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Transcript

Speaker 1

It's time for the outspoken cyclist your weekly conversation about bicycles, cyclists, trails, travel, advocacy, the bike industry, and much, much more. You can subscribe to our weekly podcast at outspokencyclists.com or through your favorite podcasting app to listen anytime. Now here's your host, Diane Jenks.

Speaker 2

Hello and welcome to the outspoken cyclist. I'm your host, Diane Jenks. Thanks for tuning in today. Back in April, 65 members of the European Cyclists Federation, representing 40 countries, signed the EU Declaration of C. Dumpling. Founded in 1983, the European Cyclist Federation is a Brussels based, independent non-profit association dedicated to achieving more and better cycling for all in Europe. The Ecfs mandate that by 20-30 there will be more cycling, safer cycling and stronger political support for cycle. That includes higher investment with more and better infrastructure. Today, my guest is Jill Warren, the CEO of the European Cyclist Federation, and in a moment she'll tell us more about the E CF and what the future holds for cycling worldwide. In the second-half of our episode today, we continue our summer exploration of great and favorite trails. One of my past guests, Scott Casper, contacted me and wanted to share his experiences of the White Rim Trail in Canyonlands National Park in Utah. Not as well known or traveled as the Grand Canyon. Scott thinks this trail is just as breathtaking and urges us to drop in, climb out, and disconnect from the grid for a few days, taking in the beauty of the rugged white Rim Trail. Jill Warren, CEO of the European Cyclist Federation, left the corporate world to pursue a career committed to expanding cycling for everyone, everywhere. She's lived in Europe for 35 years, and although she does have a car, she rarely drives it, depending instead upon one of the stable of bikes for her transportation. Jill says, and I quote, there is no conceivable way to achieve the sustainable development goals the European Green Deal or climate neutral cities without significantly more cycling. Let's find out what she means by that and what the goals of the E CF are. Hello, Jill. Welcome to the outspoken cyclist. Thanks for being my guest today. How are you?

Speaker 3

Doing really well. Thank you. Thanks for inviting me.

Speaker 2

Diane, it is my pleasure. So I'd like to get a little background on you and how you came to be the CEO of the European Cyclists Federation and I need to know more about the organization. So tell me a little bit about yourself.

Speaker 3

So I'm Jill Warren. I grew up in the US. I've been in Europe for the past 35 years now. I worked in the automotive industry and then 20 years in the legal industry, more on the business side of things. So client relationship management, marketing that, that sort of thing. And I found that there were actually a lot of transferable skills from those experiences into what I do now as the CEO of the European Cyclists Federation, so. We are the umbrella organization for member based cycling advocacy organizations in Europe, such as Ada essay in Germany, fixers bond in the Netherlands, Cycling UK and almost 70 other organizations and. Level we represent their interests at the EU, the wider European level, but also the global level and some of what we do. We promote cycling is a sustainable and healthy form of transport and leisure, and we organize the annual Velo City Conference which just took place a few weeks ago in Ghent next year. It's in advance and they also centrally coordinate the eurovelo cycle route network about 90,000 kilometers. Long distance cycle routes all over Europe.

Speaker 2

OK, that's a whole lot and that, but that's awesome. I wish we had something like that here in the US. I know that we're a big spread out country. As you know growing up here. But I still feel like there could be a more coordinated effort beside the League of American Bicyclists, which really just can't get its teeth into. I I don't think the the scope of what needs to be done. So what are the goals of the federation like right now? And I know you have a 20-30 goal in your in your in your planning, so are.

Speaker 3

20-30 strategy has about 5 main goals that we pursue, so we want more cycling, which we define as doubling the number of kilometers cycled to about 312 billion plus year by 20-30. We want safer cycling. That means at least 50% fewer cyclists killed or seriously injured on the way to vision zero. Of course, the ultimate goal is is 0, but we've got to get there somehow. Then we want stronger political support, which we define as cycling being treated as a fully fledged. Mode of transport and prioritized in the mobility. We want higher investment. So from an EU level, we want many more billions invested in cycling and we want that to carry through at all levels throughout Europe and and beyond, whether national, regional, local level, because you've got to to spend money on it to make it to happen. And last but not least, we want a lot more and better cycling infrastructure that will invite a lot more people to take up cycling and cycle more.

