



Green Bike Tour 2006





The Green Bike Tour

Sponsors

The Green Bike Tour 2006 was sponsored by The Iowa Policy Project, the University of Iowa's Environmental Health Sciences Research Center, Fresh Energy, The League of Rural Voters, Clean Up the River Environment, The Fred & Charlotte Hubbell Foundation, and Kelly Webworks.

On the web

Information about the Green Bike Tour is at <http://www.greenbike.org>.

For a day-by-day look at the 2006 tour, see the riders' blog, with primary author David Osterberg, at <http://greenbiketour.blogspot.com/>.

More information

Contact the Iowa Policy Project, by phone at (319) 338-0773, or by email at ipp@lcom.net. The Iowa Policy Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and policy analysis organization based in Mount Vernon, Iowa, with its primary office at 120 N. Dubuque St. #208, Iowa City, IA 52245.

Green Bike Tour 2006

When we ride, people talk ...



... and policy makers pay attention

By David Osterberg

Executive Director, The Iowa Policy Project

Eight days of hopping on and off bicycles in a tour of renewable energy facilities is more than our idea of a good time. It's how we can showcase the use of wind power and ethanol in five Midwestern states and the

possibilities for clean, sustainable and secure energy in our country.

The 2006 Green Bike Tour was our fifth such effort to direct attention to renewable energy technology already operating and producing power in various locations. Besides an ambitious venture to Europe in 2002, we have conducted two Iowa tours and two larger tours in the Midwest.

Teaming with renewable energy and sustainable environment advocates in five states, we organized rides that combined the interests and expertise of local businesses, farmers, elected officials, energy producers, and others to help the public better understand not only the cutting-edge technology at work, but also the public policy issues involved.

If there is anything we hope Iowans and Midwesterners will better understand, it's that renewable energy puts dollars into local economies,



Minnesota State Rep. Aaron Peterson (above center), and Iowa House Majority Leader Chuck Gipp (at right) joined Green Bikers during the 2006 tour.



David Osterberg, a former Iowa state legislator and co-founder of the Iowa Policy Project, has organized each Green Bike Tour.

The Route

Green Bike Tour 2006

Thursday, Sept 21: Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Decorah, Iowa

Friday, Sept. 22: La Crosse, Wis., and Austin, Minn.

Saturday, Sept. 23: Mankato and St. Peter, Minn.

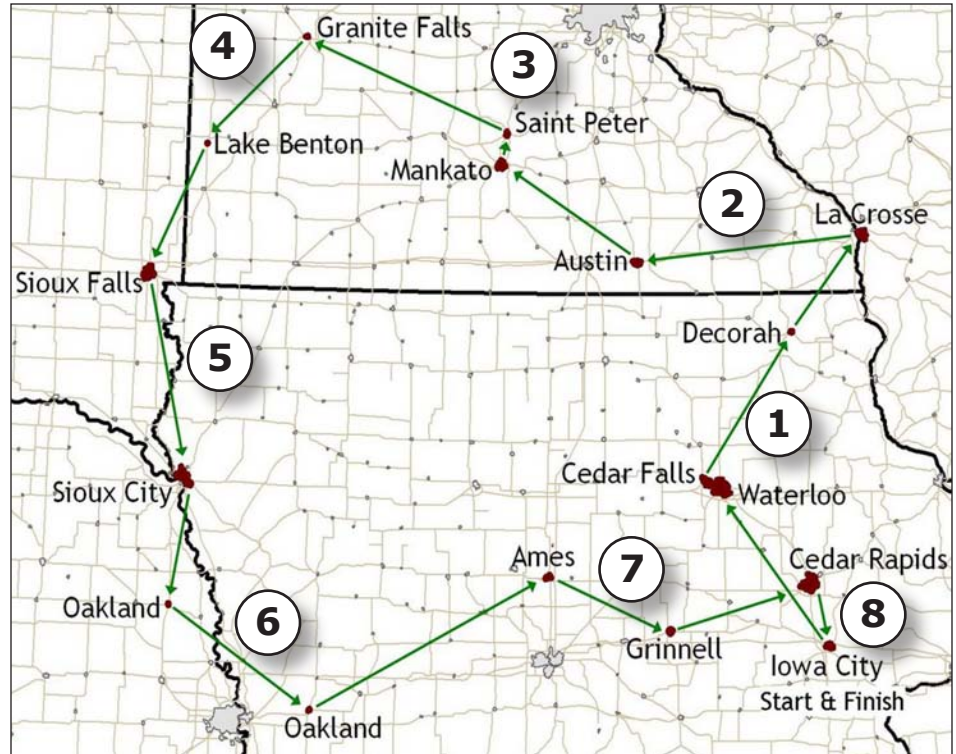
Sunday, Sept. 24: Granite Falls and Lake Benton, Minn.

