

Road and trail biking on the Boothbay peninsula

By JOSEPH CHARPENTIER

Boothbay Region Land Trust keeps over 30 miles of year round trails for hikers and now for mountain bikers. Pine Tree Preserve was cleared last July and given cross loops to accommodate bikers with areas to bypass hikers. Together, two different loops offer a two-mile ride with a dead-end, northbound logging road expanding that to three miles. The difficulty is moderate. From Edgecomb to Southport, BRLT has nearly 20 trails for hiking and biking, in varying degrees of difficulty.

"Mountain biking is finally finding a place on the Boothbay Peninsula at the Pine Tree Preserve and on the multi-use trails of the Schmidt Preserve in Edgecomb," said local avid mountain biker David Nutt. "This is just the beginning and there will be more mountain biking coming to the region in the near future."

Both preserves are fun, Nutt said, adding that his personal favorite is Schmidt Preserve due to the variety of trails, from old roads to more classic trails. "But both areas are great – out in the woods, off the roads and usually quite solitary."

Nearly all of BRLT's trails are geared and cleared for hiking, so watch out for the low hanging branches and for hikers.

For trail maps and more information, visit www.brlt.com Explore Maine, an auxiliary of the Maine Department of Transportation, has a road biking tour. One leg is 16 miles, one 17, and a third is 21. All three start and end at the Boothbay Region YMCA. The first travels out to Ocean Point riding along scenic Linekin Bay. The second is a clockwise loop of Southport Island where riders can catch views of Hendricks Head Light on Sheepscot Bay, The Cuckolds Light at the tip of the island, and slight detours for views of Squirrel and Burnt islands. The third features two loops up the west side of the peninsula, one around Barter's Island, the other up the west side of Back River to Oven's Mouth Preserve and down the west side of Back River.



Caroline Jones Tinder enjoys a ride on her bike.

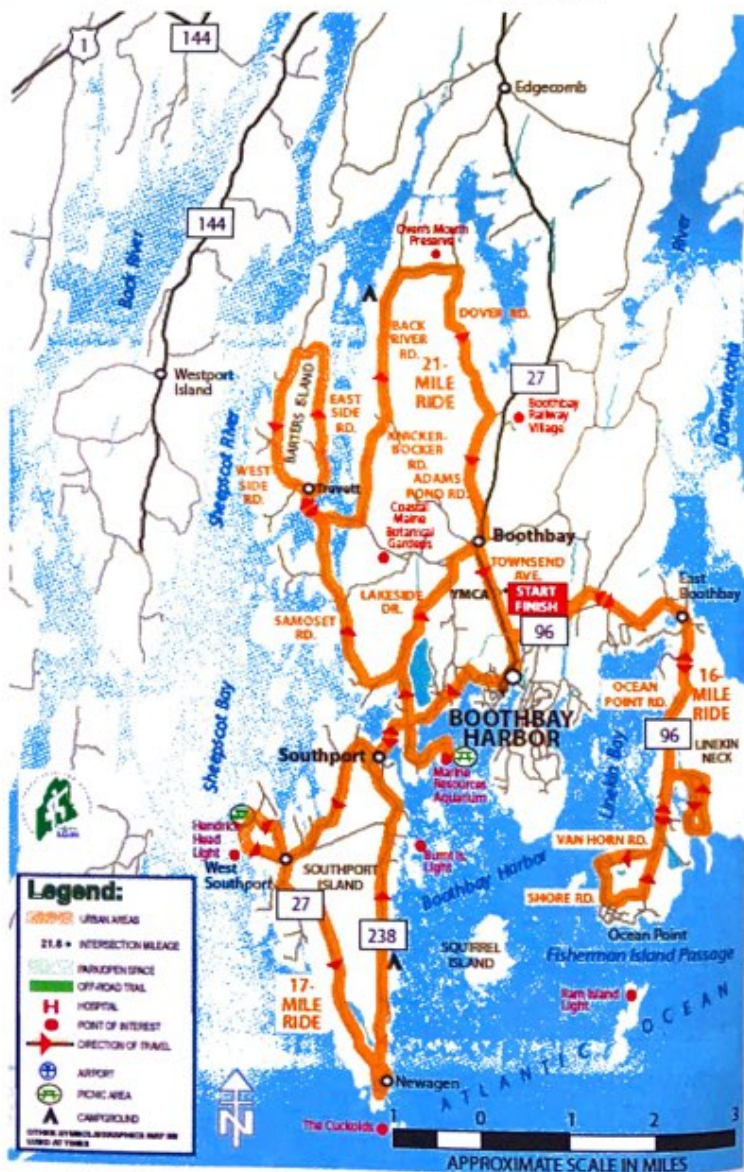
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"The long road bike ride from Boothbay Harbor out around Ocean Point and back is very scenic," said Nutt. "The ride around Southport Island is always fun."

The ride on the Back River area roads tend to have less traffic, as does the ride around Barter's Island, Nutt said. "The road rides are always challenged by impatient traffic so one must always be careful."

For maps and more information, visit <http://www.exploremaine.org/bike/midcoast/boothbayharbor.shtml>

Any longer rides can be shortened or combined with some of BRLT's trails. For example, on the third road course, bikers will find Oven's Mouth Preserve which has both an easy and a challenging trail. On the first road course, bikers can enjoy the Linekin Preserve and Burley Loop.



The three road biking courses in Boothbay and Boothbay Harbor are highly recommended. Watch out for traffic!

Courtesy of Maine Department of Transportation

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