Speaker 2

So I take it you're a cyclist?

Speaker 3

Ohh yes.

Speaker 2

And living where you live in in Europe, you are able to do without a car a lot.

Speaker 3

Yes, I hardly ever drive my car. I do still have one, but I hardly ever drive it. I do just about everything by bike or public transport or walking.

Speaker 2

Good for you. We just went to a meeting locally here to try and change some things in the communities. I don't know how familiar you are with with Cleveland, but there are ring suburbs. There is the one we live in South Euclid, and then there's Cleveland Heights and there's university height. And none of them are particularly walkable or bikeable, but they're trying to put together a strategic plan to do that. And you know, I look at what they bring to the table and I'm like, well, I don't know if you're thinking cohesively enough. So one of the questions I have. For you has to do with the political support and how you go about getting that and what kind of sort of clout do you have well.

Speaker 3

Political support happens at all sorts of levels, so as in umbrella federation. We also operate on the principle of subsidiarity, which means that you know, everything should be done at the right level. It should be done. At. So we can support and reinforce what would be done at a regional or local or national level in what we do at the more EU or wider European or or global level. But it also means working very, very closely with the stakeholders. In in all of these ways, I guess it would be easy to just give. You a couple of. Examples so you know we don't go around writing national cycling strategies or policies, but we do analyze all of them. So our latest analysis is. In Europe, in the widest sense, 54 countries we've analyzed, do they have a strategy or similar policy? If so, what's in it? You know, what are the main goals? How much funding do they attach to it? All those kind of things? We published this analysis and you know, countries can see how they're doing compared to others. And our advocates on the ground can use this information to push for a strategy if their country doesn't already have it. For example, I mean, this can be really powerful in catalyzing further action. And a lot of what we do is meant to catalyze just by showing this is best practice. This is what you should be striving for. This is who's there yet this is who's on the way. This is who's not there at all and you. Really need to do. Something and you know that can all help you catalyze further action.

Speaker 2

Let me take a moment to reintroduce you. Then I want to talk a little bit about the EU declaration. From April, we're speaking with Jill Warren. She is the CEO of the European Cyclists Federation. It is headquartered in Brussels, but she happens to be in the Netherlands right now. So the EU declaration of cycling had, I think, 8 principles and something like 56.

Speaker 3

36.

Speaker 2

Commitments 36 commitments. So I had the six right 36 commitments. How was the ECF involved in that and how do you see the reception since you got it out there and got it signed by all these? Countries.

Speaker 3

So this declaration is an interinstitutional declaration, which means that it has the backing and the support and the adoption by the European Commission, that's the administrative organ, let's say, of the of the EU, the European Parliament, the elected body and. The Council, which is the 27 Member States that formed the EU, so we lobbied all three of those institutions all along the way. To let them know that we thought a strategic approach at the EU level was necessary and desirable, and these are the things that it should cover, and this is what we wanted to see in it and we gave very helpful suggestions and we participated in public consultations and even helped lead one of them in a working group we participated in. At at the EU level, and so did everything we could to try to influence the outcome of that document with content that we knew was important and and could. Help you know, act as that strategic compass that this document is meant to be to further cycling in in the EU. So I think it's suffice to say that last two years before it was adopted, we worked very, very hard on it with all the different stakeholders that we could and mobilized others to do so. And this is a result that we're very proud of and it it's based on work that we've been doing for many years. So it you know it didn't come from nowhere, it's really an.

Speaker 2

If you look at your member countries, which ones are sort of at the top of the list of doing and meeting some of these commitments principles and which ones are at the sort of at the bottom of the list, who need to start doing things?