Monday, Sept. 25: Sioux Falls, S.D., and Sioux City, Iowa

Tuesday, Sept. 26: Oakland, Neb., and Oakland, Iowa

Wednesday, Sept. 27: Ames and Grinnell, Iowa

Thursday, Sept. 28: Cedar Rapids and Iowa City, Iowa



and public policy drives the ability of renewable energy strategies to get a foothold.

We chose our locations for the 2006 tour carefully, looking for a good mix of technologies and innovative ways to put renewable energy to use, with an eye to ways public policy has played a role.

We were able to do this with the advice of our allies for this effort throughout the region. As noted by one of our partners, Michael Noble, executive director of Fresh Energy in Minnesota:

“This tour serves as a powerful reminder for all of us in the Upper Midwest that there are people and projects highlighting our potential as the regional leader on renewable energy for the 21st century.”

“This tour highlights the need for renewable energy sources that create jobs and protect our economy and environment. As the cyclists and supporters on the tour demonstrate beautifully, we can do both.”

Michael’s comment sums it up well. We started and ended in eastern Iowa, visiting locations in Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska. We visited wind farms and solar installations, college campuses and private homes. We saw wind projects, ethanol

projects and solar projects.

We even brought the technology with us, an extra hook that has drawn attention to our effort in each Green Bike Tour: the solar bicycle. We had two bikes equipped with solar panels. The extra source of energy gave weary legs a boost for rides up long or steep hills, and even powered equipment to play music.

The “green bike” has been a great way to show, in our own small-scale way, the large-scale uses and benefits of renewable energy. There is no part of this country where the economy and the environment are not challenges. This project is well-designed to give Americans some practical solutions to them.

We received important help in organizing this trip from many sources – a necessity when covering so much ground. We thank all, but a few we must single out are Iowa Policy Project environmental researcher Teresa Galluzzo, who coordinated our schedule and set up our blog; University of Iowa professor Tom Cook, the technological mastermind; the team at Fresh Energy, which coordinated the northern portion of the tour. Of course, we especially thank our funding sponsors, listed on the inside cover. They are truly the “renewable energy” of all good policy work.

Pedaling bikes to peddle ideas

Excerpts from media coverage of the 2006 Green Bike Tour

September 8, 2006 — The Daily Iowan, Iowa City, by Danny Valentine

Group to bike for greening of America

Riding bicycles equipped with solar panels, UI professors, students, former Hawkeyes, and concerned citizens will pedal through five states in support of using renewable resources.

From Sept. 21 to 28, students across Iowa, along with other sustainability-minded groups, will traverse 1,270 miles to promote the benefits of alternative power and to tour green buildings.

“The Midwest is really full of energy resources,” said Teresa Galluzzo, a research assistant for the Iowa Policy Project, the group sponsoring the ride. “We want to draw attention to global warming and to the fact that there are [alternative] energy solutions on the ground working.”

Now in its second tour around the Midwest, the 2006 Green Bike Tour, which was founded by UI Clinical Associate Professor David Osterberg in 1999, has traveled as far as Europe. This year’s tour will be the group’s fifth, overall.

The bikers will stop in 16 cities, including Waterloo, Sioux City, and Ames. The final destination in the group’s five-state loop is Iowa City – just in time for the national Engineers for a Sustainable World conference.

