



## **Pedal to Phoenix 2026 – Team Proposal**

ZWAP (Zwifters Against Parkinsons) intends to field a team to participate in the WPC2026 Pedal to Phoenix initiative. For info about WPC 2026: <https://www.worldpdcoalition.org/page/wpc2026>. The purpose of this document is to set out the team's plans in order to seek WPC endorsement and to enable prospective team members to evaluate and indicate a possible team participation.

### **The Route: An epic ride down the Western US seaboard!**

The route is one of the greatest 'End-to-End' trips out there, with stunning scenery, exotic wildlife and the full 'American Experience'. We will travel the length of the United States along some of the world's most scenic coastline to the palm-lined beaches at the Mexican border. This is an indirect route starting in Seattle, WA and following the Pacific Coast Highway via San Diego. The 'official' Pacific Coast Highway Bicycle Route runs for 2000 miles from Vancouver, Canada to Imperial Beach, CA but we will be starting our ride in Seattle, WA, thus avoiding 6 ferry rides and 115 miles heading north, arriving in San Diego 4 weeks and 1600 miles later. From there we will follow the 'Southern Tier' trans-America route for a further week and 400 miles as far as Phoenix, AZ.

There are many reasons for this choice including:

- At 2000 miles it represents a very substantial challenge and should help gain traction with sponsors and media
- The team is keen for the richest possible experience and the Pacific Coast Highway is an iconic 'bucket list ride'.
- It allows us to follow the detailed routes provided by the Adventure Cycling Association ([adventurecycling.org](http://adventurecycling.org)). These are thoroughly 'tried and tested', taking the most cycle-friendly paths and de-risking the ride.
- Our Support Leader, Steve Wesson, has extensive experience of the Seattle to San Diego section, further de-risking the ride.
- It offers a number of logical intermediate points at which riders looking for a shorter ride could join the team.
- The approach to Phoenix could be hot and our route retains the cooler coastal climate for the longest possible time.

## Itinerary

The ride will involve a total of 33 riding day over 5 stages. Riders may join the team at any stage, subject to there being space available. It is likely that a small number of rest days will be included, to be confirmed but probably 3 in Florence, Pacifica and Marina Del Ray. In total 36 days to do the complete ride of 2060 miles or **ca 3300 km**, starting April 18<sup>th</sup> in Seattle, and ending May 23<sup>rd</sup> in Phoenix.

Day		Distance	Average
	<b>STAGE 1</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>71</b>
	Seattle	WA	
1	Shelton	WA	63
2	Westport	WA	68
3	Long Beach	WA	80
4	Rockaway Beach	OR	73
5	Lincoln City	OR	67
6	Florence	OR	75
7	REST DAY		
	<b>STAGE 2</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>62</b>
8	Bandon	OR	76
9	Gold Beach	OR	60
10	Crescent City	CA	57
11	Arcata	CA	74
12	Redcrest	CA	58
13	Leggett	CA	60
14	Fort Brag	CA	48
15	Ocean Cove	CA	79
16	Point Reyes Station	CA	59
	Pacifica (San		
17	Francisco)	CA	50
18	REST DAY		
	<b>STAGE 3</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>60</b>
19	Santa Cruz	CA	65
20	Monterey	CA	50
21	Big Sur <sup>1</sup>	CA	43
22	San Simeon <sup>1</sup>	CA	67
23	Arroyo Grande	CA	60
24	Solvang	CA	62
25	Ventura	CA	70
26	Marina Del Ray (LA)	CA	63
27	REST DAY		
	<b>STAGE 4</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>68</b>
28	San Clemente	CA	73
29	San Diego	CA	63
	<b>STAGE 5<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>397</b>	<b>57</b>
30	Pine Valley	CA	51
31	El Centro	CA	69
32	Brawley <sup>2</sup>	CA	20
33	Blythe <sup>2</sup>	AZ	89
34	Salome	AZ	58
35	Wickenburg	AZ	50
36	Phoenix	AZ	60

Notes:

1 (day 22)– South of Big Sur the Pacific Coast highway has been closed for a considerable time due to landslips. It is possible that it will still not have re-opened by May 2026 and our contingency is to re-route inland via King City and Paso Robles. This detour is already tried and tested.

2 (day 32-33) – A complete lack of accommodation in this part of Arizona creates 2 EXTREMELY uneven days. We want this final stage to be as accessible as possible and we are researching ways to allow riders to ride two equal days of about 55 miles, with support transport to get them to overnight accommodation.

3 - Stage 5 has been designed to be the easiest with the shortest average days and least climbing. This is to make it accessible to the widest range of abilities for the ride into Phoenix AND because of the likely hotter weather. Temperature in Arizona during May is average high 33 degrees Celcius / average low 18 degrees.

