

# The Bigfoot Bicycle Club

...promoting road, mountain, and family cycling



## Elk River Covered Bridge Ride

Elk River Road is a wonderful country ride close to Eureka. The Elk River Valley offers an out-and-back ride on a quiet country road. The scenery is wonderful and includes open fields, two covered bridges, and surrounding forests. If you are fit and ride hard, you can finish in less than one hour. If you want to enjoy the scenery, it will take a couple of hours. The majority of the ride follows roads with good shoulders or very little traffic. The ride is fairly flat with only a couple of short climbs. The weather in Elk River Valley is similar to Eureka. A coastal wind normally blows up the valley creating a little resistance on the ride back. At the end of Elk River Road, the BLM Headwaters Reserve offers a good place to take a break or a short hike. The ride can be done several different ways, but the following route is a great way to do a loop and end up with almost 20 miles of riding.

## Detailed Route

Mile Point 0- Start in Eureka at Henderson Center Bicycles at 2811 F Street.

This is a good time to get supplies for the ride or try one of two local bakeries. Head south on F Street towards the Fresh Freeze drive-in continuing through the intersection past Jo-Ann Fabrics. The road is busy and narrow but after a few blocks you will enter a nice bike lane. As you continue out F Street its name changes to Fairway Drive. You will drop down a short fast descent, pass the Eureka Golf Course, and then go up a short climb. At the top of the hill look for the Fairway Market.

Mile Point 2.4- Turn left onto Meyers Avenue at the Fairway Market. Meyers Avenue will drop down into the Elk River Valley on a short descent. The road name will change to Pine Hill Road. You will cross over Swain Slough and come to a stop sign.

Mile Point 3.1- Turn left onto Elk River Road. The road is in good condition with a nice bike lane. Traffic will zoom by at 45 to 55 miles per hour. Traffic can be busy during rush hour. After about a mile of flat riding you will start up a short hill.

Mile Point 4.3- At the intersection of Elk River Road and Ridgewood Drive turn right and continue out Elk River Road. This is the beginning of the truly scenic part of the ride. There is usually very little traffic.



Mile Point 5.3- Turn right onto Berta Road to see the first covered bridge. After seeing the bridge turn around and go back to Elk River Road. Turn right and continue out Elk River Road.

Mile Point 6.3- Zanes Road Covered Bridge. Check out the bridge or continue riding our Elk River Road.

Mile Point 8- At the intersection of Elk River Road and Wrigley Road go straight over the narrow bridge. Continue up the road and start a short climb. After the climb you will start a short descent. Warning, at the bottom of the climb on the left side of the road is a house with several big black dogs chained up in the front yard. These dogs make a big scene by jerking at their chains and barking. Even though they are no threat, they give me an adrenaline pump every time I fly by. You might be able to zoom by without waking them if you coast by real fast without pedaling.

Mile Point 9- Headwaters Forest Reserve North Trailhead. This is the end of the road. There is a picnic bench, porta-potty, and trailhead kiosk. This is a great place for a break. You could take a short interpretive hike out to the former ghost town of Falk. The town was founded in 1884 and abandoned in 1937. It's a former ghost town because nothing much remains of the town except a few pieces of scattered timber. Unfortunately, bikes are not allowed beyond the trailhead. When you are ready, head back out Elk River Road the way you came.

Mile Point 13.3- At the intersection of Elk River Road and Ridgewood Drive turn right and start up the longest climb of the day. Ridgewood Drive will change into Walnut Drive and take you to Cutten on the outskirts of Eureka. The road is wide and has ample shoulder room.

Mile Point 17.6- Walnut Drive ends at the stop sign. Turn left and continue around the curve onto W Street. You will pass Sequoia Park and Zoo.

Mile Point 18- Turn left onto Hodgson Street.

Mile Point 19- Turn right onto F Street and head back to Henderson Center.

Mile Point 19.3- Henderson Center Bicycles. You are done.

### **Just the Basics**

Mile Point 0- Start in Eureka at Henderson Center Bicycles at 2811 F Street. Head south on F Street towards the Fresh Freeze drive-in.

Mile Point 2.4- Turn left onto Meyers Avenue at the Fairway Market.  
Mile Point 3.1- Turn left onto Elk River Road.  
Mile Point 4.3- Turn right on Elk River Road.  
Mile Point 8- At the intersection go over the narrow bridge on Elk River Road.  
Mile Point 9- Headwaters Forest Reserve North Trailhead. Turn around here.  
Mile Point 13.3- Turn right onto Ridgewood Drive.  
Mile Point 17.6- Turn left at the stop sign.  
Mile Point 18- Turn left onto Hodgson Street.  
Mile Point 19- Turn right onto F Street.  
Mile Point 19.3- Henderson Center Bicycles. You are done.

By Jim Robbins, Bigfoot Bicycle Club