenue and reaching a larger number of cyclists," said Teri Maloughney, sales and marketing director. "It seems that we're more visible than ever to cyclists outside our core membership, which bodes well for continued growth."

Membership and *Adventure Cyclist Magazine*

This year, Adventure Cycling's total [membership](#) numbers hit an all-time high with 45,225

members. Overall, the program experienced a 5.5% growth rate, which caps a 20% growth rate in membership over the last decade. Membership renewals remained strong following a 4-year trend of increases, and inquiries (people asking about services and member benefits) grew 7%. Adventure Cycling also attracted 233 bike shop members and 126 club memberships.

The organization welcomed 120 new life members, double the number who joined in FY11, bringing the total number of life members to 1,733. Adventure Cycling's [life member program](#) is a very popular way to support the organization; funds from life memberships are restricted to provide long-term support for the nonprofit. In the past, life member funds helped purchase Adventure Cycling's headquarters and, this year, complete its renovation

Adventure Cycling Association's 45,225 members come from every state in the U.S. with the most members residing in California and the fewest in North Dakota. 1,426 live outside of U.S. with 51 countries represented. From Austria to the United Arab Emirates with Luxembourg, Malaysia, Slovakia, and China in the mix, members reside and travel all around the globe.

In 2012, Adventure Cycling added 11 corporate members, including Primal Wear, Walz Caps, and Belmont Distribution (representing Moulton and Pashley). "In addition to providing support for our programs and services, many businesses join Adventure Cycling to take advantage of our great benefits package," said Amy Corbin, membership and marketing coordinator. Popular benefits include generous advertising discounts in *Adventure Cyclist* magazine, as well as exposure to membership and supporters through social media and targeted promotional mailings.

Advertising in [Adventure Cyclist](#) increased 10% over 2011 to \$260,000. New advertisers included Surly, Dual Eyewear, America's Milk Processor's "Got chocolate milk?" campaign, and Vitacost. Published 9 times each year and reaching more than 90,000 readers annually, *Adventure Cyclist* features bicycle-travel stories and photographs from around the world, how-to information, gear and travel-bike reviews, and more. *Adventure Cyclist* is the association's primary member benefit, along with discounts on maps, and access to tours and instructional courses

Tours

Adventure Cycling experienced a record-setting year in tour signups and revenue, offering more than 50 guided cycling tours — including supported trips, self-contained tours, and educational courses. By the end of the season, 1,275 cyclists rode with Adventure Cycling on tour, a 33% increase in participation in one year.

Donations

In FY12, Adventure Cycling saw a 23% increase in charitable contributions, which totaled \$712,982, in support of its outreach and program work to advance bicycling and bicycle travel.

Individual donations were up 50% over last year, however, grant funding dipped as several of the organization's foundation supporters shifted their giving focus. Members and donors stepped up in a big way to raise over \$250,000 to support the renovation and expansion of the organization's Missoula, Montana, headquarters. Members also gave to support Adventure Cycling's work on the U.S. Bicycle Route System, and continue growing the Adventure Cycling Route Network, including a major re-route on the Northern Tier to address safety issues. Cycling businesses also supported the organization, with gifts ranging from sponsorships to product donations, which were used in raffles and the organization's summer auction.

"This is my second year at Adventure Cycling, and I'm continually impressed and thankful for the generosity of our members," said Development Director Amanda Lipsey. "It's truly amazing when you consider the slow-growth of the current economy."

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, Adventure Cycling will work on maps for Bicycle Route 66 and continue work to convert its existing routes using GIS (Geographic Information Systems), which will allow for more efficient and timely updates of its maps. It will also complete work on the Idaho hot springs route in late 2013.

Work on the [U.S. Bicycle Route System](#) (USBRS), an emerging official national network of cycling routes, will continue with even more states designating U.S. Bicycle Routes, completion of a best practices report to aid states in implementation of routes, and the signing of U.S. Bicycle Route 20 in Michigan. Adventure Cycling's new Department of Travel Initiatives, which coordinates the USBRS, will focus part of its time to grow support and enthusiasm for bicycle tourism. Adventure Cycling will also continue work with other national cycling groups at the federal and state levels to improve bike-friendly policies and facility investments.

In FY13, the Adventure Cycling [Tours Department](#) will offer more than 70 trips (a 24% increase over FY12) featuring a diverse lineup of tours to accommodate a wide variety of touring styles and skills. "We continue to adjust our tours schedule to meet the needs of our membership," said Arlen Hall, Adventure Cycling's tours director. "For 2013, we've expanded our inn-to-inn and van-supported trips, and we're offering more trips in the eastern U.S. than ever before. We've also expanded our off-road tour offerings to meet demand." Sign-ups for 2013 tours are already running at twice the rate of 2012, and a number of early season tours have sold out.

This spring, the organization plans to launch a new website and online store, which will be followed by the unveiling of a newly redesigned *Adventure Cyclist* magazine.

"If we can even come close to matching our 2012 results in the coming year, we will be thrilled," said Jim Sayer. "We are just grateful to be part of the fast-growing active travel and bike-touring markets — and part of the movement to create a more bike-friendly world."

Learn more about Adventure Cycling Association at www.adventurecycling.org.

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Adventure Cycling Association inspires and empowers people to travel by bicycle. As the premier bicycle-travel organization in North America with more than 45,000 members, Adventure Cycling produces cycling routes and maps, organizes more than 70 tours annually, and publishes the best bicycle-travel information anywhere, including Adventure Cyclist magazine. With 41,420 meticulously mapped miles in the Adventure Cycling Route Network, Adventure Cycling gives cyclists the tools and confidence to create their own bike-travel adventures. Contact the office at (800) 755-BIKE (2453), info@adventurecycling.org, or visit www.adventurecycling.org.