Speaker 3

I think the picture is very mixed, so the gold standard is very often considered to be the Netherlands and frankly it's hard to not find safe cleaning infrastructure here when you you know you need to go. From A to B you can find. To say. Great way to get there. Almost everywhere. It's it's fantastic. Denmark is also very good in the last few years. I think that the highest flyer in terms of, you know, just continuously improving than

France in my opinion. In Germany you have pockets that are really, really good pockets that still need a whole lot of improvement. We're seeing a lot more money in Flanders going to the the Flemish speaking part of Belgium, going into investing in cycling infrastructure. You've seen really great improvements there. So I I would point out those as as kind of the the highlights and of course those low lights, I don't, I don't like to name and shame too publicly, but there are certainly places that could be a lot better than than they are now and traditionally. You would have said that maybe more towards Southern Eastern Europe. You you needed a lot more improvements than even there we are seeing. Excellent projects come on board. Sometimes it starts with they see the touristic potential of cycling and they'll start to develop things that way. But you see very quickly when you do that that locals are encouraged to take up cycling and do more of it. So it it has, you know, real virtuous circle kind of effect.

Speaker 2

Does the ECF have influence beyond Europe?

Speaker 3

Yes, we do. Because currently there really isn't a global federation. So ECF is very often looked to to fill that gap. So we have observer status for the UN climate conferences. So we go to these comp conferences and advocate for cycling as a solution to climate change and to decarbonizing transport. There for example, we also represent cycling and cyclists at. Occasions like the International Transport Forum and their conferences and events at transforming transportation in Washington DC, where that which is put on by the World Bank every year. So we basically fly the flag for cycling from a civil society perspective at at all of these or around the world, so de facto. Do a lot of global work.

Speaker 2

Yeah, that's a good thing. It's a very good thing. I I had a question about E bikes. So being in the bicycle business and watching E bikes proliferate, I mean, I've been watching the growth of E bike use and production for over 30 years. There's I have mixed feelings about E bikes. I know they're there are boon to cycling in some ways, but they're not as. Climate friendly, as some people might think. I mean, you still have to create those batteries and that's a whole another manufacturing issue. Plus you need charging. You need batteries that don't blow up. That's another whole issue. But tell me about E bikes and how they fit into the ECF plans.

Speaker 3

The diagnostic as two type of bike we want people on bikes and if an E bike is the way to get them on there, let's do it. E bikes are fantastic for opening up cycling to more people of all ages and abilities. They're fantastic for increasing the range and you know what people are willing to use their bikes for. So I I have of my too many bikes that I own. One of them is a cargo bike. That's the only one. That's the the E bike. But frankly I wouldn't want to drive around a cargo bike that wasn't an E bike probably.

Speaker 2

You know, I get that.

Speaker 3

And I think. Yeah, to to the environmental aspect, I think you need to see that in the perspective of. An electric vehicle, as in a a car is gonna have a battery that is so much bigger. How many ebikes can you make out of the same materials that you would make for the battery of one car so that the proportion there? I I think very much favors more E bikes and then when you consider that more than 50% of trips. Taken are less than 5 kilometers or what is that 3.5 miles or something I.

Speaker

Approximately.

Speaker 3

Don't know my mouth. Might be off, but yeah. Then there's so much potential to replace car trips with bike trips, and if E bikes contribute to replacing more of those trips, then we've done a hell of a lot for the environment. And so I'm very much in favor of them and our organization as well.

Speaker 2

Good explanation. I like it. Yeah, I it. I never compared. I didn't take the number of E bikes it would take to replace one electric car or hybrid car. Well, hybrid cars are a little different, but. Automobile in the meantime. So lastly I I'm wondering if there's anything you think the US can take from the work that you do and I guess we should mention velocity too before we, before we end our conversation. Is there anything the US can take? I mean we have. I think a pretty good Department of Transportation Head with Pete Buttigieg. He certainly understands about cycling. Of course, he's saddled with so many other problems with our infrastructure. But is there anything from? For example, the declaration that you think would translate into something. Maybe states could pick up here as opposed to the whole country.

