

## HAMS JOIN WITH CCVSAR TO SUPPORT RIDGE-TO-RIVER MOTORCYCLE ENDURANCE RIDE

On June 1, 2019, an all-day motocross type endurance event took place over many miles of rough and treacherous mountain trails in southwestern Chelan County. The riders started and finished at the Chelan County Fairgrounds in Cashmere and the many miles of designated trail routes traversed the vicinity of Brender Canyon, Camas Meadows, Tip Top Mountain, and Tronsen Ridge near Blewett Pass. The motorbikers would finally come off the trails where Devil's Gulch trail meets Mission Creek Road, and proceed back to the fairgrounds. The event was appropriately named "Ridge-to-River".

Recognizing the inherent dangers of such a long and difficult course the event organizers had contacted Matt (AE7MK) and Laura (W7LMK) Kozma to request radio communication and emergency assistance at numerous check points along the course route. Matt and Laura responded, organizing a team of local volunteers made up of ARES/RACES ham radio operators plus members of the Chelan County Volunteer Search and Rescue (CCVSAR) group. The ham radio operators would be located at 7 check points along the course, reporting the riders' progress, and any problems, back to the event HQ at the fairgrounds. Several SAR Off-Road-Vehicle (ORV) teams were strategically stationed along the course to quickly respond to any emergency situation.



The HQ staff located at the Cashmere Fairground. Laura W7LMK, Rich N7PZT, and an event organizer.

The event turned out to be a big success; 127 motorbikes participated, with no injuries reported. One motorcycle crashed along the trail resulting in a "dead bike". Other cyclers reported that incident at the next check point, where the ham operators notified event organizers by radio and quickly arranged for rescue of both the dead bike and its non-injured rider. Radio communications between all the check points greatly assisted in accounting for all 127 riders by the end of the day.

The following local hams participated in supporting this event:

Laura Kozma- W7LMK  
Matt Kozma- AE7MK  
Colin Kozma- K7CJK  
Rich Cole- N7PZT  
Brad Hampton- KC7MRP  
Keith Murray- W7BBK  
Jim Wonn- K7MQV  
Doug Gardner- K7DEG  
Dan Whaley- K7ISC  
Jex Whaley- K7JEW  
Derek Knutsen- KI7KDE

Three hams from Oak Harbor also assisted with the event support:

Ken Sousa- N7AXJ  
Cliff Allen- W7COA  
Isaac Allen- KJ7BPY

Thankfully there were no injuries during the event. But Search and Rescue ORV teams were on standby and at the ready, to locate and help any riders in trouble. These CCVSAR ORV guys are amazing:

Bill Kinsey  
Gary Hymer  
Troy Seiber  
Shane Milner  
Dean Warren

It was very gratifying to hear so many riders and event organizers saying how valuable it was to have the radio communication and SAR support.



K7MQV photo

(Above) The 2m and the SAR band antennas installed and radioing rider progress information back to event HQ. The 146.680-mHz W7TD repeater was used at all 7 check points to maintain communication over the rough, mountainous terrain. SAR band and one ham 2m simplex frequency were used as emergency back-up channels.



(Above left) Doug K7DEG, ready to begin relaying traffic about the first riders as they begin passing Checkpoint #2 near Camas Meadows. (Right) Checkpoint #7 was located along Mission Creek Road at the Devil's Gulch trailhead. (K7MQV photos)

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Derek KI7KDE working hard at check point #5. (AE7MK photo)



CCVSAR ORV riders - Troy, Gary, Billy, and Shane. (AE7MK photo)



Side-by-side rescue vehicle with first-aid and rescue equipment. (AE7MK photo)

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The action at check point #5. (AE7MK photo)



View from Forest Service road FS-7200. (AE7MK photo)

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Meanwhile over at check point #3, Jex K7JEW and Dan K7ISC were setting up their antenna mast, monitoring cycle traffic, and passing information to the event coordinators.



K7JEW photo





K7JEW photo



K7JEW photo

It was a long, busy and very productive day, for sure. The cycle riders and the Coyote Offroad organizers were very grateful for all of the communications help from the Apple City Amateur Radio club and the ORV emergency assistance provided by C CVSAR. It was a BIG PR event for both organizations. --Jim, K7MQV