July - Sept 2017

North Country Cycling Guide

For many years the Laurentian Chapter has featured cycling trips as part of its outings program. About five years ago the thought occurred to Tom Ortmeyer, one of our leaders, that it would be a good idea to document the routes and that it might potentially form the nucleus of a cycling guidebook. Tom shared the idea with John Barron, another leader, and the concept of a cycling guide to the North Country was born. Now, after about five years of development it has come to fruition in the form of an electronic publication, *Cycling Routes of the St. Lawrence River Valley and Northern Adirondacks*, released by ADK Publications in May and now available for purchase.

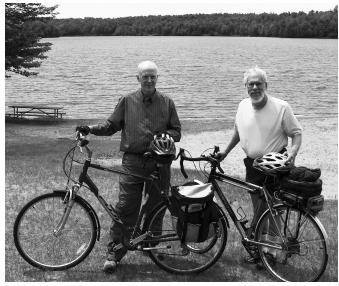
We (Tom and John) began by reading cycling guidebooks to other regions, to serve as models of what information to include. Detailed route information was clearly needed, along with maps. Descriptions of features that made the routes appealing was important. So were photographs, featuring cycling, scenery, culture, and sometimes other outdoor activities. As it was hoped that the guide would attract cyclists from other places, it was also important to include lodging, restaurants, and information of a tourist nature.

When we started we already had quite a number of routes we knew well. Using the details from those routes we developed formats and layouts. As we continued to enter trips, we found five areas emerging that could serve as chapter titles: the Northern Foothills of the High Peaks; the Northwestern Adirondacks; Massena/Cornwall area; Potsdam/Canton area; and the Thousand Islands.

In some places we had enough routes to cover the area well. Where we were short of material, we often planned and scheduled new chapter trips and collected information during our outing. The routes vary in length and difficulty. About a quarter of them are in Canada. Water seems to be a unifying scenic theme: rivers and streams, lakes ranging from small ponds to Lake Ontario, and even man-made canals.

The ADK Publications Committee warmed to the idea of being our publisher. ADK professional editors and various reviewers improved the guide very much. One of their requests was for GPS waypoint data to be included; we were able to obtain and verify the coordinates using Google Maps. It was decided to publish electronically only - a first for ADK Publications. This leads to very low costs and makes specialized, low-volume publications economically feasible. Everyone was pleased with the final outcome, and the ADK hopes it will serve as a prototype for more activity guidebooks at the chapter level.

Cycling Routes of the St. Lawrence River Valley and Northern Adirondacks comprises twenty-seven ride descriptions in six chapters. It is available online in ePub and Mobi file formats for computer, tablet, and smartphone compatibility at www.adk.org/product-category/digital-books/ for \$4.95. The book has a facebook group at https://www.facebook.com/groups/501999636619781/. We encourage you to become a friend of the book and post your bicycling adventures there.



Tom Ortmeyer and John Barron. Photo by Jeanna Matthews

Chair Tom Wheeler

Individual members of the chapter can often play an important role in shaping the future of the wild lands in our area by participating in the Unit Management Plan process. For those unfamiliar with this process, here is a brief rundown. State lands in both the Adirondack Park are divided into various management units. Examples you may be familiar with are the High Peaks Wilderness, Debar Wild Forest, or the Saint Regis Canoe Area. In St. Lawrence County the DEC has been actively developing Unit Management plans for the myriad of State Forest Lands outside of the Adirondack Park. They have done this by placing state forests into three groupings based upon their location and geography. The St. Lawrence Flatlands unit, which includes forests in the northern part of our county, has a UMP which was completed in 2015. The St. Lawrence Foothills Unit had a draft plan submitted for public comment in 2015, and is not yet finalized. The St. Lawrence Rock Ridge unit is apparently still in the drafting stage. This latter unit includes state forests in the western part of our county and Jefferson County.

