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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Starbucks Bike to Work Day Tallies 19,097 Cyclists

Fremont Bridge continues to be the highest travelled spot with 1,675 riders

SEATTLE , WA May 15, 2009 – On Friday, May 15, [Starbucks Bike to Work Day](#), area cyclists took to the streets in mass numbers. This year, more than 19,000 people across the greater King County region rode their bikes in celebration of Bike to Work Day. [Cascade Bicycle Club](#) continues to see strong participation throughout its commute programs, on daily rides and in recreational cycling events. This year's total ridership for Starbucks Bike to Work Day, however, was lower than 2008.

The 2008 count is slightly above 2007's total of 19,044, but shows a drop of 16.9% from peak ridership of 23,000 in 2008.

Why the lower number this year? We see two factors: a cold, wet May and rising unemployment.

According to [weather.com](#), Seattle can expect 2.0 inches average rainfall in May. Month to date for 2009 is already 3.26 inches. Average temperatures are also lower than usual. Many riders who did participate shared stories of damp, cold days leading up to today.

Unemployment statistics released in March 2009 also show a steep downturn across our region. [Washington State's](#) unemployment rate hovers just below 10%. [King County's](#) rate sits at 8%. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Seattle – Tacoma – Bellevue](#) unemployment is 8.9%.

Anecdotally, Cascade staff members have heard stories ranging from avid bike commuters who have lost their jobs to those hit with 10% workweek cuts.

With fewer people working, fewer people are commuting by every method. According to a Seattle Times article published in March 2009, driving trips across the region are also lower. Metro's ridership is reportedly down 5% from a year ago.

Group Health Commute Challenge Participation Reaches Record High

Meanwhile, those who are employed are actively cycling. The [Group Health Commute Challenge](#), a bicycle commuting competition produced by Cascade Bicycle Club, has seen record participation this year. For the first time, the contest has more than 10,000 participants. Employees from Group Health,

Starbucks, Microsoft, REI, Boeing, University of Washington, City of Seattle, Seattle Children's Hospital, amazon.com and F5 Networks have logged the highest number of riders.

Employees from more than 700 companies and organizations are participating, including Nordstrom, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Honeywell International, Harborview Medical Center, PCC Natural Markets and Seattle Public Schools.

As of Friday, May 15, contest riders have logged more than 480,000 miles since May 1, which translates into 480,000 pounds of CO2 emissions saved. The average trip in the distance Group Health Commute Challenge is 14.87 miles with 32,304 trips tracked so far. Registration is free and open to all. The contest ends on May 31.

Bike Commuting is the Fastest Growing Form of Transportation

Today, Cascade Bicycle Club released a [Report Card on Bicycling](#) as a way to present the City of Seattle's progress toward becoming a bike-friendly community, but also to bring awareness to relevant issues as they pertain to bicycling.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, bicycling trips grew 27 percent in Seattle between 2000 and 2005, making it the city's fastest-growing form of transportation. City downtown bike counts showed an increase from 1,104 bicyclists over two and a half hours in a 1992 tally to 2,273 in 2007. A 2008 count at 32 neighborhood locations reported 4,686 cyclists.

The city estimated that between 4,000 and 8,000 people currently commute by bicycle every day, though Cascade believes it to be closer to 15,000, basing that number on Puget Sound Regional Council survey data showing 4.2 percent of city residents commuting to work by bike in 2006.

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RESOURCES

[Bike Month Fact Sheet](#)

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