

## Ragged Point

Ragged Point is one of the great treasures of our county. A small community sits 300 feet above the sea with a 300 degree view up and down the coast. There is an inn, a small market, Ben and Jerry ice cream, a hamburger grill and a world-class restaurant. These are seductive goals for enthusiastic bicyclists.

Round trip from Morro Bay is 85 miles. Highway 1 is so beautiful that you will not regret a single mile. Most of the ride is on the Pacific Coast Bike Route. You can, of course, tailor a trip of any length by choosing from among the following segments. There are rest rooms available at Lila Keiser Park in Morro Bay; Hardie Park in Cayucos; Shamel Park in Cambria; W.R. Hearst State Beach in San Simeon, Piedras Blancas motel site north of the elephant seals (more about that later), and at Ragged Point.

**Morro Bay to Cambria** – Twenty miles of a combination of coastal and inland highway with a nice climb out of Cayucos to the town of Harmony. At Old Creek Road in Cayucos, turn right, then an immediate left onto Ocean. Follow the bike trail through the cemetery. Turn left at the stop sign to rejoin Ocean Avenue on the other side of the freeway. Ride the bike lane through town. Connect again with Highway 1 at the north end of Cayucos.

The good: Wide shoulder, with one exception, and great coastal views.

The bad: Toro Creek Bridge north of Morro Bay has no shoulder. Look behind you for traffic before you cross the bridge.

**Cambria to W.R. Hearst State Beach** – eight miles of flat highway.

The good: Wide shoulder, great coastal views. Nice alternate route along Moonstone Drive at the north end of Cambria. Sebastian store at San Simeon serves breakfast and lunch.

The bad: Headwinds are common when you ride north.

**Hearst State Beach to Ragged Point** – fifteen miles of rolling hills alongside Hearst Ranch. You pass beaches ruled by elephant seals. Piedras Blancas lighthouse marks the transition from a westerly to a northerly heading. Watch for Hearst's Roosevelt elk herd north of Arroyo de la Cruz or zebras anywhere along the route.

The good: Exquisite coastal views. Traffic tends to be light. Drivers give great courtesy to cyclists. Ragged Point grill serves tasty hamburgers

The bad: The shoulder narrows to nonexistence in some places. Northbound cyclists generally encounter heavy headwinds. Turnouts for vehicles to park and observe elephant seals north of San Simeon – beware turning vehicles who don't always give bicyclists the right of way. (Also seals don't smell very good – hold your nose as you ride past.)

**The Return** -- If you have a headwind going out, you will have a tailwind coming back. You can crank up some speed getting past those seals. Just watch out for motorists entering Highway 1 from the parking areas.