When a draft unit management plan is completed, the DEC holds a series of public meetings explaining the plan and begins a period where public comment is accepted. This is an important time for you as citizens and ADK members to participate by attending the public meetings and by submitting thoughtful written comments. The DEC has just released the draft unit management plan for the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest. This is an area where many of us hike and canoe. The Saranac Lake Wild Forest covers extensive state lands from just east of Tupper Lake to a bit east of Lake Placid. Much of it is on the northern fringe of the High Peaks Wilderness. Included within its boundaries are many lakes, and it surrounds the well known Rollins Pond and Fish Creek campgrounds. Scarface

mountain is within the unit. Extensive new opportunities for mountain biking are included as well as some miles of new hiking trails. The public meetings will take place on July 12th and 13th in Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake and the deadline for public input is August 11th. (The DEC website has substantial detail at http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/22593.html)

The process after public input is for the DEC to prepare a final plan and (in the Adirondack Park) submit it to the APA and the governor for approval. The Boreas Ponds and McIntyre tracts are presently in this final stage.

Being a member of ADK can be more than simply being a recreationist. By participating as an informed advocate in processes such as this, you can help shape the future of recreation and conservation in our area.



Titusville Mtn. Paula Skiff; John Barron (TL); John Omohundro; Michael Minthorn; Toni Towle; Susan Omohundro. Not pictured Gina Hazen and Rob and Liz Haney. Photo John Omohundro.

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Conservation David Katz

Anne and I recently enjoyed a week exploring the foot trails of Ontario's Bruce Peninsula, the piece of land that separates Lake Huron from Georgian Bay. Like northern New York, the Bruce is a mixture of active farms, brushy abandoned fields, and dense woodland. The two areas share much of the same flora and fauna, although sandhill cranes forage in the farm fields instead of the deer we would see at home, and we saw a Massasauga Rattlesnake after it rattled at us, warning us to wait while it left the trail. And the orchids, which are in full bloom in June, and other wildflowers are not to be missed.

Much as ADK works to create and maintain trails in our area, the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) manages both the 550-mile Bruce Trail and its 250 miles of side trails between Niagara Falls and Tobermory at the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. On one of our walks, we ran into the BTC's Land Stewardship Coordinator and chatted about the similarities and differences between their challenges and ours.

Some Bruce Trail sections are on protected provincial, federal, First Nations land, or land owned by the BTC. However, much of the trail passes through private land owned by various individuals and corporations, and inevitably some of the parcels change hands occasionally, requiring new negotiations with the new owner. And

Appointed Positions

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Merchandising: open

Social Media Coordinator Marianne Hebert 315-265-0756 hebertm@potsdam.edu compared to the strict controls imposed by the Adirondack Park Agency, private conservation and land use on the Peninsula are relatively lightly regulated. Also, Ontario conservation easement law is not as well developed as New York's. So while we deal largely with New York State and a few large landowners such as Brookfield Power, the BTC must work with many partners with varying interests. And while the BTC's legal and regulatory environment sometimes affords them greater flexibility, it also provides less guidance in planning and less certainty about future developments.

For more information about the Bruce Trail and the Bruce Trail Conservancy, visit www.brucetrail.org.



Dean Road hike: Rita Lewis, David Katz, John Barron, Marcia Cox, Marianne Hebert, Monica and Fred McLaughlin. Photo by Tom Ortmeyer (TL). Participant not shown: Anne Csete.



Marianne Hebert

Sat, Jul 1: Robert Moses State Park, Massena Bike and Hike. We will explore the park on our bicycles and a quick pass on foot for the Nature Center trails and new just opened Nature Center building. We will try to see a ship going through Eisenhower Lock and the Hawkins Point Visitor Center. I estimate we will bike ~10 miles around the park and walk 1-2 miles on the Nature Center trails. Relatively flat easy terrain. If there is interest, we could consider going to the beach afterwards and there are fireworks in Massena at the mall that evening. Family friendly event. Contact Jeanna Matthews, jeanna.matthews@gmail.com.

Sun, Jul 2: Oak Rim Trail at Barnes Corners. (A joint outing with the Black River Chapter) This trail runs along the edge of Inman Gulf, with spectacular views and waterfalls. It is 1.9 miles in one direction. We can return the same way or make a loop with Williams Road. Our group will meet at the Ski Trails Parking Lot on route 177. We will determine the time based on the weather and convenience for the participants. Level 2. Contact Marie Steinbeck (text) 315-558-8568, email mjstbeck@aol.com or Marianne Hebert 315-265-0756, hebertm@potsdam.edu

Sat, Jul 8: Bicycle the Madrid-Waddington loop. This is a 25-mile scenic road loop going down to the St. Lawrence through Chipman Corners, stops at several parks on the river, and then back to Madrid along the Grasse. Largely flat. Moderate. Contact Tom Ortmeyer 315-244-3707, tortmeye@gmail.com.

