

Safety Valve: Letters from readers

Website Staff

Jan. 3, 2014, 10:35 a.m.

Safer and more pleasant

Local cyclists have proposed that an official bike route be designated between Wenatchee and Leavenworth, with posted “BIKE ROUTE” signs pointing the way, mostly along our existing back roads.

Orchardists, residents, and county commissioners who have reservations about this procedure might consider that these signs are hardly for the benefit of local cyclists. Virtually all of us who choose to ride up the Wenatchee Valley already do so on these scenic and lightly traveled side roads — Easy Street, Sleepy Hollow Road, North (Dryden or Leavenworth) Road, etc. We’ve been sharing these roads with farmers and the occasional spray drift for years with no harmful effects, as far as I know.

On rare occasions when I’ve observed or encountered cyclists on Highway 2/97, except for the short sections where there are no viable side roads, they are virtually all non-local bike tourers (as usually indicated by their trailers or pannier bags), who are probably unaware of their options. It is mainly for their benefit that the signs need to be posted. And we’re all better off with these slow-moving cyclists off the highway.

I seriously doubt that the proposed bike route signs will increase bicycle traffic on the side roads by more than 5 percent from current levels. Not having them there is like not having road signs for vehicles on the highways. They serve to point our guests in the right direction so they can enjoy a safer and more pleasant experience here in the Wenatchee Valley.

Larry Glickfeld

Wenatchee

Careless on a bicycle

We are not bicyclists, nor are we orchardists, but read with interest the comments about marking of back roads between Wenatchee and Leavenworth for bicyclists.

We live in the Plain area. At various times of the year there are bicycle races, tours, etc. that originate in Leavenworth and continue up the Chumstick Highway, over Beaver Pass and onto the Chiwawa Loop Road. On many occasions we have had to deal with riders who seem to think there isn’t anyone in the area that has to get to a job, doctor appointment or other activity. They ride three or more abreast so passing them is not an option, especially on the winding, narrow roads.

We have observed close calls that make you wonder how much sense some bicyclists have, other than their sense of entitlement to use the road as they choose. They do not observe speed limits, especially going down hills. Some of them appear to be unfamiliar with the area but don't seem to be concerned that someone could pullout of a driveway in front of them as they go speeding by.

I appreciated the orchardists' concern regarding the safety of bicycles on their narrow roads vying with farm equipment. I worry about liability in our neighborhood. My hope is no one will put signs up around here encouraging any more bicycle traffic than we already have.

Judy Van Eyk

Leavenworth