

Sacred Mountain Point of Pines Ride

For those who arrived at Apache Gold Resort in San Carlos for the Run to the Rez by the morning of Friday October 18, the schedule included the Sacred Mountain Point of Pines Ride. This ride is about 140 miles round trip; reaching nearly 7000 feet elevation from our 2,650' starting point.

100+ riders gathered for the 10am departure.

First stop was in Peridot, at Noline's Country Store. Riders topped off their gas tanks and Dr John called them together for a road review.... This was particularly important for those who'd never taken the trip. He warned that while the entire route is paved it is not well maintained. There are sections of the road that are in rough shape. Watch for potholes & rough patches. He also shared that there were no worries about getting 'lost'. There's only one road in & out ☺ Then it was time to roll.

This is one of those times when I am so glad to be a 'traditional gal' who rides behind her 'ole man. I knew that Bruce was busy taking in and focusing on a new road; the condition of which he'd already been warned about. I, on the other hand, could be taking in some of the wonderful views.... Wild flowers, flowering prickly pear & chollas, and other natural beauties of the mountains and flatlands. There were even trees sharing their autumn colors... a treat to us Valley dwellers. It was windy at times. Parts of the road indi-

cated that a light rain had recently fallen. Just a hint of ozone remained in the air. Other times you'd feel the sweet combination of chilling air & warming sun.

We passed a sign announcing we'd arrived at Barlow Pass; having climbed to 6,644 feet. Some of the road was indeed rough ... but it was all do-able. It was similar to the old Route 66 segments that are still open. The views were amazing!

As we climbed, about 10 miles from our destination the pack pulled over to the side of the road. Here, a Spiritual Leader named Manuel Cooley shared some history about and significance of the Nantac Rim & Point of Pines. He reminded us that Life is a learning process ☺ He emphasized the importance of sharing history forward to younger generations. While his words were likely directed most pointedly toward his fellow Native Americans; it is also true that we all have history that can be lost to time if not protected... familial, ancestral, historical, and cultural.

Lunch was ready at the top of the mountain, at a camp of the Point of Pines Cattle Associations. Thank you for the use of your property! Once all the bikes were parked, you could

hear the murmur of the breeze through the tall pines. It was SO peaceful! Everyone in line for lunch received a raffle ticket. The Fry Bread was delicious ☺ Raffles were drawn during lunch. Winners received a purse with \$50 in it, a man's wallet holding another \$50, a \$50 gift certificate for the Apache Prime Steakhouse, and a leather jacket. Congratulations to each of you!

As people finished their lunches and concluded their conversations they departed back down the mountain at their own pace. We got back to Apache Gold about 3pm.

On our return ride we passed other bikers on the side of the road. A short time later, with dread, we saw emergency vehicles coming the other way. Thankfully, it was announced later that the rider was at the trauma center but was doing okay.

This is a restricted area. Visits require a permit. We appreciate the invitation and opportunity to be there and to share in the history and community that was imparted.

This was a good way to start the Run to the Rez weekend activities & we were glad to be a part of it. Read more about the Run to the Rez in an upcoming issue of *AZ Rider*.

Betsy & Bruce

See more photos from this ride by clicking the title online.

