

# Biking in Lyons

By *Dave Chase*

It is great to be a cyclist in Lyons, Colorado! Many cyclists call Lyons home because of the wide variety of biking opportunities. Whether you ride a road bike or a mountain bike, you will surely find enjoyable riding in or near Lyons.

For starters, you don't have to drive beyond town to have a great time on the road or in the dirt. Just a short spin from downtown and you are in your element. If getting dirty is your pleasure, Boulder County's Hall Ranch Open Space is on the western edge of town. This property, situated between the St. Vrain canyons of US 36 and SH 7, is one of the most popular places to mountain bike on Colorado's Front Range. Hall Ranch has two trailheads. The more difficult option is just a couple of miles west on Hwy. 7. This option will lead bikers through the rock garden, a steep and though passage thru scrub brush, pinion forest, and rocks – lots of rocks. Perhaps consider a less demanding option by accessing Hall Ranch from Antelope Road, just off of Apple Valley Road a few blocks west on Hwy. 36. Either trail comes together in the middle of the park for riders to enjoy fantastic views of the Continental Divide, light forest, and foothills meadows. Hall Ranch is very busy in the spring and fall, and can be very warm in summer's midday sun.

If higher elevation forest mountain biking calls you more, hop in a car and head west. The trails based out of Peaceful Valley (30 minutes up Hwy. 7) make an exceptional network of rocky alpine singletrack. Bring your lungs, though, as Peaceful Valley starts at an elevation of 8000 feet. More National Forest mountain bike opportunities also exist west up 36 in Johnny Park (a large network of OHV roads near Big Elk Meadows) or in Lion Gulch, an arduous trail just off of 36, only 20 minutes from Lyons.

The road riding opportunities are fantastic as well. In fact, many bike clubs from Ft. Collins to Denver meet in Lyons for social rides. Leaving from town, riders can head west up Hwy. 7. A 3000-foot climb following the South St. Vrain River, this road eventually leads cyclists to one of the most beautiful alpine roads in the state, the Peak-to-Peak Highway. Turn around at the small hamlet of Raymond and ride back to town or continue on to ride all day. You won't be disappointed either way. For other options, also leaving from town, cyclists can ride east to access the beautiful sleepy farm roads near Hygiene, Longmont, and Boulder. These roads are all relatively flat with low traffic and offer amazing views of the foothills and the divide. Carter Lake, between Lyons and Loveland, is also a very popular destination for riders from all over the area.

For a cool down, make sure to ride up Old South St. Vrain Road, or Apple Valley Road. Both parallel the highways west out of town and meander right next to the South St. Vrain River and the North St. Vrain River. Do them both and ride what the locals call the Fruit Loops. After your cool down on the bike, make sure to leave room for a proper cool down off the bike. Lyons offers fantastic wining and dining right in town, and most establishments have outdoor patio seating.

For more specific information on these rides, or information about more mountain bike and road bike opportunities, make sure to call or visit the fine bike shops in Lyons – Redstone Cyclery ([www.redstonecyclery.com](http://www.redstonecyclery.com) ) at the corner of 4th and Broadway, or Bitterbrush Cycles ([www.bitterbrushcycles.com](http://www.bitterbrushcycles.com) ) across the street from Subway right on Main Street.

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