

The Green Bike Tour 2004

www.greenbike.org

www.windonwheels.org

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Solar Bike Tour to Wind Through Four States

HOWARD, South Dakota (Sept. 9, 2004) – Renewable energy supporters will set out Monday on a solar bicycle tour of rural communities in South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin to demonstrate the potential for economic development through investments in wind, solar and bio-based fuels.

The six-day Green Bike Tour 2004 will begin at Howard and will proceed through Saturday with elected officials, energy producers, energy policy activists and media joining the ride at various stages, for a variety of events and visits. Three bikes on the tour carry solar panels that produce electricity to power uphill rides or to play music.

“This tour illustrates that renewable energy production is growing in the upper Midwest. Two years ago we rode bikes in Europe to see the success of such development. We hope to change policy in Midwest states to allow renewable energy to grow faster,” said David Osterberg, executive director of the Iowa Policy Project, which is sponsoring the tour in conjunction with the Minnesota-based League of Rural Voters.

“Global climate change is real. We can confront this environmental problem and help our economy in the Midwest. We are going to see lots of exciting examples of how renewable energy technology can keep money working in our own communities, and provide a more secure energy future.”

Communities selected for visits in the four states have some organized local interests or an economic connection to renewable energy.

“Investments in community-based renewable energy projects help strengthen local economies, reduce our dependence on imported energy and help clean up the environment at the same time,” said Niel Ritchie, executive director of the League of Rural Voters. “The tour is an effort to salute those rural communities in Midwestern states that are leading the way, partnering with farmer-owned cooperatives, utilities and educational institutions to make these projects a reality.

“We need the federal government to step up and commit to a new direction in energy policy, away from fossil fuels and toward renewable energy.”

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The public can keep track of the Green Bikers during the tour through stories and photos that will be updated daily on a website, www.greenbike.org <<http://www.greenbike.org>>.

The tentative itinerary: (includes biking and driving)

Monday: Howard, S.D., to Luverne, Minn. (includes Sioux Falls, S.D., and Tyler and Lake Benton, Minn.)

Tuesday: Okoboji, Iowa, to Emmetsburg, Iowa (includes Spirit Lake School, Linn Grove, Storm Lake)

Wednesday: Estherville, Iowa, to Joice, Iowa. (includes Fairmount, Minn.)

Thursday: Dodge Center, Minn., to Northfield, Minn.

Friday: Northfield to Mississippi River to La Crosse, Wis.

Saturday: La Crosse to Baraboo, Wis.

Riders scheduled for the 2004 Green Bike Tour:

Monday: David Osterberg and Tom Cook from the University of Iowa; environmental entrepreneur Ed Woolsey of Martinsdale, Iowa; environmental educator Gail Barels of Linn County, Iowa; policy analyst Elaine Ditsler of Iowa City, Iowa; Jim Cooper of Ames, Iowa, who works with farmers on resource issues; Jeri Neal of the Leopold Center at Iowa State University; John Dunlop of the American Wind Energy Association; Mike Knutson of Miner County Community Revitalization in Howard, S.D.; Becky Smith of Clean Water Fund of Sioux Falls, S.D.; South Dakota State Representatives Rich Engels and Bill Thompson; South Dakota congressional candidates Jeff Venekamp and Lance Moran; and Minnesota State Representative Aaron Peterson.

Tuesday: Donna Buell, an Environmental Protection commissioner in Iowa; Mike Kelly, manager of Top of Iowa windfarm in Joice, Iowa; Iowa State Representative Mary Lou Freeman; Iowa State Senator Joe Bolkcom; photographer Tom Langdon; and many of the first-day riders.

Wednesday: Mark Lambert, an Iowa Utilities Board commissioner, and John Fredrich, campaign manager for congressional candidate Paul Johnson.

Thursday: Bruce Anderson of St. Olaf University in Northfield, Minn., and Christopher Childs of the Sierra Club in St. Paul.

Friday: Guy Wolf and others from Wisconsin.

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Editors, News Directors Note: The itinerary and rider list is likely to change. We will provide updates on the web at <http://www.greenbike.org>.