## Team Leadership

### Rune Bjerke – Team Captain

After being diagnosed with Parkinson’s Disease (PD) in 2016, Rune has developed into a strong and experienced rider, having already completed several multi-day/multi-week tours, including the 2023 Bike to WPC in Barcelona ride. Rune has organised rides for large, mixed-ability PD groups in Norway and Portugal.

Rune will be extensively involved in the pre-trip organization but will participate as a rider on the trip.

### Steve Wesson – Support Leader

Having previously been the owner/operator of a cycling vacation business Steve has organized and led 100+ tours across Europe, North America and Australasia. His experience includes group sizes from 6 to 60 and tour durations of 3 days to 10 weeks. By the time of WPC2026 Steve will have led three tours for mixed ability PD groups.

Steve will be responsible for all route planning and will lead the tour, driving the primary support vehicle. He is also a qualified first-aider and capable cycle mechanic.

About Steve: <https://stevewesson.wixsite.com/home/resume>

## Support

Steve will be the primary support, travelling with the team the entire way. We envision that the initial rider group will be comparatively small and no additional support will be required. It is likely that one (or more) additional supporters will be required as we travel south and the team grows. No firm decisions have been made but this additional support may come from:

1. An additional dedicated support person (possibly driving a 2<sup>nd</sup> vehicle)
2. Non-cycling partner/s of team members who may accompany the group for sections
3. Local volunteers along the way. Steve Wesson is involved with a US non-profit cycling touring club ([peoplecycling.org](http://peoplecycling.org)) and it is thought that volunteers may be found from amongst its membership. He has already received offers of support from members in Seattle and San Francisco and is very well connected with group members in coastal Oregon.

The primary support vehicle is likely to be a 10-seat passenger van. While the team is small this will serve as SAG (support & gear) wagon but with space to give multiple team members a ride in the event of sickness, injury or PD-related problems. As the team grows, we envision needing a 2<sup>nd</sup> vehicle, this time a cargo van to haul bags and support gear, leaving the passenger van dedicated to supporting the riders on the road.

Our support gear will include:

- Emergency food rations
- Water
- First-aid kit\*
- Full tool kit
- Work stand
- Floor pump
- Heavy duty cables & padlocks for securing bikes overnight
- A range of service items, spares and accessories which should allow us to deal with all but the most serious mechanical failures at the roadside.

The first-aid kit will include non-prescription medicines to treat pain, allergies, dehydration and upset stomachs. We will not dispense medicines, which are made available on the strict understanding that the rider accepts responsibility for determining the safety and suitability of whatever is taken.

## The Team

The limits on team size are:

1. The availability of accommodation. In most overnight stops accommodation is plentiful (though we may need to split the group across multiple hotels), but in some places the total available rooms are limited. Further work will be done to identify these hotspots.
2. The availability of sufficient support. It is not currently envisioned that the team would be allowed to exceed the ability of 2 dedicated supporters.

Both of the above limitations probably suggest an absolute limit of about 30 riders.

To be accepted as part of the team, riders will need to demonstrate a commitment to the ride. This means active participation in planning & briefing activities and following an appropriate training programme. The team leadership will establish checkpoints and riders may be asked to step aside if there are serious concerns that cannot be remedied.

Priority will be given to:

- Riders with PD
- Riders intending to join for the greatest number of stages
- Riders with non-riding partners who are willing to participate in the support effort

In the event that we have more interested riders than places we will operate a standby list.

## Travel

Riders from outside the United States **MUST** have travel insurance. This must, at least, cover medical costs and emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that they also have cover for cancellation and curtailment, in which case they should effect cover at the same time as booking onto the ride.

When seeking cover riders will need to declare that they are cycle touring as this is sometimes excluded from standard policies. Without cover we cannot accept riders on the trip and they will be asked to provide evidence of cover several weeks prior to travel - the name of the policy provider and a policy number will be sufficient.

All riders will be responsible for getting themselves to the start point hotel on the day prior to their first riding day and accommodation will be provided for that night.

Accommodation for one night will also be provided in Phoenix at the end of the ride. Riders are responsible for their own onward travel from this hotel.

We will not have space in the support vehicle/s for bulky bike cases (hard OR soft-sided) and it will be a condition of joining the team that riders transport their bike in a cardboard bike box. These will be packed flat in the support vehicle for the duration of the trip.

## Accommodation

Accommodation will generally be 'motel style' though occasionally we may make use of campground cabins. For many nights we will be staying in motels operated by national chains where standards should be reasonable and consistent. For some nights, especially in the north, it will be necessary to use privately operated motels/hotels and we will do our best to ensure that these are of an acceptable standard.

To keep participation costs as low as possible we will aim for 3\* accommodation but, out of necessity, accommodation will vary in style and quality. We will reserve en-suite accommodation wherever possible but on a very small number of nights we stay in remote locations where accommodation is scarce. On these occasions it is possible that we may need to use some 2 bedroom units with shared bathroom facilities.

ALL accommodation will be for 2 people – either a couple sharing a large bed or a room with 2 beds. Single riders will need to pair up with another rider and we will facilitate this process.

