



Adventure Cycling Association

2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

Built on 50 Years. Riding Toward 50 More.



Photos by Giselle Hicks (left) and Janice Weldon (above)

A LETTER FROM OUR INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Fellow Adventurer,

2025 was not the year any of us expected. The road ahead felt uncertain. Along the way we hit some bumps, and the fabric of this community was put to the test. Yet all of us, staff and supporters alike, did what cyclists do: we kept moving forward.

I'm proud to report that we ended the year on much better footing than we originally budgeted for. What turned that around was disciplined management of our resources, a staff that gave more than was asked of them, and you, our incredible community who generously stepped up to face the challenge alongside us. That support came in the form of membership dues, generous donations, enthusiastic participation, and candid feedback that challenged us to become a better version of ourselves. The result matters not just as a number but as a foundation, one we're building on as we enter our next 50 years.

2025 was a year of real momentum. We ran guided tours with 500+ participants who carried ACA's spirit out into the world. Our team launched two week-long routes and completed development of the Golden Gravel Trail, ACA's longest gravel epic to date, releasing all three free to the community as an expression of our gratitude. We recommitted to advocacy and partnerships that amplify the collective voice of cyclists nationwide in support of the safety issues that matter most.

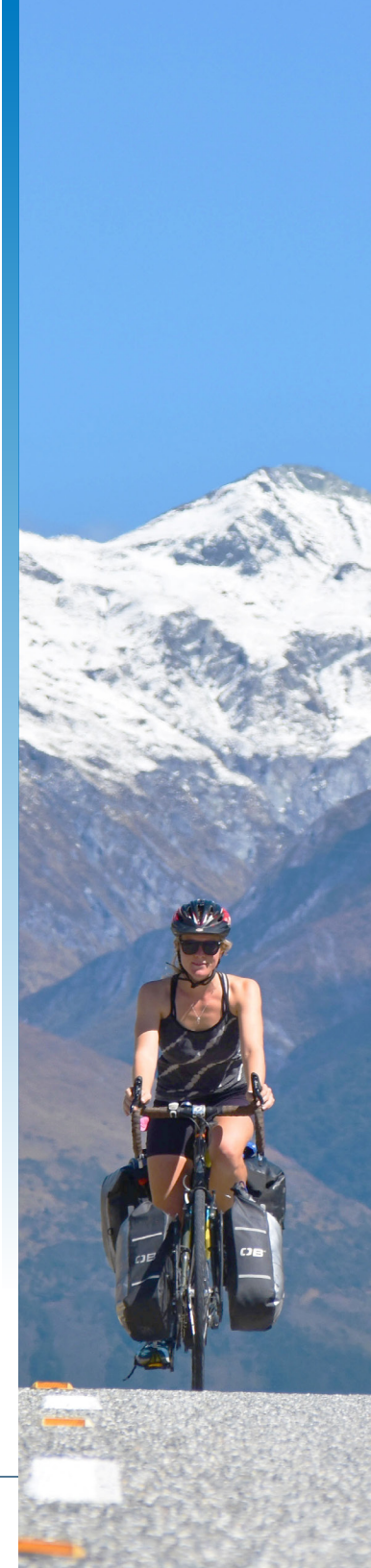
None of this happened by accident. It happened because of us: a staff that navigated transition with professionalism and heart, and you who showed up in every way that matters.

2026 is a milestone year. The road ahead is still a climb, but one that we feel much more equipped to tackle, thanks to the incredible support we are seeing in the form of donations on the heels of the building vote. Our will to see what's over the next hill is stronger than ever. The work we did in 2025 was the groundwork, and I believe ACA's best miles are still ahead.

Thank you for riding alongside us.



Max Caplanides
Interim Executive Director, Adventure Cycling Association



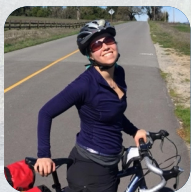
A LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear Community,

Over the past year, I've found myself continually reminded of why ACA matters. At the Jubilee in the Desert, I met Bikecentennial riders whose stories echoed the same highs, lows, and community I found on my own cross-country ride. I reconnected with an ACA member I first met on the road in 2012. And I recently helped an undergraduate student map out his own Southern Tier adventure connecting summer internships. Experiences like these, along with ACA's newest route, the Golden Gravel Trail, remind me that this organization continues to inspire connection, adventure, and possibility across generations.