Sat, Jul 22: Paddling in Kingston, Ontario. Highlights include the city's Lake Ontario waterfront and harbour, Old Fort Henry, Royal Military College, the Cataraqui River, and the start of the Rideau Canal. Kayak or canoe rentals available. Optional supper at the Kingston Brew Pub afterward. Moderate, and within a small area. Contact John Barron (613) 828-2296, johnbarron@sympatico.ca or Toni Towle at blackrapids@gmail.com.

Sun, Jul 23: Hike Azure Mountain and Fire Tower History lecture. Bring the kids for this classic chapter outing. Azure Mt. is a "Firetower Challenge" and a "Kids on the Trail Challenge" destination. 2.2 miles RT, elevation gain 944 ft. Level 2/3. Afterword, we will head over to Paul Smiths VIC for a lecture by author Marty Podskoch on the history of the Adirondack Fire Towers, and optional visit of the Butterfly House. Contact Marianne Hebert 315-265-0756, hebertm@potsdam.edu

Foot travel		
Difficulty Level	Feet of ascent	miles
5. Very strenuous	over 1500	10+
4. Strenuous	1000-1500	8-10
Moderate	500-1000	5-8
2. Fairly easy	to 499	3-5
1. Easy	level mostly	1-3

Cycling

Leaders should specify mileage, elevation, and surface.

Check for additions, deletions and changes on our chapter website, www.adklaurentian.org

Please contact the leaders at least a day before the trip. Car pooling makes sense, as does sharing the cost of gas.

Sat, Aug 13: Mountain Bike to Burntbridge Pond. This is a 13.5 mile round trip ride on trails in the Cranberry Lake Wild Forest. Largely flat. Highlights include a scenic view of Cranberry Lake of Brandy Brook Flow and wetlands along the trail, as well as a lunch stop at Burntbridge Pond. Moderate. Contact Tom Ortmeyer, 315-244-3707, tortmeye@gmail.com.

Sun, Aug 20: Canoe down the Grass River. We will rendezvous at the Lampson Falls parking area, then carpool up to the put-in and parking area about 3 miles upstream. It is a nice quiet paddle, very little current, with a stop above the Falls and a chance to stretch our legs before paddling back to the cars. About 5 miles round-trip. Contact Duncan Cutter at 315-328-4675, cut57@twcny.rr.com

Sat, Sep 9: Landon Bay Centre. This area near Gananoque, Ontario is part of the Frontenac Arch Biosphere, a protected area of special ecology on the link between the Canadian Shield and the Adirondacks. Rugged trails and a high lookout over the Thousand Islands. Pace slow to moderate. 5 miles RT, Level 3. Possible swimming. Optional supper at the Stonewater Brew Pub. Contact John Barron at (613) 828-2296, johnbarron@sympatico.ca or Toni Towle at blackrapids@gmail.com.

Sat, Sep 16: Ancient Pines and Jackrabbit walk. We'll start in the settlement of Gabriels and walk to a grove of majestic old pines, about 1.5 miles RT, partly a bushwhack. Each old tree has dogtags and its history is recorded in a database by devoted volunteers and forestry students. Next, we'll post a car at the VIC and walk the Jackrabbit Trail from Gabriels to the VIC. Rolling terrain amidst big evergreens, about 2.75 miles one-way. Perhaps in a shoreline lean-to we'll eat a trail lunch. Level 2. Joint trip for Laurentian and North Woods chapter members only. Contact John or Susan Omohundro 315-244-9131.

Sun, Sep 17: Chapter Barbeque/Potluck. 1:00-5:00pm at the home of Blair and Margaret Madore. Burgers and

drinks will be provided - participants are asked to bring salad, side dish or dessert. Families are especially encouraged to come see our kid's fort, feed our bunnies, and play garden games. Members only. Contact Blair Madore 315-261-0751, madorebf@potsdam.edu.