Speaker 3

Yeah, well, I think. The declaration, or aspects thereof, you know, with the 8 headings on things that are just really applicable to everything you need to do for cycling, whether it's. Policies, the infrastructure, Rd. safety and security and and all of those things, I think it's a good blueprint for anybody to take inspiration from. I think the one most important thing anybody can do to really exponentially increase cycling is making sure that they're safe infrastructure to do it on because the number one reason people will give anywhere about why they don't cycle or don't cycle more or don't let their child, their children cycle will be safety, right. And it that's the first problem you have to solve everywhere, and it takes money to solve that, no matter how you. Do it so. If the US

can, you know, really consciously invest more in it now, what we. Recommend as an organization is that countries should be spending about 10% of their national transport budgets on cycling. Then most people tell us we're completely crazy when we say that, but I can think of two countries that do that you should have mentioned Ireland before in my list of countries, that's doing very well on these things because Ireland actually does spend 10% of their national transport budget on cycling. And a further 10% on walking and that adds up to about €1,000,000 a day for cycling and walking in that relatively small country and the Netherlands, and you see the difference that that makes in the case of Ireland starting to make. In terms of changing mobility, enabling a shift in mobility behavior.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I would totally agree. And we certainly had this enormous infrastructure bill that is starting to trickle down into infrastructure for cycling pretty much in, in a lot of places that I follow like New York and Ohio and Washington. Well, the last thing is velocity. Tell me what below city is.

Speaker

Hmm.

Speaker 3

Yes, velocity is the world's premier conference for cycling. Planning and promotion takes place every year. It takes place in a different host city every year. It's a competitive process to host fellow city. We just held the conference in Gents with about 1600 delegates. Next year we'll be in Gdansk from the 10th to the 13th of June 2025, the year after that limit and 2027 bids are open. At the moment it's just a fantastic conference for politicians and advocates and city planners and. You know the whole ecosystem around cycling planning and promotion comes together and it's a whole lot of fun. There's a bike parade, there's, you know, all sorts of networking as well as the content is just top. You know, sharing best practice and and as a knowledge transfer transfer platform and place for workshops and and for everyone to get together. So it's really, really good.

Speaker 2

Lastly, how can people follow the CF and what you're doing? Because clearly you're doing something right and I think that any planners here and around the world who are not in Europe could take something from it.

Speaker 3

Well, come to Villa City, first of all, second of all, sign up for our. Newsletters@ecf.com sign up for our euro available newsletters if you're more into. That kind of of cycle route, if that's where your interests lies, or both. And that's how you can follow what we're doing and how we're. Doing. It donate to us if you want to support our work because good advocacy costs money, and I would. I would also say our friends at League of

American Bicyclists donate to them, help them do more of what needs to be done, because that's that's the way that you have strong advocacy that that really is effective.

Speaker 2

It is and I appreciate all the work that you're doing and I think you're a model that we can take a lot of information from and I appreciate it. Thank you so much. We've been speaking with Jill Warren. She's the CEO of the European Cyclists Federation. You can go to ecf.com, sign up for the newsletter, follow what's going on and be an advocate for cycling. Thank you so much. Thank you. My thanks to Jill Warren for joining me on the show. You can find out more about the Ecfc@ecf.com and sign up for their newsletters. While you're there too, I'm hoping we here in the US can take a page out of her playbook in hopes of expanding our cycling infrastructure and our goals. For more cycling everywhere. Let's take a short break, and when we return, we're heading for Moab, Utah, to learn about the White Rim Trail. With Scott Casper, you're listening to the outspoken cyclist. We are back on the outspoken cyclist. I'm your host, Diane Jenks. If you're ready to drop off the grid for a few days and ride one of the more challenging trails we've covered this summer in our favorite trails series, you might want to consider the White Rim trail. Located in Canyonlands National Park. Located between the Green and Colorado rivers, the 100 mile MTB Trail is both rugged and breathtaking. My guest is Scott Casper, and his description of his experiences. Yes, he loved it so much, he had to do it twice. So far will wet your appetite for a multi day experience to remember. Hi, Scott. Welcome back to the outspoken cyclist. Nice to talk with you again. How's the East Coast compared to the southwest?

Speaker 4

Ohh thanks for having me back Daniel. It's nice to talk to you as well and the East Coast is is great. We're back in your family and and friends that we left behind in 20 something years ago when we moved away from here. And and it's good to be back but I I do have to say. With all due respect to my cycling friends here in the Northeast, the miles are much better in the southwest. I I look forward to bringing my bike back there for a. Vacation.

Speaker 2

Isn't it really hot there though right now?

