

## Old LaHonda closing weekdays, May 15 through July!



Approaching the top of Old LaHonda, soon a weekend-only prize.

This is a pretty big thing for SF Peninsula. Starting Monday, May 15th, Old LaHonda will be closed Monday through Fridays (from 8am-4pm) to traffic trying to get to Skyline. And it will remain closed for quite a few months! Below is the email I received from Sean Rose, Public Works Director for the Town of Woodside-

Hi Mike: At this time, the start date for the closure is May 15. It looks like it will extend into July. Once they get started, I will update you on dates. There will be 500-1000 large trucks on the road during the trucking phase of the project (dump trucks, concrete trucks, delivery trucks, etc). The closure to through traffic (vehicles and bikes) is to reduce the number of bikes and cars on the road during trucking operations. Once the trucking operation is complete, I will reopen the road to through traffic. Sean  
Saturdays and Sundays are not affected. This is strictly a weekday thing.

The effect on car traffic on alternative roads will be minimal, because obviously they'll figure out a way for residents to get to their homes, and the only time Old LaHonda is used for "through" auto traffic is when other roads are closed. That's the good news. The bad news is that there's a good reason Old LaHonda is the most-popular route for bicyclists riding up to Skyline. It's pretty, car traffic is generally light and slow, and the changing grade gives you a chance to rest a bit now & then.

But for three months, weekday riders will need to use a different route to get up and over Skyline. To keep some perspective on the alternative routes, here's the raw data for Old LaHonda- 3.75 miles long, 1300ft of elevation gain. Just three relatively-short pitches that go to 10%. 1.5 lanes, generally no centerline, light traffic.

**Page Mill Road.** 7 miles (starting from Arastradero Road), 1770ft of elevation gain. A really nasty, open & hot section in the middle that kicks up well over 10%. Considered one of the tougher climbs in the area. Can be busy at times. Narrow 2 lane road with centerline. People love or hate this climb.

**Highway 84 (Woodside Road).** This generally isn't even considered as a suitable route to Skyline because Old LaHonda parallels it and is much nicer. However, the grade is very consistent and not too steep, making it the easiest route to Skyline, and the traffic is pretty light early in the morning. Not advisable on a warm summer weekend after 9am or so, due to heavy traffic. Unfortunately, heavy storm damage on the upper section has created two one-lane signal-controlled segments, most of which does not have enough clearance for a bike and car to pass each other. The segments aren't very long, but for a slower rider, it could be quite unnerving having a string of angry cars behind you as you're heading up the hill. I'm going to check it out personally in the near future and report back. 3.3 miles, 1000ft elevation gain, generally wide 2-lane road with centerline, moderate traffic (but heavy during peak summer hours).

**Kings Mountain.** I know this road all too well, climbing it twice a week for the past 40 years or so. It can feel longer than its 4.3 miles would indicate, with a few steeper pitches here & there. Traffic isn't too bad unless another road has an issue (it's possible during summer that backups on the single-lane sections of 84 could divert some motorists to Kings). Due to the number of turns, it can be difficult for cars to pass cyclists so please, if there are cars behind you, ride single file!!! 4.3 miles, 1600ft of elevation gain, mostly fairly-narrow 2-lane road with centerline.

**Highway 92** (from northern end of Canada Road to Half Moon Bay). I would avoid this if at all possible, unless you're really comfortable riding a narrow road with a bad shoulder and very heavy traffic. It's actually not too bad going up to Skyline from the Canada Road side, but once you get near Half Moon Bay it gets really narrow and traffic can back up pretty badly. Those who've ridden the Half Moon Bay side generally don't have a desire to ride it again.

Something else to think about. If you've always descended Old LaHonda because you preferred to descend slowly, you will not enjoy any of the alternatives. Virtually everyone driving 84, Kings, Page Mill or 92 will seem to be in a rush, and there aren't many places you can easily pull off to the side and wait until the cars have gone by.

Please ride safely, make sure you're single-file when cars are behind and need to get past, and, a new pet-peeve of mine, stop for people at crosswalks! It might add 20 seconds to your ride, but if we want respect from motorists, we can start by respecting people trying to cross the street. Amazing how cars just go flying through, sometimes even when it's a flashing yellow signal crosswalk. If cars see **you** stop, they just might pay more attention to other road users in general.

Thanks- Mike Jacoubowsky, Partner, Chain Reaction Bicycles