As Adventure Cycling Association celebrates its 50th anniversary year, we do so at a pivotal moment of both reflection and transition. This moment invites deep questions about how ACA evolves while honoring its legacy.

2025 came on the heels of two years of deficit budgets. Between 2023 and throughout 2025, we implemented major changes to in order stabilize operations and finances, including multiple staff reductions, cutting operational and program costs, while increasing membership and tours prices to adjust to a rapidly changing economic environment. In 2025, staff and board invested extraordinary time in sustaining and improving our core programs — routes, guided tours, and advocacy — and in deepening our partner relationships.



Flavia Chen
2026 Adventure Cycling Association Board Chair

That work paid off. Through the continued support of our member community, ACA came out of 2025 budget positive. We launched new routes, renovated guided tours operations, partnered with four organizations on advocacy initiatives, and planned 50th Anniversary celebrations. Member support has shown that they're excited by this work.

Additionally, the proposed headquarters sale and subsequent member vote revealed how deeply people care about ACA and its future. It highlighted that ACA's long-term sustainability depends not only on finances, but on cultivating trust and engagement with the community that sustains us.

Reflecting on that, the Board has worked to broaden its capacity and recently onboarded four new board members. We also launched a working group focused on ACA's strategy and sustainability. Bringing together the expertise of board, staff, and members, our goal is to collaboratively articulate a clearer near term roadmap for ACA's future.

I am deeply grateful to Max Caplanides for stepping into the Interim Executive Director role, providing steady leadership in a time of transition, and to ACA's staff, volunteer board, members, donors, founders, and supporters whose commitment — even through difficult conversations — reflects a shared belief that ACA and the spirit of adventure still matter deeply.

Our Mission & Vision

We look upon our 50th Anniversary with excitement. We began as one cross-country route and a group of scrappy young cyclists who gathered others to ride across the U.S. during the 1976 Bicentennial. As momentum grew, our founders recognized the strength of this adventurous community and used that power and passion to build thousands of miles of routes, a robust guided tours program, advocacy for safer riding conditions nationwide, and an award-winning magazine full of inspiration and resources.

For 50 years, we've been opening the door to life-changing adventure for thousands of people. In 2026 and beyond, we plan to inspire and empower thousands more to ride through it.

OUR MISSION REMAINS STRONG

*To inspire, empower,
and connect people to
travel by bike.*



Impact Numbers

Routes

4,547 miles in 46 Short Routes

53,494 miles in the Adventure Cycling Route Network

24,144 miles of the U.S. Bicycle Route System

12,000 cyclists using our routes

MOST POPULAR ROUTES (IN ORDER)

Great Divide Mountain Bike Route | Pacific Coast Route

TransAmerica Bicycle Trail

Membership

18,152 Total Members

1,279 New Members

Guided Tours

500+ tour participants

49 Guided Tours

2 countries, **30** states, **1** Caribbean archipelago

Advocacy

810.7 USBRS miles added

2 new U.S. Bicycle Routes designated

24,144 USBRS miles nationwide

35 states + D.C. with USBRS routes

Stories of Impact

Routes

In 2025, Adventure Cycling expanded the reach and accessibility of bicycle travel through new route development, strengthened partnerships, and major investments in digital navigation. We launched two new free routes on Ride with GPS: the Vancouver Crossing Loop, our first route entirely within Canada, and the Klamath Mountains Loop, a rugged and scenic route through northern California and southern Oregon. At the same time, we prepared for the early 2026 launch of the Golden Gravel Trail, our most ambitious off-road route ever, spanning more than 3,800 miles across the American West.

Central to the Golden Gravel Trail's development was the work of four

route researchers who spent the summer of 2025 riding, documenting, and evaluating the route on the ground. Their fieldwork helped us refine navigation, identify services and challenges for riders, and ensure the route would meet Adventure Cycling's standards for safety, quality, and experience before launch.

2025 also marked a significant re-engagement with infrastructure partners nationwide, laying the groundwork for a broader strategy focused on route connectivity, federal partnerships, and long-term investment in bicycle travel infrastructure heading into 2026 and beyond.

"What excites me most about this new route is the incredible variety of campsites and swimming holes that riders will experience along the Oregon and Idaho sections, as well as the sweeping mountain views they'll have as they make their way across the route."

Jeremy Nolan

Golden Gravel Trail Route Researcher



Community & Guided Tours

Adventure Cycling's Community & Experiences programming brought more riders, more miles, and more meaning to bicycle travel across North America.

