American “Wounded Warriors” Honored as Participants In Epic, Week-Long Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 Event

August 15 – August 22, 2015 Fully Supported 500 Cyclist and Volunteer Crew Event Starts in Red Lodge, Montana, With Overnight Stops In Cooke City & Absarokee, Montana; Cody & Powell, Wyoming

GREATER YELLOWSTONE ECOSYSTEM – Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 starts in Red Lodge, Montana, with more than 500 cyclists and volunteer crew touring the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem during a seven day, epic event among some of the most beautiful and ecologically significant areas on Earth.

The Montana Office of Tourism and Coca-Cola, Inc. are Presenting Sponsors of Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015.

“The economic activity that Cycle Greater Yellowstone brings to our communities helps support good jobs and strong local economies,” said Montana Governor Steve Bullock. “We are proud to support these efforts to build lasting, meaningful relationships with the cycling community throughout Montana and beyond our borders.”

“More than 520 miles of mountains, streams and wildlife in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem promises our participants and their support teams a truly life changing experience, with memories of friendship, beauty and wilderness certain to endure,” said Caroline Byrd, Executive Director, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, the organizer of Cycle Greater Yellowstone. “Participating in the 3rd Cycle Greater Yellowstone event brings you to some of our most exhilarating and wild places in the Greater Yellowstone region, where wildlife, wild waterways and wildlands fill the soul with wonderment and wisdom. This is the wild heart of North America, a place we protect, we defend and we rely upon for our communities, our continent and our lives to thrive.”

As sponsored guests, four American Wounded Warriors are participating in Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015, bringing even greater meaning and significance to the event.

“America’s veterans answered the call of duty to protect our country and the freedoms we enjoy,” said U.S. Senator Jon Tester, Montana’s only member of the U.S. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. “The American Wounded Warriors participating in this year’s ride inspire all of us, and we thank them for their service and sacrifice. This ride also reminds us of the importance of our public lands and the significance they have to the surrounding communities.”

“Our veterans have put their lives on the line for us day in and day out; they deserve the absolute best we have to offer,” said Rep. Ryan Zinke, a retired Navy SEAL Commander and member of the House Armed Services Committee. “Over my 23 year career with the SEALs I was lucky. My generation mostly trained for war; but the men and women of today live it. I’m happy to see Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 partnering with American Wounded Warriors to help raise awareness for the critical mission of taking care of our troops with physical and emotional wounds. I can think of no better place for this epic event than the beautiful and healing lands of Yellowstone.”
The American Wounded Warriors participating in Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 are:

**Kyle Miztel –**

Kyle is 27 years old. He is originally from Baltimore, Maryland. He served in OIF 07-08 with the 1-175th INF Maryland Army National Guard as a military intelligence analyst. He was medically boarded out of the Army National guard in 2013 after multiple surgeries. He now lives in Denver and serves as an Economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“I started cycling, to clear my mind, in the fall of 2012 while living in Reston, Virginia,” Miztel explains. “Shortly after picking up cycling I decided that moving to the Denver area was my new goal. In January of 2014 I made the jump to Denver and have regretted ever saying ‘I enjoy biking up hills’.”

**Anne Oravac -**

Anne Oravec joined the Army directly out of high school with big dreams of becoming an officer and serving her country. Life was on the right path as a Military Police Sergeant, until she was hit by a road side bomb in Iraq, where she sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury. After many years of therapy and trying to reclaim her new life, Wounded Warrior Project introduced her to cycling as a form of coping. She instantly fell in love with the sport and now rides avidly. Anne has raced recreationally and conquered quit a few challenging climbs. However, cycling Greater Yellowstone will be to date the longest distances she's ridden. She looks forward to the challenge and meeting some amazing people along the way.
Laura Root –

Although she felt the calling of the military, Laura Root first graduated with her M.A. in International Relations from the American University of Paris and University of Paris XI, having earned her BA from the University of Washington. After living in both Paris and Istanbul, Laura hoped to apply her international experience to Naval Intelligence. She was commissioned in Newport, Rhode Island in 2011. In the midst of her first tour, she began suffering from a rare form of adult onset muscular dystrophy and was retired from military service.

Military adaptive sports programs lead Ms. Root to several gold medals in shooting at the Warrior Games in Colorado in 2013 and 2014 and 2 medals in cycling at Invictus Games in London in 2014. Currently, Ms. Root tries to reverse the symptoms of her disease by remaining active. She became a shooting coach in order to motivate other veterans struggling with health issues. She is also currently working on a book about veterans in adaptive sports due for release in 2016.

Ritz Schell --

Rita M. Schell retired as a Lieutenant Colonel from the U.S. Air Force. She served on active duty for 20 years as a Space and Missile Operator. Some of her duties included Chief of Standardization and Evaluation for military launches at Cape Canaveral AFS, DoD Manned Spaceflight Support for the Space Shuttle, and Flight Commander in the Space Control Center under NORAD at Cheyenne Mountain AFS. She also served 2 one-year tours of duty in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Rita is a disabled veteran and wounded warrior as a result of her service in the Iraq War. Prior to military service, she was a kindergarten teacher. Rita received her bachelor's degree from Texas A&M University and also has a master's degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Rita contributes her time as volunteer in the Wounded Warrior Project, as a member of the Disabled American Veterans, with Penrose Catholic Church, and with the Colorado Springs Horticulture Society. She now lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

These American Wounded Warriors will join more than 500 Cycle Greater Yellowstone cyclists and volunteer crew, who are coming from 39 states throughout America and three countries, Netherlands, Switzerland and Canada.
WoundedWarriorProject.org has more information regarding this important effort to support veterans of the American military.

Supporting Sponsors of Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 are: Bolle’, Primal Cycling Apparel, Republic Services, Roswell Bicycles, Tanager Beverages (Cody, Wyoming) and Uberbrew (Billings, Montana).

Mile Marker Sponsors of Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 are: Allegra, Bad Idea Events, Clif Bar, Kat’s Bars, Moon Lake Market, Owenhouse Bicycle Company, Quarterpoint Capital Management, Stillwater Mining, Sylvan Peak, Well Approach Fitness Center.

Sponsorship for Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 remain available. Please contact: info@cyclegreateryellowstone.com

ABOUT CYCLE GREATER YELLOWSTONE 2015

Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 is organized and sponsored by the Greater Yellowstone Coalition (www.greateryellowstone.org), a 30 year old organization dedicating to protecting the lands, waters and wildlife of the 20 million acre Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. More than 350 cyclists and their support teams are participating in this 3rd annual event. The Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015 route covers more than 550 miles, starting in Red Lodge, Montana, winding its way to Cooke City, Nye, Columbus and Joliet, Montana. In Wyoming, communities including Cody, Lovell and Powell are among those who are helping to host the event participants.

Here is schematic and map of the Cycle Greater Yellowstone 2015:

[Map Image]

www.cyclegreateryellowstone.com includes more detailed information regarding the cycling, the route, the entertainment and the educational opportunities that make Cycle Greater Yellowstone such a meaningful, fun and important event for its participants, supporters and sponsors.

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