## Meals

### Breakfast

In some motels a complimentary breakfast is provided, though the quality of these can vary. Elsewhere we will supply a simple continental breakfast to be taken in bedrooms (tea/coffee, juice, cereal, toast, pastries\*). Alternatively there will usually be somewhere close by where riders can get breakfast, though the cost of this is not included. *\*To avoid the waste caused by single-use disposable cutlery and crockery riders will be asked to bring their own cup, plate, bowl and flatware.*

### Lunch

Lunch is not included in the price. The Tour Leaders will identify available services each day but in some remote areas these will be few and far between and we will expect riders to always carry some emergency provisions. We will always warn riders in advance of a remote day so that they can stock up.

### Dinner

Dinner is not included in the price. Our route takes us through some remote and spectacular countryside and this inevitably means that we are occasionally staying in isolated areas, including a very small number of places without a restaurant. On these occasions we will either drive riders to the nearest town or arrange to bring in a take-away meal.

## The Ride

Each morning, usually over breakfast, a Team Leader will talk riders through the day's route, pointing out any places of interest and suggesting places where they might like to stop to eat. After breakfast they can set off when they are ready.

We do not require, or expect, the whole group to ride together and we do not 'lead' the ride. People usually set out off in small groups, though these often change during the trip. There is no absolute 'cut-off' time at the end of each day but the Team Leader may impose a cut off if they feel that circumstances make this necessary. In this very rare eventuality riders will be provided with a ride for the remaining miles.

The route is almost entirely paved, and a road bike with tyres 28-36 mm is recommended. There are some sections where we must ride on main highways; very occasionally these are multi-lane with faster moving traffic but there is usually a generous shoulder making these sections actually safer than some single carriageway roads.

## Navigation

Route instructions will be provided in the following formats:

### Electronic Route Files

Electronic route files are provided and made available via Ride With GPS (RWGPS - [www.ridewithgps.com](http://www.ridewithgps.com)). Riders will need to create a basic (free) account.

### Paper Turn-By-Turn Instructions

We will also provide paper turn-by-turn instructions. These are printed in Half Letter format, easy to use and all riders should be able to follow them accurately without using a map; each person will be given a pack for the entire trip.

Even if riders intend to rely solely on a GPS device we strongly recommend that they familiarise themselves with the printed route sheets and carry them during the ride, in particular because:

- Electronic files do not identify possible refreshment stops
- They may not always accurately follow dedicated cycle routes
- The printed route may include instructions to dismount in order to follow pedestrian routes or to run against traffic in 1-way streets; this requirement will not be obvious if following an electronic track

## Cost

We have left this until last, though it will probably be the first question asked by prospective riders. A firm price is impossible to give at this stage, but some important principles can be established:

### Fixed Costs

Riders will be expected to bear their share of fixed costs such as rental vehicle, fuel and support team travel, accommodation and out-of-pocket expenses. These costs, and the number of riders amongst which they are shared, will vary stage by stage. Note that all members of the support team will be unpaid volunteers!

### Variable Costs

Each rider will incur costs for hotel accommodation and breakfast supplies. These will also vary stage by stage; for example, accommodation is generally most expensive in southern California.

### Non-Profit

We do not propose to engage commercial sub-contractors so only actual, necessary, incurred costs will be reflected in the price.

This is a private, non-profit travel arrangement, and there will be no contract, no liability insurance or comeback if any problems occur along the way. The Tour Management and Support Team work on a voluntary basis and will do our very best to make this a great journey!

### Sponsorship

The sponsorship program for the event will be coordinated with WPC2026. We will try to look for possibilities to fund some of the team members costs, but for the moment we cannot take this into account.

## Working Estimate of Costs

Given the principles established above, our working estimate is that hotels/breakfast might cost around \$70-\$80 per person per night on average and a share of support costs might be around \$40 per person per night.

As a VERY ROUGH guide this suggests a possible cost as follows:

	<b>Cost estimate</b>	<b>Nights</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Arrival airport</b>	<b>Finish</b>	<b>Distance (miles/km)</b>
All stages	\$4,250	37	Seattle	Seattle	Phoenix	2060/3315
4 Stages	\$3,500	30	Florence	Portland	Phoenix	1634/2630
3 Stages	\$2,500(*)	19	Pacifica	San Fransisco	Phoenix	1013/1630
2 Stages	\$1,250	10	Marina delRey	Los Angeles	Phoenix	533/860
Final stage	\$1,000	8	San Diego	San Diego	Phoenix	397/640

*(\*) reflect high hotel costs in Southern CA*

At the point of the initial registration no payment will be requested. Once we know the likely group size for each stage a more detailed costing will be performed, and riders will be invited to confirm their participation with a deposit or be given the opportunity to withdraw.

## Do you want to join this once in a lifetime adventure?

As a first step, please indicate your initial interest in the Google Form.