More than 500 riders hit the road with us on guided tours throughout the season, joining 49 tours that covered more than 300,000 cumulative miles across 30 states, two countries, and one Caribbean archipelago. We crossed the continent horizontally three times and vertically once, hopped ferries, pulled out passports, and shared laughter and tears through every twist that comes with truly living the word "adventure." The road has a way of reminding us why we do this work, and this year delivered that reminder in abundance.

Behind the scenes, we took a candid look at how our tour operations were running and what it would take to keep the program thriving long-term. That honest assessment led to a new operational partnership, helping us manage costs, navigate rising insurance rates, and ensure tour lodging and logistics receive the care and attention our riders deserve. The goal: a stronger, more sustainable guided tours program heading into 2026 and beyond.

Off the bike, we welcomed ambassadors Lael Wilcox, Ryan Van Duzer, and Sarah Swallow into the Adventure Cycling family, three riders whose passion for bicycle travel mirrors our own and whose reach helps us connect with new audiences across the country.

We also began digitizing 40 years of photographs from the National Bicycle Touring Portrait Collection, with 114 volunteers stepping up to help preserve the visual history of American bicycle travel. It's a reminder that community isn't just about where we're going, but honoring where we've been.



Photo by Lisa Festa

Advocacy

Adventure Cycling strengthened its role as a national voice for bike travel by bringing together what we know best: route expertise, rider experience, and trusted partnerships.

Through our stewardship of the U.S. Bicycle Route System, we worked with state departments of transportation, AASHTO, and local partners to improve and expand the nation's official bike travel network. Two new U.S. Bicycle Routes added 810.7 miles to the system this year, bringing the USBRS to 24,144 miles across 35 states and Washington, DC. Additional realignments and safety-driven updates across several states are a reminder that the USBRS is not static; it's a living system that requires ongoing coordination to remain current, connected, and useful for riders.

We deepened partnerships with organizations including the League of American Bicyclists, Outdoor Alliance, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, PeopleForBikes, IMBA, and the East Coast Greenway Alliance, adding a national bike travel perspective to shared efforts around public lands access, roadway safety, passenger rail, active transportation funding, and long-distance route connectivity.

Behind the scenes, we built the systems needed for a more responsive advocacy program. We outlined a clearer decision-making process to evaluate where Adventure Cycling's voice adds the most value, and a stronger public-facing Advocacy Hub to connect members to the policy and infrastructure issues shaping the future of bike travel.

Together, this work is helping make bike travel safer, more connected, and more recognized as an essential part of the transportation and outdoor recreation landscape.

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Rails to Trails has been grateful for Adventure Cycling's participation and increased engagement on advocating for federal funding for trails, walking and biking. Their participation in sign-on letters and other advocacy actions ensures that their robust national membership is aware of and helping to advocate for this important source of funding.