Sun, Sep 24: Baxter Mountain. Hiking with kids. This is a short and mostly gentle hike to a good picnic spot with views of Keene Valley, the Great Range, and Mt. Marcy. Round-trip 2.2 miles, elevation change 770 ft. Level 3. Contact Maria Fernandez de de Alaiza marfagm@yahoo.com, 786-291-3473 or Marianne Hebert 315-265-0756, hebertm@ potsdam.edu

Sun, Oct 1: Owl's Head of Long Lake. This is a fire tower peak, with views accordingly. Pace slow to moderate. 6.5 miles RT, 1200 feet of gain. Level 3 plus. Optional supper at the Adirondack Hotel dining room. Contact John Barron, (613) 828-2296, johnbarron@sympatico.ca by Friday September 29.



The Gulf Unique Area. Photo by John Bsrron



The Gulf - at the Canadian border. Linda Kenny; Marianne Hebert; Sally Vrooman; Niall Barron; Jeanna Matthews; Annegret Staiger; Marcia Cox. Photo: TL John Barron

Director

Tom Ortmeyer

On April 24, the New York State Assembly passed bill A6279, which has been called an environmental bill of rights for New York. The wording of this bill

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY proposing an amendment to article 1 of the constitution, in relation to the right to clean air and water and a healthful environment

Section 1. Resolved (if the Senate concur), That article 1 of the constitution be amended by adding a new section 19 to read as follows:

S 19. ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS. EACH PERSON SHALL HAVE A RIGHT TO CLEAN AIR AND WATER, AND A HEALTHFUL ENVIRON-MENT.

S 2. Resolved (if the Senate concur), That the foregoing amendment be referred to the first regular legislative session convening after the next succeeding general election of members of the assembly, and, in conformity with section 1 of article 19 of the constitution, be published for 3 months previous to the time of such election.

The corresponding Senate bill is S5287, and this bill lies in committee at the current time.

The intention that each person in New York has a fundamental right to clean air and water and a healthful environment seems clear and not at all controversial. The question then becomes, is there a need to ensure this right in the New York Constitution? A quick review of this issue shows that, worldwide, at least 92 countries have similar language in their constitutions, where the United States does not. Adding such an amendment to the US Constitution is considered an involved process and considered by some difficult to be successful at this time. There is, however, active interest in adding environmental bills of rights to state constitutions. Currently, 6 states recognize this right in various forms in their constitutions. The first of these was Illinois in 1970, followed by Pennsylvania, Montana, Massachusetts, and Hawaii in the 1970's and then Rhode Island in 1987. The beginning of the modern environmental movement in the late 1960's clearly led to these amendments.

Pending the senate action, registered voters in New

Continued on page 7



April to June 2017

Sat. Mar. 18: Southville State Forest . We had a perfect blue sky day. The snow was deep enough for snow shoes, and temperatures were warm enough for a comfortable trek through the woods. We had to break trail for most of the hike, but the silence and the wilderness were worth. It was a lovely trek along the West Branch of the St. Regis River. Participants: Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, Marsh Cox, Tom Ortmeyer, Jeanna Matthews, Annegret Staiger, Marianne Hebert (TL).

Sat. Mar. 25: Snowshoe at the Indian Creek
Nature Center. Trails were snow covered as a group of eight
people hiked the Lowland trail loop and the first third of the
Upland Trail. Highlights included sightings from the John
Green leanto of three swans flying low over the frozen Middle
Lake and a distant bald eagle. Also, John Montan provided
a fascinating history of the wildlife refuge. All enjoyed
exploring the trails and its varied habitats. Participants: Trip
Leader Tom Wheeler, Eileen Wheeler, Jon Montan, Marianne
Hebert, Annegret Staiger, Wendy Cox, Fred McLaughlin, and
Monica McLaughlin

Sun. Apr 2: Road walk on the Dean Road. We somehow picked the one beautiful early spring day hidden among a string of rainy ones, and we thoroughly enjoyed the walk. Road conditions were good: no ice, snow or mud. We walked from the kiosk/parking area at the first crossing of the Middle Branch of the Grasse River, broke away from the river for a short stretch, and then back along it for the rest of the hike to our destination, a bridge over the river 3 miles upstream. As we neared the bridge, those in front veered off into the snow - as we reached them, we found them overlooking a very nice waterfall in full spring glory previously unknown (at least to us). After enjoying it, we continued to the bridge and again enjoyed the river views. Our trip back down to the kiosk was equally enjoyable. Participants: Rita Lewis, David Katz, John Barron, Marcia Cox, Marianne Hebert, Fred & Monica McLaughlin, TL Tom Ortmeyer