Speaker 4

In the Southwest, well, so. So I was in Albuquerque, which is 6000 feet above sea level. And so it's not quite as hot as Phoenix or Tucson gets, but there's also no humidity. And that does actually make a huge difference. And so yeah, it's hot.

Speaker 2

Right.

Speaker 4

But you get used. But I'd rather have hot and. Dry than hot and humid.

Speaker 2

Yeah, we have hot and humid here in Cleveland, but we have Lake Erie. So it's, you know? Yeah. So it's Albuquerque where the Sandia Mountains are.

Speaker 4

Sure.

Speaker 3

Yep.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So we took that crazy cable thing up to the top. That's scary.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 4

Yeah, well, why didn't you ride your bike to the top? That's fun.

Speaker 2

Because we were actually out there, we we built a. Bike for a gentleman. And we flew out there to get him fitted on it and he and so we just had. We weren't actually out there to ride. We were only there for a day or so and then we were on our way to a ride directors conference in Sacramento. So there was no riding. Yeah. OK. But in the meantime, I did like Albuquerque.

Speaker 4

The Albuquerque is. A neat place and the rioting there is out.

Speaker 2

Well, we're actually. Talking today about another trail. So you know we've been doing.

Speaker 4

Sure.

Speaker 2

This. Series all summer about favorite trails and most of the people I've talked to are associated with the trails somehow, but you are going to talk to us about experience,

your experience of the White rim trail in Moab. So it's part of the Canyon Lands National Park. You've ridden it more than once. When did you ride?

Speaker 4

So I wrote the full white room trail in October of 2021.

Speaker 2

That's 100 miles.

Speaker 4

It is 100 miles, a little more than 100 miles the way we did it. And then we went back again in 2022 and we got rained out on the first day. There is such a a bad storm that came through that the Park Rangers evacuated folks who were not yet all the way. Down in the Canyon. So we rode for a day with our the the group that we were with. We rode down the Schaefer Rd. which I'll talk about as they get into some of the details about the Lightroom Trail, but we rode down the Schafer Trail, which is super fun and out into the Canyon a little bit and then turned around and went back up to Shafer Trail. And then the rain started that night. So it's actually good that we weren't in there, we. Would have gotten. Stuck in in a in an awful situation, so yeah.

Speaker 2

Yeah, but you were able to ride the whole thing in 2021, so I was reading it it takes more than a day to do this. How many days did you take to do it?

Speaker 4

Yeah. So actually it's interesting we, we saw some day riders. We saw some guys that were out there, ***** riders that were attempting to do the 100 miles in a day. And I think we saw two or three of them pass us by, but most people, most sane people, do it over three or four days. We spent three nights. In the Canyon. So we rode for four days. The night before we dropped in, we actually stayed outside of the park just in a in a. State Park campgrounds, called called Horse Thief Campground and and from Horse Thief Campground. It's about a 12 or 15 mile ride to the entrance of Canyonlands National Park, where you then dropped into the Lightroom Trail. So we did that. We left our cars parked in a parking lot there. We hopped on our bikes and we we did. The first 12 miles on the road paved in a gravel combination of paved and gravel roads until you drop in to the Canyon. There's two ways to do it right you can. You can go in in the north and ride counterclockwise, or you can go in the. South and ride. Clockwise and the decision to which one you do largely is based on which campgrounds you get assigned when you get your permits. You know, obviously, if if you're assigned the northernmost campground on night #1, it makes sense to start north. And and go around counterclockwise.

Speaker 2

So explain how the permits work. I didn't realize that your permit. Had to do with your campground.

Speaker 4

Yeah. So the permits for overnight camping on the camp sites there are I think, 10 distinct campgrounds along the Lightroom Trail, and each one of those campgrounds, most of them have several camp sites and there are facilities there, bathrooms, facilities and and.

Speaker 2

OK.

Speaker 4

Stuff like that. But quarterly. The National Park Service opens permits for overnight camping. So, for example, in May, the fall permit. Open up and so you got to go online and you know, they typically sell out very quickly and you get whichever campgrounds you know. It's by the luck of your timing and who was faster than you on the Internet. And and you select the campgrounds along the way. When we did it in 2011. It just so happened. That the the way the campgrounds were sold out sold out on two of our camp campgrounds were only like 11 or 12 miles from one another. So that was a short day of riding, but we used it to go on some hikes off some little spur trails or, you know, just some additional riding off the trail on other little spur trails that goes down by the river or. To some scenic overlooks, things like that. So it wasn't a wasted day at all. It was just short from 1 campsite.

