

# More Than 300 Intrepid Cyclists & Sponsors Make First Land Trust Tour de Lyme A Big Success



**By George Moore  
LLCT Executive Director**

How do you picture success?

One would be the scene of more than 300 smiling people standing in the rain and trying to decide between a vegan lunch from the G-Monkey truck or a BBQ from Four Mile River Farms after cycling as much as 55 miles through a beautiful New England countryside.

That was the setting when road and mountain bikers joined more than 30 volunteers for a great picnic lunch after completing the Land Trust's first Tour de Lyme fundraiser on May 11.

Tour de Lyme was more than a year in the planning, and we often wondered if anyone would show up. However, as the event drew closer, pre-registrations soared, and when registration closed on May 10, we had 326 riders signed up. Although the threatening weather caused about 30 no shows, almost 20 additional riders came and registered onsite.

Riders came from eight states from Maine to DC (and one from Colorado), including entrants from 74 Connecticut towns.

We attracted some serious riders – about 40 percent signed up for the 55 mile challenge! We had a nice family turnout with youngsters joining their parents on the shorter Family Ride. Mountain Bikers were

**Photos by Joe Standart, Lisa Niccolai and Harley Manning**



well represented and most chose a rigorous ride that included two preserves and the Nehantic State Forest.

The important question is did the riders and volunteers have fun? The many smiling faces in the pictures on [www.tourdelyme.org](http://www.tourdelyme.org) would suggest that indeed they did.

A goal was to showcase the results of 45+ years of land preservation – lightly travelled roads, ideal for cycling. We did that. Feedback from the riders was that they loved our rural roads and trails.

Finally, we wanted to develop an annual fundraising event unique to the Lyme Land Trust that would allow us to reach a broader audience than our small population affords. We did that.

A great deal of thanks goes to our sponsors who believed in an unproven Tour de Lyme and put up a total of \$22,000 in cash and goods in kind. We could never have succeeded without the hard work of over 30 volunteers and the support of our volunteer Board.

Lyme's terrific Emergency Response crews were positioned onsite and happily, their services were not needed. We are deeply grateful for their wholehearted support.

Last but not least, our thanks to the good sports who paid to ride in Tour de Lyme and despite the rain, helped us raise almost a net \$40,000 for your Land Trust. And, of course, let us not forget the people of Lyme who with characteristic good grace accepted 300 riders out on our roads.



***2014 Tour de Lyme Set For Sunday May 18***