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CSCS Climate Ride Update

"On the Road", Week 3



Week three was possibly the toughest week of the trip. Between our rest day in Yellowstone National Park and our next rest day in Crazy Horse, South Dakota, we completed two centuries (100+ mile rides), climbed over the Bighorn Mountains (7,000 feet of elevation gain), and made our way through the Black Hills. As we rode through the countryside of Wyoming and South Dakota, we dug into this week's question: "What can we learn from Indigenous perspectives of land and climate."

On Saturday, we visited the Ucross Foundation (<https://www.ucrossfoundation.org>) in Clearmont Wyoming, an art residency that hosts creatives from all mediums including many Native American artists.

The next day, we spent the night at Devil's Tower, a spiritual site known by the Northern Cheyenne as Bear Lodge. We met Thaddeus, Cleroy and others who had gathered for a solstice celebration and were eager to talk with us and let us spend the night in the teepees they had erected for the event.

As we finished out the week with a couple days in the black hills, we read parts of Sarah Augustine's book "The Land is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery," in preparation for our event with Sarah on Wednesday.



Theme for the past week: *Indigenous communities: What can we learn from Indigenous perspectives of land and climate?*

Visiting Devil's Tower National Monument

by Caleb Schrock-Hurst

On June 20th we biked 60 miles from Gillette, Wyoming to Devils Tower national monument.

Typically when we pull into camp we are greeted by a table spread of snacks prepared by Dan and MaryAnn; on this day, however, we were greeted by empty tables, two large teepees, and Dan and MaryAnn deep in conversation. They had befriended two Northern Cheyenne men, Thaddeus and Cleroy, who had come to the site to perform a ritual celebrating the summer solstice, as their people have done for time immemorial. Because of a rainstorm the previous evening, they needed to

leave the teepees up another night and had offered them as shelter for our group.

Once the group got settled in we joined the conversation with Thaddeus, who graciously shared some of his story and his people's stories of Devils Tower, known to them as Bear Lodge. Though he grew up on Lama Dear reservation in Montana, he sees himself as a bridge between the Cheyenne people of the reservation and those who have moved away; he now lives in Missoula, where we'd passed through about two weeks earlier.

Thaddeus, Cleroy, and a few other people from the seven tribes who had gathered for the ceremony joined us for supper and the evening.

Thaddeus's stories struck a deep chord in all of us, especially alongside his family's hospitality. Our two common reads for the trip — *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer and *The Land Is Not Empty* by Sarah Augustine — are both by Native American authors, and being able to spend an evening in conversation with a Native American thinker was a wonderful blessing.





Anna Paetkau "I challenge our riders and the people following from back home to take the time to question the names of land and landmarks used in this country and to even question common phrases. What is the history behind what we are saying? How does it continue our conformity to colonialism?"

Toby Bartlett " *We saw a yak yak yak
Oh wait a bison bison bison...*"

Read the full reflections [here](#)





Want to see more pictures? See them in these photoalbums for [Week 1](#), [Week 2](#), and [Week 3](#).

And Coming Up Soon...

Join the riders for the townhall "What is our Call to Climate Justice?"
*June 23, livestreamed from First Mennonite Church, Lincoln, NE; 7:30pm
Central time (5:30/6:30/8:30 PT/MT/ET).*

Come hear from those working on racial justice for a conversation about how climate justice and racial justice go hand in hand. Join for conversation with our distinguished panel:

Bennie Shobe (Lincoln city council)
Brandee Mimitzraiem (AME pastor, scholar, Nebraskans for Peace board member)
Ken Haar (former legislator)
Samantha Lioi (CSCS climate rider, pastor)
Elizabeth Miller (CSCS climate rider, Center for Justice and Peacebuilding, EMU)

See here for [townhall details](#), and for full list of Climate Ride townhalls. [Register here to receive information to watch via livestream.](#)

"I believe that the church has an opportunity to serve as the voice of reason and the moral authority to step into the breach and say enough is enough."

- Sarah Augustine, from the June 23 webinar "The Land is Not Empty"

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