Speaker 2

To the next what kind of bikes were you? Writing.

Speaker 4

So I was riding a a trek hard tail mountain bike, so I'm trying to think in our group. We had and you'll like this. We had a pair that was riding a tandem mountain bike we had. A couple of folks who were on full suspension mountain bikes and we had someone on a gravel bike and all of the above are perfectly fine for the white room trail.

Speaker 2

OK, that that was my question. What kind of tires, what kind of do you need suspension? So it's it's a it's an up to you.

Speaker

Yeah.

Speaker 4

For the most part, the White Rim Trail is an off road Jeep. There are a few sections of it that have some technical aspects. I personally wouldn't have wanted to be on a gravel bike in those sections. Some of the cross country kind of stuff was. Super Bumpy and I wished I had had a suspension, but I was perfectly fine in my hard tail and it was perfect.

Speaker 2

Let me reintroduce you and then we're going to talk a little more about some of the other things that I'm interested in about the White rim trail. We're speaking with Scott Casper. So Scott is actually a rider. He is a you are a paramedic. And what else you do all kinds of things.

Speaker 4

Well, so my my paramedic career. Yeah, I've had. I started my career in EMS back in 1986, so that's been my primary career in life. That's what's paid the bills. However, I'm also an avid cyclist. I'm a USA cycling coach. I participate with on the national level. The breakthrough T1B ride to cure program used to be known as the JDRF Ride to Cure program. So yeah, I I dabble. In a whole bunch of stuff and. The but the thing that I think the thing that keeps me sane is miles in the saddle on the bicycle, wherever they may be.

Speaker 2

Yeah. And you know, I follow you on on social media and you are always taking these beautiful photographs of all the rides you do. And we will have a gallery of the White Rim trail ride that we're talking about today. Scott sent me pictures, and I think there are almost a dozen of them. And and we're going to put them all up there. 'Cause, they're all gorgeous. So tell me about the altitude. I have trouble when it's really, really high up there. And I think this is this is high.

Speaker 4

Yeah. So I think Moab itself is right around 4000 feet above sea level, 3500 feet above sea level. And then you actually go up to Canyonlands National Park from there. So I think the white room trail is right around 6000 feet above sea level, which as we were talking before the show here, I we were talking about Albuquerque, which is where I live. During this period of time, which is also 6000. Feet above sea level, so for me it wasn't a huge challenge, but I think if you're coming from the East Coast or the Midwest at A at a sea level kind of environment, you definitely would. Benefit from spending some. Time out there to acclimatize before you started riding hard for sure.

Speaker 2

Yeah, I can remember being in Denver for a seminar that I was doing, and I had one.

Speaker 4

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Glass of wine and I fell asleep for like 5 hours. It was like it was a.

Speaker 4

Yeah, alcohol definitely. Definitely affect you in altitude and.

Speaker 2

You don't do that.

Speaker 4

Right. And and the thing that a lot of people don't consider is hydration. Hydration really has a huge benefit when you go to altitude and and to stay hydrated makes a huge difference in how. You feel for sure.

Speaker 2

They say drink lots of ice.

Speaker 4

Yeah.

Speaker 2

Water. So I want to ask something about the the camping and the eating. If if you are you are you hiking everything in there? Are you bringing everything with you or are there places?

Speaker 4

Yeah, yeah.

Speaker 2

To. Stop or.

Speaker 4

So there is no potable water once you once you go past the Ranger station and you drop down mineral mineral bottom Rd.

Speaker 2

Hmm.