*“It is real. It is now.
And it is capable of
replacing our traditional
forms of energy.”*

Mark Kresowik
The Daily Iowan, Sept. 8, 2006

At the stops, the group will meet with local sustainability organizations, politicians, and people using alternative energy. The members will also tour biodiesel factories, wind farms, green buildings, and ethanol plants. ...

On the ride from Cedar Falls to Waterloo, approximately 20 people will join former UI Student Government President Mark Kresowik - now a regional conservation organizer for the Sierra Club – to raise awareness about the renewable- energy cause.

*“These solutions can
be an economic boom.
It’s time to stop relying on
dirty coal and to focus on
energy sources that will
benefit communities.”*

Teresa Galluzzo
The Daily Iowan, Sept. 8, 2006

“The Green Bike Tour gives us an opportunity to highlight solutions that will move the Midwest into a new energy economy. There are plenty of people demonstrating how they can securely produce energy and save money.”

“We have done this before in the Midwest and in Europe. It’s been a great way to show, in our own small-scale way, the large-scale uses and benefits of renewable energy. It’s good for the economy and the environment – both of which are big concerns here and across the country.”

David Osterberg , Executive Director, The Iowa Policy Project
bikeiowa.com, Sept. 18, 2006

“This tour serves as a powerful reminder for all of us in the Upper Midwest that there are people and projects highlighting our potential as the regional leader on renewable energy for the 21st century.”

Michael Noble, Executive Director, Fresh Energy
bikeiowa.com, Sept. 18, 2006



September 22, 2006 — The Courier, Waterloo-Cedar Falls (Iowa), by R.C. Balaban

Energy group kicks off five-state tour in Cedar Valley

WATERLOO – Seeing bicyclists riding along trails in the Cedar Valley isn't unusual. Seeing bicyclists who also will be in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Nebraska and South Dakota within the next week just might be.

The 2006 Green Bike Tour kicked off in Waterloo on Thursday. The group, which advocates renewable energy sources, also traveled to the Center for Energy and Environmental Education on the University of Northern Iowa campus. The tour traveled to Decorah on Thursday night.

“You don't have to be a Lance Armstrong to ride a bicycle. You can be an ordinary schmoo and still commute by bicycle and save a lot of pollution and be a little healthier.”

Tom Cook

Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier, Sept. 22, 2006

David Osterberg, with the Iowa Policy Project, said one of the most enjoyable aspects of the trip is getting to meet with people who are taking personal steps toward less dependence on traditional energy sources.

“What you find is exciting things are going on,” Osterberg said. “Just because they're not going on at the national level does not mean that we're not doing something about renewable energy and energy efficiency.”

Tom Cook, a professor at the University of Iowa, showed up at the tour stop wearing a blazer and tie. His point was that everyday commuters can still ride their bicycles to work....

The trip covers more than 1,200 miles, though the group does not bike the entire journey. ... The group also discussed global warming as part of its tour stop.

According to a study by the Iowa Public Interest Research Group, the average temperature between 2000 and 2005 was above normal in 95 percent of locations across the United States. In Waterloo, the average temperature was 1.3 degrees above normal between 2000 and 2005, and 3.3 degrees above normal during the first six months of 2006.

September 23, 2006 — The Free Press, Mankato (Minnesota), by Mark Fischenich

Rider uses solar-powered bike to fuel alternative energy talk

ST. PETER — Tom Cook admits that the solar powered bike that he rode Saturday from Mankato to St. Peter is largely an attention-getting gimmick.

Not that the bike doesn't work. The electric motor can be switched on to assist the pedal power provided by the rider, making hill-climbing a breeze. Cook figures he climbed the hill to Gustavus about three times faster than he would have without the motor. ...

“This is not science fiction. We're doing it in Minnesota.”

State Rep. Ruth Johnson

Mankato Free Press, Sept. 23, 2006

But that's really not the point of the trip. The point is to get people talking about the connection between energy, transportation, the environment and the economy.

