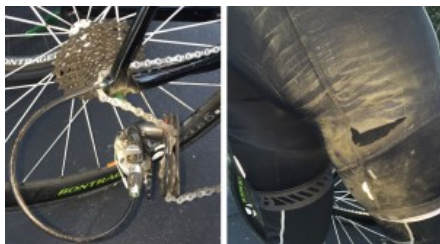
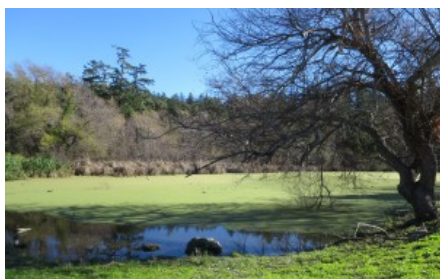


Food-induced coma or bike ride?



OK, some catching up to do. Tuesday morning's regular ride? Kinda got cut short when Kevin when boom, just 1.25 miles from home. Thought he was threading his way through the mud that had slid down onto the top of Jefferson, but went down hard, with sparks literally flying. Really. I was behind him and saw the whole thing. Very cool, except for the torn up clothes and the rear derailleur that broke off his frame. Thankfully, it was pretty much downhill back to the house, so I was able to push him from behind and get him back without much trouble. But it killed a ride I really needed!

No way to do a make-up ride Wednesday; that was Christmas Eve and we opened an hour earlier than normal. And Christmas Day? That's not normally a ride day. Oh sure, some years ago, I'd tell the kids Christmas Eve that I was going to do a ride in the morning so they'd have to wait to open presents, but I was joking. Truth be told, Becky and Kevin slept in late enough I could have done a regular Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride and gotten back in time! But instead I made an early-morning run to the shop to pick up the pieces needed to fix Kevin's bike so we could go on an afternoon ride. But that didn't work out; everyone in my family but me went into a too-much-food-induced coma and took long naps right about the time I wanted to get out. No way could I take that option; I'm already too far behind my normal yearly mileage to possibly catch up (just over 6600 and my usual is 7200) and just a few pounds are enough to really feel not-quite-right.



So just before 1pm I'm out the door on my own, on a day where, truthfully, I really didn't want to be out on my own. It just didn't feel right, but I knew staying home would feel a lot worse. Only a few hours before dinner, so had to be short & sweet. Old LaHonda, West Alpine. Made it up Old LaHonda a bit better than expected; I was thinking 25 but it was 23-something. I stopped on West Old LaHonda for the obligatory photo of a crystal-clear view of the coast and then headed to the LaHonda duck pond, for the obligatory photo of a pond that now features, of all things, water!

West Alpine wasn't easy, but I methodically made my way up the hill, stopping again a couple times for more photos. Once up on Skyline I started feeling pretty good; apparently it takes me 30 miles to warm up. Warm? Probably not the right word, as it was in the low-40s, dipping to 39 at one point, but comfortable in leg warmers, long-sleeve baselayer and winter gloves.

Definitely felt a lot stronger returning than I did leaving, and that's really the best type of ride. A bit strange being out there alone, and not too many others out on the road (either bikes or cars), but it put me in a much better mood for eating too much ham and string beans with bacon and au gratin potatoes. Finally beginning to feel that coma coming on! --Mike--