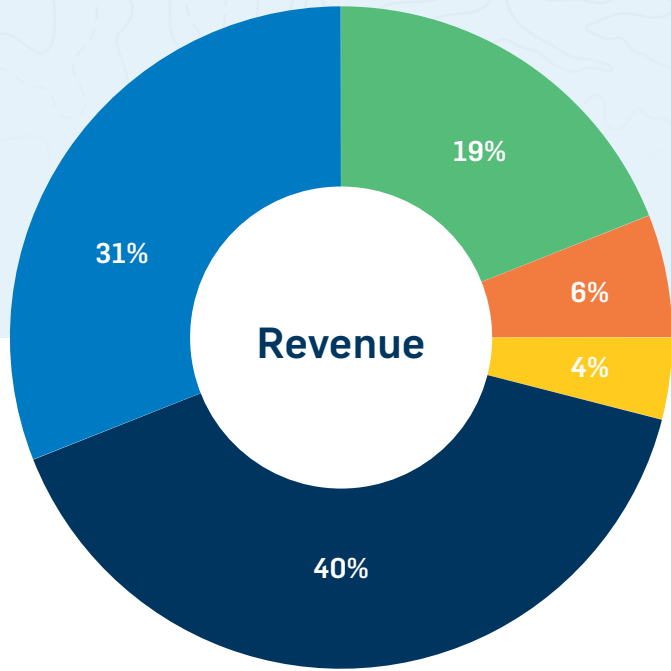
Elle Segal

Rails to Trails Conservancy



Photo by Kerry O'Connell

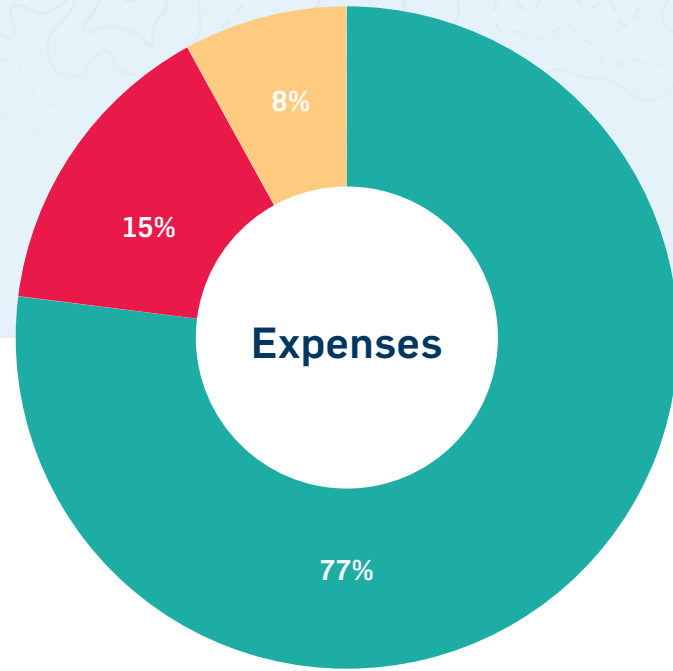
2025 Financials



- Tours
- Donations
- Membership
- Merchandise
- Other

TOTAL REVENUES

\$4,622,422



- Program
- Management
- Fundraising

TOTAL EXPENSES

\$4,405,581

It's All Thanks to You

Each supporter, each cyclist — whether member, donor, corporate sponsor, Legacy Society, board member, or staff — is crucial to achieving our mission of inspiring, empowering, and connecting people to bicycle travel. We are incredibly grateful to those who believed in the transformative power of bike travel and gave to Adventure Cycling.

2025 Corporate Sponsors

Platinum

- Follow My Challenge USA
- Ortlieb USA
- Selle Anatomica - Brooks England

Gold — \$5,000

- Otso Cycles
- Tout Terrain GmbH

Silver — \$2,500

- J&B Importers, Inc. "Sunlite"
- PNW Components
- Salsa Cycles

Bronze — \$1,000

- ExperiencePlus! Bicycle Tours
- Mr Biker Saigon
- Noble Invention Bike Touring
- Planet Bike
- Portland Design Works
- Staver Accident Injury Lawyers, P.C.
- The Bike Lawyer

Supporter — Under \$1,000

- Abrahamson & Uiterwyk
- Beck & Beck - Missouri Car Accident Lawyers
- Bedrock Sandals
- Chicago Bike Injury Lawyers

- Davis Law Group Car Accident and Personal Injury Lawyers
- Explore Ridgeland
- Filmed By Bike
- Florin Roebig "Bike Accident Attorney"
- Hensley Legal Group
- KaplunMarx Accident & Injury Lawyers
- Kisling, Nestico & Redick
- Live Love Ride - Portugal Bike Tours
- Rosenfeld Injury Lawyers LLC
- Schultz & Myers Personal Injury Lawyers
- Vietnam Bike Tours
- Visit Joplin
- Visit Mississippi
- Westfir Lodge & Mountain Market

2025 Legacy Society

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Denise & Jim Badgley | • Gail Hubbell | • Michael Seeber |
| • Andrew Broan | • Jackie Jones | • Steven Snyder |
| • Charles & Kim Brown | • Barry Kaiser | • Fran Stagg |
| • Kenneth Brown | • Micki Kemper | • Scott Thompson |
| • Richard Collins | • Steve & Lynn Kesling | • Mary Jane Watson |
| • Randy & Becky Cronk | • Russ & Julie Meyer | • Susan Wenberg |
| • Randy Ferguson | • Lynn Nebus | • Wally Werner |
| • Murray Fishel | • Charles Pace | • Jo Williams |
| • Steven Fox | • Michael Prest | • Fillmore & Sharon Wood |
| • Barbara Fulp | • Steven Richards | • Timothy Yoder |
| • William Garrett | • Frank Schipper | • Nick Zeller |
| • Jennifer Garst | • John Scibek | • Anonymous x 141 |

The names here represent individuals who have made arrangements to support Adventure Cycling with a planned gift from their estate.