Speaker 4

Hard to say. There's no portable water. You you can't have access to the river. So if you're ***** and you. Want to you know. Treat the water that you pull out of the river. You can do that, but there's otherwise. Everything that you need, you have to bring in the group that I did it with. We did a supported ride. So we had two. Very large pickup trucks that supported us, that carried all of our food and our water and our gear and our tents and cooking stuff, everything that we needed to enjoy the time that we were there, we took the bicycles and the trucks took everything else. So it was a great way to be able to be confident. We we had two people, a great guy by the name of Mike Clark and a wonderful woman by the name of Linda Thompson Crowder who? We're sort of our ride leaders and they handled all the logistics they planned this whole thing for us. So for example, we would sit out in the morning and they would send one of the trucks ahead to find a great spot to eat lunch and then by the time we got there, the truck would be there with a table with all the stuff laid out that had been packed in in. Big gigantic Yeti coolers and we had a luxurious picnic in in the Canyon Lands National Park on the Lightroom Trail surrounded by, you know, dirt and rocks and everything else. And it was luxurious and it was fantastic. Definitely a way to. Do it, yeah.

Speaker 2

That's the way I'd want to do. But. That that sounds wonderful, because I, well, we did a ride in Israel similar to that, and every time you would stop, you get to the rest stop and everything was laid out for you. The lunch was ready. All you had to do was grab a plate and go. So tell me some of the highlights along the trail, the things that that.

Speaker

For sure.

Speaker 2

You saw that you would recommend. And I know you're recommending the trail to begin with because you came to me with it. It's like, yeah, what are some of the? What are some of the highlights of the trail?

Speaker 4

Yeah, for sure. So so I think. For folks who look at the gallery that you've mentioned the the 1st and the last highlight are the drop in and the climb out bar. None super exciting. So when you come down mineral bottom Rd. you you get to the entrance to Canyonlands National Park and you descend. You descend about two miles and 1000 feet over 2 miles on a dirt switch back Rd. that that goes from the rim of the Canyon down towards the the Green River at the Canyon floor, and it is #1 spectacularly scenic. It's. A little. Scary for folks who have never done that kind of riding before, but in a very invigorating way. It's not unsafe, you know, it's it. It just the appearance of it it the the magnitude of it and how high you are coming down these switchbacks is just super exciting. Getting like excited. Was thinking about it so that that was a ton of fun. And then the same thing is on on the on the end, you go up what's called the Schaefer

Road, and it's the same thing. It's 2 1/2 mile Rd. of 1200. Plus feet of climbing. Along switch backs to take you back up to the rim of the Canyon and. I mentioned I did it, you know, twice. My goal was to climb Shaffer Rd. Better and faster and without getting off the bike as compared to the first time I did it. You know? So. And and I succeeded. But it's just spectacular. So to me, those are the 1st 2 highlights. You're you're in Canyonlands National Park and I don't know. For folks who have never been there, I equate Canyonlands National Park. To being not unlike the Grand Canyon, it's obviously much smaller, but the scenery is very much the same, but nobody's there, Diane. It's like nobody knows about this gem of a National Park that we have, so it's not crowded even when you're not in the back country, even when you're up on the rim and the visitors station. Stuff. There's nobody there. It's off the beaten. Path and it's. Spectacularly beautiful. One of the one of the pictures that I sent you has a large Butte in the background. It it shows a friend in front of our campfire that's at the airport campground. So these huge money. Lift block formations exist there and just very scenic, you know, spectacular scenery and. Then we did it in the fall. So the Cottonwood and the other trees that are along the river in what is otherwise a very barren high desert type environment are extremely colorful and gorgeous so that you know, just the scenery is, is fantastic. And then you know, I think the last thing I would. Tell you is it's the Backcountry. There's no cell signal. You're out there with your bike and your friends and Mother Nature and the trail. And you know the trails. I I've listened to each one of your episodes on on the different bike trails so far, and they all sound fantastic, but they're all in civilization. And and this is. Absolutely not that. So it's really gives you the opportunity to disconnect and just ride your bike and not have any worries and and not have any outside influences getting in the way of just having a great time on two wheels.

Speaker 2

What about critters? Any critters?

Speaker 4

So we saw lots of. Critters. We saw mountain goats and all kinds of other stuff, but no critters. That bothered us.

Speaker

OK.

Speaker 2

Even better.

Speaker 4

It was, yeah, it it was super safe.