Sun. Apr 10: Annual Spring Waterfall Walk on Tooley Pond Road. This was the first really glorious day of spring with highs above 60F. Thus, a large group of people assembled at the head of the Tooley Pond Road, anxious to see the South Branch of the Grasse River in full spring flood. This was the first official "dog" outing for the Chapter, and we had 5 well behaved canines participating. There were 27 humans, with ages from approximately 8 to 80. So many of us in fact, that we split into two groups to lessen the impact on the trails. John Barron and Marianne Hebert led one group to Basford Falls, Sinclair Falls, Twin Falls and Rainbow Falls. Blair Madore led another group in the reverse order. Each of the falls delighted us with its own style of wonder. Basford presented us with

Compiled by Marianne Hebert

a classic Adirondack setting of old growth pine and granite bedrock with water surging past. Sinclair is a high-volume wonder of water that rushes right at you before negotiating a near 180 degree turn. Rainbow Falls is a display of might and thunder as foaming white water drops over 35 feet and tumbles down the long narrow gorge. Amidst this beauty, we shared companionship and joy in the emerging spring before going on our own merry ways. Trip Leaders: Blair Madore, John Barron, and Marianne Hebert. Participants: Jeff and Cheryl Miller; Jane Subramanian; Ned Potts; Janet Green; David Katz; Valerie, Brett and Alyssa Summer; Audrey Hammond; Connie Jones; Debra and Mike White; Margaret Mauch; Jennifer Ward; Jeff and Abbey Hosken; Bob Platte; Janet McFarland, Linda Kenny, Marsha Arnold, Jean Giblin, Fred McLaughlin, Monica McLaughlin, Marcia Cox, and Bob Platte.

Sat. Apr. 22: Hike the Pinnacle on Earth Day - Leaders: Susan and John Omohundro. It was "March for Science" day, too, so there was much to commemorate on the rocky summit as we looked out into the mist where the St. Regis River should be. It drizzled most of the time, but no one paid it any heed. For our ceremony, we spoke of the art of place, read poetry (some of it original and created for the occasion), passed around cartoons, and examined photos of Patagonian glaciers. While we lunched, a sharp-shinned hawk cruised us, a raven squawked, and three turkey vultures circled, assessing their chances. The trail was just beginning to show some yellow violets and trout lilies, but it featured blowdown. We collected several bags of trash along the trail as we returned.

Sat. Apr. 29: Annual Everton Falls Clean-Up. Considerable blowdown across the hardwood trail kept the five of us busy with chainsaw, loppers, and pruning shears. Just a minimum of pickup along the road, with the treasure of the year being a dumped console-sized dehumidifier. We enjoyed lunch on the ledges beside the falls, sunshine, and only a half-hearted assault of black flies. To our surprise, the canoe carry on the far side of the river above the falls needed only minimal brushing out. It was a fine day to be in the woods with friends. Duncan Cutter TL, Robin Woodin, Rod Woodin, Bill Thomas, Todd Dunham, TNC rep.

Sat. May 6: The Gulf Unique Area. The weather fore-casters were right: despite torrential rain along the nearby St. Lawrence, we had generally sunny, mild conditions with only a brief shower. Highlights included The Gulf itself, a chasm rimmed by tall cliffs and containing a deep lake; a spectacular waterfall now at its springtime best; and the Canadian border and its marker monuments. The marked DEC trail was easy to follow on the way out. On the return, we attempted a short cut on old jeep roads, which led to a mile or so of extra hiking distance and an extra hour of time. An adventure. Participants: Linda Kenny, Marianne Hebert, Sally Vrooman, Niall Barron, Jeanna Matthews, Annegret Staiger, Marcia Cox, TL John Barron.

Sat. May 13: Bear Mountain Wildflower Hike Cancelled due to weather.