Staff and Board Members

Staff

- Nicki Bailey
- David Barth
- Josh Bowden
- Maxton Caplanides
- Richard Darne
- Michelle Estrella
- Jake Flaherty
- Haydin Grotz
- Corbett Hall
- Nicholas Hunt
- Michael McCollough

- Geoff McMillion
- Jillian Millkey
- Jeffrey Mizell
- Jennifer O'Dell
- Kym Verhovshek
- Amy Wally
- Andy Williamson
- Ellie Zachary
- Jessica Zephyrs

Board Members

- Ricky Albores
- Joyce Casey
- Flavia Chen
- Scott Edwards
- Daniel Kanter
- Noel Kegel
- Elizabeth Kiker
- John McDermott
- Maria Elena Price
- Audrey Snyder Welsh
- Lael Wilcox

The names listed here represent both current and former staff and board members who contributed to our successes during FY25 (January 1, 2025 – Dec. 31, 2025).

Looking at 2026 Priorities

Deepening Member Connection

2026 brings a sharper focus on delivering what members value most. *Adventure Cyclist* Magazine doubles down on its roots with a renewed emphasis on North American-based, achievable trip stories. Programming and resources stay laser-focused on the pillars members point to most: new routes, meaningful advocacy, and an exceptional guided tours lineup. Membership itself becomes a richer proposition with Campfire Chats, a renewed Companions Wanted program, increased gear and bike deals, more giveaways, and more opportunities for members to share their own stories. Fifty years in, Adventure Cycling's relationship with its members remains the organization's most vital asset.

Investing in Infrastructure and Accessibility

Behind the scenes, 2026 is a year of meaningful investment in the systems that will serve Adventure Cycling's mission for decades to come. A redesigned routes experience on the website makes it easier than ever for cyclists to discover, learn about, and plan rides on Adventure Cycling routes, USBRS routes, and Short Routes, putting the full depth of the network within reach of riders at every level. A major digitization initiative is also underway to preserve and publicly share Adventure Cycling's 40-year archive of cyclist portraits and stories. More than 5,000 photographs in the National Bicycle Touring Portrait Collection document the human history of bicycle travel in America. These investments ensure that Adventure Cycling's legacy is not only celebrated in 2026 but accessible to future generations of riders.

Celebrating 50 Years of Bicycle Adventure

2026 is the year Adventure Cycling has been building toward: the organization's 50th Anniversary, marking half a century since the legendary 1976 Bicentennial ride that sparked a movement. This milestone will be woven throughout everything we do in 2026, from member programming to route launches to group rides that honor our history while looking boldly forward. The anniversary is both a celebration of the past and a rallying point for the next generation of bicycle travelers.

Launching New Routes for Every Rider

The centerpiece of Adventure Cycling's 50th Anniversary year is the public debut of the Golden Gravel Trail, a 3,804-mile gravel route stretching across the American West and the longest addition to the network since the Northern Tier in 1984. Purpose-built for the gravel cycling movement, it's poised to rival the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route as a bucket-list expedition. Later in 2026, a second new route will offer a counterpoint: less rugged and demanding, but no less scenic, opening up more routes to a broader range of riders. Together, the two launches are a fitting statement about what the next 50 years can look like.



Investing in Future Adventures

As we celebrate five decades of transformative impact, we invite you to help us build an even stronger foundation. By becoming a monthly donor, you join a dedicated community of supporters who provide the steady, reliable funding that allows us to plan, respond quickly to emerging needs, and maximize every dollar's impact. Your recurring gift — whether \$25, \$50, or any amount that feels right for you — creates a dependable stream of support that amplifies your generosity throughout the year while making budgeting easier for you. This milestone anniversary marks not just where we've been, but where your sustained partnership can take us next.

BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR TODAY: [HTTPS://SUPPORT.ADVENTURECYCLING.ORG/MONTHLY](https://support.adventurecycling.org/monthly)



Adventure Cycling Association

Adventure Cycling is a nonprofit organization that helps people travel by bike — for an overnight, a week, a month, or a year — by giving them the skills, knowledge, and confidence for a lifetime of adventure. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and connect people to travel by bike.

150 EAST PINE STREET, MISSOULA, MT 59802 | 800.755.2453 | [WWW.ADVENTURECYCLING.ORG](http://www.adventurecycling.org)