Speaker 2

Well, I'll tell you what, it sounds like a wonderful trip. So your suggestion would be. To get on the website and and to I mean the the website is excellent. It's got lots of information in fact right now there's a piece of it that's closed Mondays through Thursdays for something that they're doing there. It's a small like a half a mile. And then to make that reservation because obviously.

Speaker 4

Yeah.

Speaker 2

They'd only issue so many permit. It's. Per quarter.

Speaker 4

Yeah, they they issue a limited limited number of permits per quarter and per day. So it's it's definitely something that you got to plan in advance unless you just happen to be in Moab and you want to be a day rider and go enjoy parts of the White rim trail, you can drop down and and ride for 10 miles and ride back up. You'd like you could do that, but if you want to do the whole thing that it's 99 point something miles. And then I think it worked out to be about 130 miles total based on where we started and ended at at the horse, these campground. But that that requires some planning and getting on the website early and reserving reserving. There are campsites very well maintained campsites. By the way. I have to give kudos to the National Park Service. They do a phenomenal job in maintaining the campsites and each one of the campsites has a bathroom facility that are are as clean as an outhouse can possibly be and they they just do a.

Speaker

Plastic job.

Speaker 2

I found a website. It's actually a blog by somebody named CS Ginger and I'm going to post his link to our our outspokencyclist.com because they have a lot of information about this particular White rim trail. So I along with you can always go to nps.gov National Park Service. Look up Canyon lands. It just sounds like so much fun. You can also use the all Trails app. I don't know. Do you need a map?

Speaker 4

So that's a really interesting question. You'll see on the gallery. One of the pictures I sent you shows of all the people that I was riding with sort of at A at a crossroads in the trail. And I kind of climbed up the hill and and took the picture. We were there trying to figure out which turn to take. Like I said, there's no self-service inside the Canyon. So if you're using all trails or you know any of those apps, they won't work unless you have the maps offline. I think most of us downloaded a PCX file or GPX file from. Ride with GPS

or one of those type websites onto our Garmin computer heads, and ultimately that's, you know, we had. That there's only a couple places where you can turn off the trail and and go someplace where you don't necessarily want to go. So I would recommend that people use a head unit with the trail downloaded to it. You won't have access to figure those new down otherwise.

Speaker 2

You know, my guess is you could still print out a paper map.

Speaker 4

You might be able to do that, Yep. And with the turn by turn directions and and Mark it and label it and stuff. Sure, for sure. Yep, Yep.

Speaker 2

Right, there's a possibility. Well, Scott, thank you. So much for telling us about this. We've been speaking with Scott Casper. He lives now on the East Coast. He used to live in the southwest, but he's done this white rim trail in Moab twice. We will have his gallery up at outspokencyclist.com. And thanks so much for sharing. Your experience, because I think it's much more interest. Saying, you know, then just like point by point I, I mean, I love all of the trail things we've done, but this one's really kind of special because of the gallery and everything else. So thank you.

Speaker 4

Yeah, you bet. As as I was listening to your other podcasts, I I thought, you know, these are all paved trails and and populated areas and, you know, for folks who are thinking about it, you can get off the road and off the grid. And, you know, Moab is a great little town to hang out in for a couple of days anyway.

Speaker

Great.

Speaker 4

And you know, get out and do it. Get out and experience. What this country has to offer at.

Speaker 2

Well, I appreciate it very much. Thank you, Scott.

Speaker 4

You bet. Thanks Dan.

Speaker 2

My thanks to Scott for sharing his experience of the white rimmed trail in Moab. As promised, we've posted a gallery of his photos on outspokencyclist.com. You will have to agree they are breathtaking. Next time we'll be heading to Missouri to explore the 240 mile Katy Trail and then we'll be having a chat with Professor Wes Marshall, whose book *Killed by a Traffic Engineer* is acclaimed as the transportation book that will change the way you look at our streets. I thought it was a pretty provocative title. Thanks for listening. I hope you enjoyed the show. Please remember that you can find links, photos and a written transcript of the show at outspokencyclist.com. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and subscribe to the podcast on your favorite app. I know there are a lot of cycling. Podcasts out there, and I truly appreciate you listening to ours. I hope you're having a great day. Stay safe. Stay well and remember, there is always time for a ride. Bye. Bye.

Speaker 1

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