The basic message is this: Global warming is real, renewable energy can help alleviate climate change and there's money to be made, especially in this part of the country.

After visiting Minnesota State University, where there was talk of the school's automotive engineering efforts centered on renewable fuels, the group rode to Gustavus. There, state Rep. Ruth Johnson spoke of the effort just down

the road to convert methane gas from a 3,000-cow dairy herd into electricity.

“We're a catalyst, and that chemical reaction is made a little easier when the Green Bikes come to town.”

“Rural communities can make money because we're blessed with a lot of wind and corn.”

Tom Cook

Mankato Free Press, Sept. 23, 2006

David Osterberg
Mankato Free Press, Sept. 23, 2006

September 26, 2006 — The Journal, Sioux City (Iowa), by Dolly A. Butz

Green Bike Tour brings renewable energy message here

SIOUX CITY, Iowa – “Global warming is real. Renewable energy can reduce global warming.” That was the message David Osterberg, of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project, and Tom Cook, a University of Iowa professor, hoped to impress upon students Monday at a rally on the Briar Cliff University campus. ...

Community and campus leaders joined Osterberg and Cook in the discussion about renewable energy outside the Briar Cliff University library. Aaron Kraft, environmental services manager, talked about the strides Sioux City is making to become more energy efficient.

Kraft said the city is renovating the waste water treatment plant. The project will decommission the sludge-storage lagoons and create a park and wetlands. Gill’s landfill near Jackson, Neb. will soon be closed and used as a bioreactor. Biowaste will be buried in order to produce methane gas. The methane gas produced by the decaying garbage can be captured and sold to an ethanol plant that is being constructed and used as a power source.

“We hope to have an impact on the community as well as the environment.”

Aaron Kraft,
Sioux City Environmental Services Manager
Sioux City Journal, Sept. 26, 2006

“It’s not just a pipe dream. There are quality jobs being created. There is far more potential that is yet to be tapped.”

State Sen. Steven Warnstadt
Sioux City Journal, Sept. 26, 2006

Kraft said the city has converted its traffic lights to high sodium lamps, which save the city several thousand dollars annually, and is also cutting down on energy costs by mowing parks only twice a year. ...

Cook said students can do simple things, such as turning off their computer monitors at night and turning off lights when they are not in their rooms to conserve energy.

“They don’t have to go buy a thousand-dollar bike and do something dramatic,” he said. “They can make a lot of choices, to car pool, to do simple things.”

September 27, 2006 — The Nonpareil, Council Bluffs (Iowa), by Nicole Weis

UI professors tout benefits of solar energy

OAKLAND, Iowa – They call themselves “a couple of nutty professors on funny bicycles,” but University of Iowa occupational and environmental health professors David Osterberg and Tom Cook are trying to promote a message with their electrical assist solar powered bikes.

“Global warming is real,” said Osterberg, a member of the Iowa Policy Project and leader of this year’s Green Bike Tour, which promotes the use of renewable energy. “Renewable energy is a way of doing something about it.”

Osterberg, Cook and Ed Woolsey, an entrepreneur in the renewable energy field, were in Oakland Tuesday afternoon to tout the potential of solar and wind energy as a part of their eight-day Green Bike Tour that first started in 1999. ...

The tour made a stop at the Golden Hills Resource Conservation and Development “green building” in Oakland to talk about more ways to conserve energy. ...

Shirley Frederiksen, Coordinator for the Golden Hills RC&D, boasted that the 3,650 square foot “green building” features energy efficient windows, uses mostly natural lighting and has a utility bill of just \$200 a month.

“We like renewable energy a lot and our obviously dedicated to it,” Frederiksen said. “The proof is in the pudding with renewable energy.”

“Renewable energy is really the economic development engine of today and the future.”

