



The Green Bike Tour News

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For Immediate Release — Monday, Sept. 18, 2006

Solar Bike Tour to Wind Through Five Midwestern States

MOUNT VERNON, Iowa — Renewable energy supporters this week will take to their bicycles to start an eight-day tour showcasing the use of wind power and ethanol in five Midwestern states.

Beginning this Thursday, the 2006 Green Bike Tour will demonstrate that renewable energy strengthens rural economies and secures America's energy future. Riders will team with local businesses, farmers, elected officials, energy producers, and activists to show the success and potential of renewable energy.

"The Green Bike Tour gives us an opportunity to highlight solutions that will move the Midwest into a new energy economy," said David Osterberg of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project (IPP), which has researched the economic potential of renewable energy.

"There are plenty of people demonstrating how they can securely produce energy and save money," Osterberg said.

The tour begins Thursday at 10:30 a.m. in Waterloo with a rally at Washington Park downtown, moving on to nearby Cedar Falls to the Center for Energy and Environmental Education at the University of Northern Iowa. Later in the day, the bikers will be in Decorah for a rally for clean energy.

In addition to highlighting wind and ethanol projects, bikers will demonstrate practical uses of solar power. Bikes will be equipped with solar panels that produce electricity to help with uphill rides or play music.

"We have done this before in the Midwest and in Europe," said Osterberg, who led Green Bike Tours in 1999, 2002 and 2004. "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."

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

For updates, visit:
www.greenbiketour.blogspot.com

Green bikers will visit wind farms, college campuses, solar installations, and complete the journey at the Conference of Engineers for a Sustainable World in Iowa City on Thursday, Sept. 28.

“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,” said Michael Noble, executive director of Fresh Energy, a nonprofit organization leading the transition to a clean energy system by harnessing research, advocacy and community engagement.

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

Teresa Galluzzo, an IPP researcher who specializes in environmental and energy issues, encouraged everyone to join the effort, “whether or not they bike.”

“We all can and must be a part of the solution,” Galluzzo said. “Visiting the tour will inform folks on what they can do to use and promote clean, efficient energy available here in the Midwest.”

University of Iowa professor Tom Cook, who helped organize the 2004 tour, noted people will be able to easily follow the events throughout the tour.

“As in the past, we’ll have a website where we’ll talk about our progress and experiences, and of course we’ll be contacting media all along the route,” said Cook, of the UI’s Environmental Health Sciences Research Center.

Readers, listeners and viewers can check www.greenbiketour.blogspot.com for schedule updates as well as highlights from previous bike tours.

The Green Bike Tour 2006 is sponsored by: The Iowa Policy Project, the University of Iowa’s Environmental Health Sciences Research Center, Fresh Energy, The League of Rural Voters, and The Fred & Charlotte Hubbell Foundation.