



# BIG THICKET BIKE TOUR

## Come join us in enjoying the early autumn in the Big Thicket!

The 2009 Big Thicket Bike Tour will be Saturday, March 21st, 2009. We are happy to be able to announce that we have updated all of our routes this year; we will Start & Finish at the Big Thicket Visitors Center, All courses are typical scenic South East Texas/Big Thicket country-side. The natural terrain is challenging. There will be manned rest stops with restrooms, snacks and drinks. We'll have SAG support throughout the course. All routes will start at the Big Thicket Visitors Center. Routes will include the beautiful neighboring cities of Kountze, Silsbee, Lumberton, Sour Lake, Batson and Beaumont all on the edge of the **Big Thicket National Preserve area**. The routes were selected by bike riders in our area.

### The Ride:



**Riders:** All riders under 18 must ride with a parent at all times. All riders must wear a helmet.

**Courses:** 14 mile from Visitors Center to Kountze & back.

36 miles from Visitors Center to Kountze, Silsbee, back to Kountze and then the Visitors Center.

46 miles from Visitors Center to Kountze, Silsbee, Lumberton, back to Kountze and then the Visitors Center.

75 miles from Visitors Center to Kountze, Silsbee, Lumberton, Beaumont, Sour Lake, back to Kountze then the Visitors Center.

101 miles from Visitors Center to Kountze, Silsbee, Lumberton, Beaumont, Sour Lake, Batson, back to Sour Lake, Kountze and then the Visitors Center

- Early registration is \$30, Riders who pay their entries before February 28th will receive a free event T-shirt.
- Online registration is available at [www.Active.com](http://www.Active.com) (\$3.00 fee applies)
- Family Registration (2 parents & up to 3 Children) \$75.00
- Late registration will be \$35 per rider or \$85 for family ride
- Packet Pick-up & late registration will be 6-9 pm. at Sertinos Cafe, 5657 Eastex Freeway, Beaumont, TX. **March 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>.**
- Day of Ride registration begins at 7 a.m. at our table outside the Big Thicket Visitors Center.-
- For safety reasons, riders must turn in their assigned entry number upon ride return.

**Ride Begins:** Ride starts and finishes at **Big Thicket Visitors Center** which is located seven miles north of Kountze, Texas, in Hardin County on U.S. Highway 69 at the junction of FM 420. Watch for the road signs directing you to the building. The street address is - 6102 FM 420, Kountze, Texas 77625.

**Ride Time:** Official start time is 8 a.m. on event day. Courses start at 5 minute staggered start for each route; 101 mile riders leave first. The course closes at 4 p.m. No late starters because SAG follows the last rider. All riders must check back in at the Registration table at the end of their ride.

### **How to Participate:**

Read, complete and sign the **SETHBC Big Thicket Bike Tour Entry Form** attached or at [active.com](http://active.com) The rider entry fee is \$30 until February 28th; \$35 after September 9th. Riders who pay their entries by February 28th will receive a free event T-shirt. All riders under 18 must ride at all times with a parent. All riders must wear a helmet. Make your check payable to SouthEast Texas Hike & Bike Coalition, 148 South Dowlen Road Suite 754, Beaumont, TX 77707-1755, email address is [contactus@funtrails.org](mailto:contactus@funtrails.org)

The funds raised will be used to expand our educational and safety programs. We put on 2 Bicycle Safety Rodeos each year, and are working to expand this program to also giving classroom safety seminars in Golden Triangle elementary schools to include informational activity packets to be given to each student attending.

### **Big Thicket National Preserve area:**

The Big Thicket National Preserve was established by Congress in 1974. This combination of virgin pine and cypress forest, hardwood forest, meadow and blackwater swamp is managed by the National Park Service. The Preserve was established to protect the remnant of its complex biological diversity. What is so extraordinary is not the rarity or abundance of its life forms, but how many species coexist here.

Lauded for its amazing biodiversity, southeastern Texas' 97,000-acre Big Thicket National Preserve is a unique combination of southwest desert, midwest plains, southeastern swamps, and eastern hardwood forest, all rolled into one interesting-to-explore park.

Scientists say the last ice age pushed plants from other parts of the country together and they landed in Big Thicket, the result being a place where visitors can investigate and enjoy more than 100 species of diverse plants, including 5 carnivorous plants, and wildlife ranging from alligators to mountain lions. Birdwatchers can also explore nearly 200 species of birds.

Big Thicket National Preserve can be reached via Interstate 10 to U.S. Highway 69-287 North from Beaumont. Eight miles north of Kountze, Texas, take FM 420 East and follow the signs to the visitor center.

Spring and fall are the optimal times to visit Big Thicket as the temperatures are comfortable and the rainfall minimal. Summer days can reach above 100 degrees so it's best to avoid the preserve during that time. Winter temperatures are usually in the 50s and 60s. Always bring light rain gear and comfortable walking shoes.

**After the Ride:** The visitor center offers you many opportunities to discover a wide array of facts regarding the rich diversity of resources found in the Preserve. You can view an orientation film, browse the exhibits, put your "hands on things" in the Discovery Room, or select a few books from our broad selection of sales items. Tired - just set back and rest in one of the rocking chairs on the front porch!