



# BIKE TRAVEL BOOM

## States and businesses catch on

→ LAST DECEMBER, Adventure Cycling issued a news release, “9 New Indicators that Bicycle Travel and Tourism are Booming.” The release included research and anecdotes from around the world: Bike tourism has a 57 billion dollar impact in Europe annually; more states (such as Michigan and Arizona) have launched economic impact studies; and more states than ever (41) are planning and implementing U.S. Bicycle Routes.” Government agencies are also more engaged (and thanks to the many members who sent suggestions about how we might collaborate with the National Park Service under our new agreement — many excellent ideas!).

The Canadians have been more active than ever planning new routes (some of which will connect with U.S. Bicycle Routes) and promoting bike tourism. I was very impressed when I keynoted a conference in Toronto last January, regarding the expansion of the Great Waterfront Trail from the entire north shore of Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. I’ll be in Québec this fall to help chart the next phase in that province’s world-class bike-travel offerings, especially the growth of La Route Verte from 4,000 to more than 5,000 kilometers of enjoyable bike routes.

But what has really caught my attention is how businesses of all kinds are being drawn to bike travel. Earlier this summer, numerous bicycle-industry executives told me that bike touring is one of the hot “new” areas for growth. We’re also witnessing it in the travel industry, where active travel is one of the fastest-growing segments. At Adventure Cycling, we’re experiencing this interest in the upsurge of companies and nonprofits that want to partner with us to promote their wares and events.

Why should this matter to you? In



*Jim at the Michigan Bike Summit. He'll be at bike and tourism summits in Georgia, North Carolina, and Quebec this fall.*

my view, there are three reasons. First, let’s be honest, it’s nice to be popular. Second, we’ll likely see an even greater wave of useful gear for all kinds of touring. But third and more important, we can leverage this popularity to reach new audiences and create better bike-travel facilities. In other words, we can make a good thing better, like in our work to halt or repair lousy rumble strips, make Amtrak more bike-travel friendly, or co-host a national symposium this fall to help college students catch the bike-touring bug.

What do you think of the bike-travel boom? How do you think we should take advantage? Do you see any downsides? Here at headquarters, we think about this stuff all the time, but so do many of our members, so please share your insights with us. A boom like this only happens once in a while — and we need your help to make the most of it.

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### MISSION

Adventure Cycling Association inspires and empowers people to travel by bicycle.

### AREAS OF FOCUS

• Provide the premier tools and inspiration for people to travel by bicycle. • Expand and integrate bike travel networks for North America. • Create the best possible conditions for bicycle travel.

### HOW TO REACH US

To join, change your address, or ask questions about membership, visit us online at [www.adventurecycling.org](http://www.adventurecycling.org) or call (800) 755-2453 or (406) 721-1776.

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