Sat. May 27: Titusville Mountain. The hike began with a half mile of gently climbing bush road with good views ahead of the cliffs that were our destination. Then came a very steep 600 foot climb on good trail to a ledge with good but limited views. We continued without trail, using map and compass to bushwhack through a small canyon, up to the viewless summit of Titusville, and then south to a clifftop ledge with an expansive view encompassing Lyon Mountain to the north, Whiteface to the east, and Debar to the south, along with many others. Participants: Paula Skiff, TL John Barron, John Omohundro, Michael Minthorn, Toni Towle, Susan Omohundro, Gina Hazen and Rob and Liz Haney.

Sat. Jun 10: Dog and Family Hike at Wellesley Island State Park. We had a perfect sunny day with mild temperatures. The trails at Wellesley continue to delight. We encountered a faun, a deer and several ospreys and enjoyed a lovely lunch at the head of the "Narrows". We were very excited to meet up with an indifferent porcupine who slowly ambled up a nearby tree. A brief visit to the butterfly house ended the day. Participants: Marianne Hebert (TL), Michael Minthorn (TL), Evelyn Minthorn, John Barron, Jarrian Jefferson and one canine Roxanne.

Marie Fernandez de Alaiza Completes the 46

At the Spring meeting of the Adirondack 46ers, chapter treasurer Marie Fernandez de Alaiza received official recognition for completing the 46 High Peaks. Marie credits her hiking companions and role models, shown celebrating with her on her final summit, Whiteface, on September 25, 2016. Without their mentorship she doubts she could have reached this goal. L-R: Marianne Hebert, Stephen Barlow, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, Brenda Bennett, Brian Baston. Congratulations to Marie, #9865!



Marie completing the 46 - Marianne Hebert, Stephen Barlow, Marie Fernandez de Alaiza, Brenda Bennett, Brian Baston.

York may be asked to vote on this constitutional amendment in an upcoming election. I suspect that the question this may raise for many of us will be "is there any downside to doing this?" Frankly, I believe it may be hard to find a downside to having this protection in our constitution. Some fear that this amendment could lead to an increase in the filing of frivolous law suits, but I could find little evidence that this has been an issue in states or nations that have this constitutional protection. Another concern is that the "squeaky wheel" syndrome could divert precious environmental remediation resources to projects that may have a lower social benefit but higher public recognition. Again, I could not find evidence that this has been an issue elsewhere.

Currently, we look primarily to the federal Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that we have steady progress in improving our environmental status in the US. New York is directly involved in implementing EPA standards, and in some cases, New York has standards that exceed EPA requirements. Still, environmental improvement is an ongoing process that clearly has the goal of meeting the intent of this proposed constitutional amendment. We have made significant progress toward achieving this goal in recent past decades, but we are not done yet—and we can expect that this process will continue for decades more, regardless of the outcome of this proposed constitutional amendment. We should all look forward to an interesting discussion on this amendment should the Senate pass bill S5287.

Membership

Randy Saumier

New Members - Welcome.

- John Bullard, Potsdam, NY
- Marcia Cox, Colton, NY
- Cindy and Jim Hart, Ogdensburg, NY
- Annegret Staiger, Potsdam, NY
- Thomas Holden, Colton, NY
- Jeffery and Abbey Hoskins, Potsdam, NY
- Monique Tirion and Daniel Benavraham, Potsdam, NY
- Mike Valentine, Mason, OH



The Newsletter of the Laurentian Chapter of Adirondack Mountain Club 7 Barclay St. Potsdam, NY 13676 STANDARD NONPROFIT U.S. POSTAGE PAID CANTON, NY PERMIT NO. 14

Just Connect

VISIT the chapter website, ably maintained by David Katz, for color photos, trail maps, updated officer reports, and outings:

www.adklaurentian.org

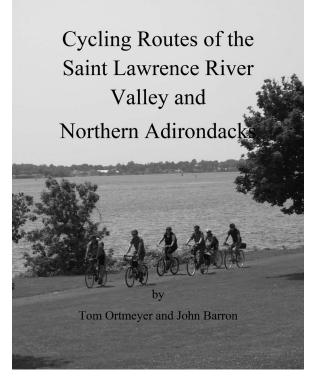
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Request to rmooers@twcny.rr.com



Cover photo of the new cycling guide.