Ed Woolsey
The Nonpareil, Council Bluffs, Sept. 27, 2006

In the News

The 2006 Green Bike Tour made news with media in many Midwest communities, including these:

- Sept. 8 — The Daily Iowan, Iowa City, Iowa (article by Danny Valentine)
- Sept. 18 — Gustavus Adolphus College, Saint Peter, Minn. (news release)
- Sept. 18 — Bike Iowa Post
- Sept. 19 — WHO Newsradio 1040, Des Moines, Iowa (interview with Jodi Chapman)
- Sept. 20 — KSAX-TV, Alexandria, Minn. (post)
- Sept. 20 — Minnesota State University, Mankato, Minn. (news release)
- Sept. 20 — KXEL News/Talk 1540, Waterloo-Cedar Falls, Iowa (interview with Mike Bunge)
- Sept. 20 — The Daily Nonpareil, Council Bluffs, Iowa
- Sept. 21 — KUNI 90.9 FM, Cedar Falls, Iowa (interview with Greg Shanley)
- Sept. 21 — Montevideo American-News, Montevideo, Minn.
- Sept. 21 — Decorah Newspapers Decorah, Iowa
- Sept. 21 — The Gazette, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (article by David DeWitte)
- Sept. 21 — KCVL Mix 96.1, Hudson, Iowa (interview with Jamie Philips)
- Sept. 21 & Sept. 22 — KCRG TV 9, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, (Evening and Morning News)
- Sept. 22 — KTTC-TV, Rochester, Minn. (interview)
- Sept. 22 — KAAL 6 Television, Austin, Minn. (interview)
- Sept. 22 — WXOW News 19, La Crosse, Wis. (interview)
- Sept. 22 — WKBT NewsChannel 8, La Crosse, Wis. (interview)
- Sept. 22 — Treehugger.com Post
- Sept. 22 — The Courier, Waterloo-Cedar Falls, Iowa (article by RC Balaban)
- Sept. 23 — Austin Daily Herald, Austin, Minn. (article by Kristen Berns)
- Sept. 23 — Mankato Free Press, Mankato, Minn. (article by Mark Fishcenich)
- Sept. 23 — The Ames Tribune (article)
- Sept. 23 — Independent, Marshall, Minn. (article)
- Sept. 24 — KELO AM/FM Radio, Sioux Falls, S.D. (interview with John Michaels)
- Sept. 24 — KSAX-TV, Alexandria, Minn. (interview)
- Sept. 25 — KELO Channel 11, Sioux Falls, S.D. (interview)
- Sept. 25 — KSFY TV, Sioux Falls, S.D. (interview)
- Sept. 25 — KDLT News TV, Sioux Falls, S.D. (interview by Paul Heinert)
- Sept. 25 — KTIV News Channel 4, Sioux City, Iowa (interview)
- Sept. 25 — Argus Leader, Sioux Falls, S.D. (photo)
- Sept. 26 — Sioux City Journal, Sioux City, Iowa (article by Dolly Butz)
- Sept. 26 — Grinnell Herald Register, Grinnell, Iowa (article by Martha Pinder)
- Sept. 27 — Ames Tribune, Ames, Iowa (article by Jeff Raasch)
- Sept. 27 — Grinnell Herald Register, Grinnell, Iowa (article by Martha Pinder)
- Sept. 27 — The Daily Nonpareil, Council Bluffs, Iowa (article by Nicole Weis)
- Sept. 28 — KASI 1430 News Talk, Ames, Iowa (interview)
- Sept. 28 — KGAN Channel 2 News, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (interview)
- Sept. 29 — The Gazette, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (article by David DeWitte)
- Oct. 10 — Decorah Newspapers, Decorah, Iowa (article by Lissa Greiner)

More information about the Green Bike Tour:

Information about the Green Bike Tour is at <http://www.greenbike.org>. For a day-by-day look at the 2006 tour and links to many of the news reports cited above, see the riders' blog, <http://greenbiketour.blogspot.com/>.

Or, contact the Iowa Policy Project, by phone at (319) 338-0773, or by email at ipp@Lcom.net. The Iowa Policy Project is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and policy analysis organization based in Mount Vernon, Iowa, with its primary office at 120 N. Dubuque St. #208, Iowa City, IA 52245.