
Bikes Belong study quantifies benefits of recreational road rides in America

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Created 11/16/2009 - 21:41

November 15, 2009

A new study by Bikes Belong found that more than 1 million Americans participated in recreational road ride events in 2008. The total revenue from these approximately 1,700 events topped \$240 million, with riders spending nearly \$140 million on food, lodging, and other purchases. These results show that recreational rides are important to the communities that host them, the causes they support, and the bike industry nationwide.

Bikes Belong surveyed U.S. recreational bike-event promoters in order to estimate the size, number, and direct economic impact of these rides in 2008, and also to learn more about how these events benefit communities and causes nationwide. The study was limited to non-race, on-road events that occurred in the U.S. in 2008, including events such as century rides, family funrides, major charity rides (e.g. LIVESTRONG Challenge), and public bike tours (e.g. RAGBRAI).

Nearly two-thirds of the 2008 rides were tied to causes big and small. The average ride raised nearly \$12,000 for charity, with some of the bigger rides bringing in tens of millions of dollars. In 2008, nearly \$200 million total was raised through these rides.

The bike industry also gains from recreational riding events. These rides often serve as “gateway” events that introduce people to bicycling. Participation in recreational road rides is nearly 20 times the number of registered bike racers in the U.S. In 2008, the average participant in Iowa’s RAGBRAI ride spent \$950 on bicycle purchases specifically for RAGBRAI and \$179 on bike clothing and accessories for the ride. That’s a total of more than \$19 million spent annually on bicycle products for a single event.

For the full survey results and report, visit our [Research page](#) [1].

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[1] <http://www.bikesbelong.org/research>