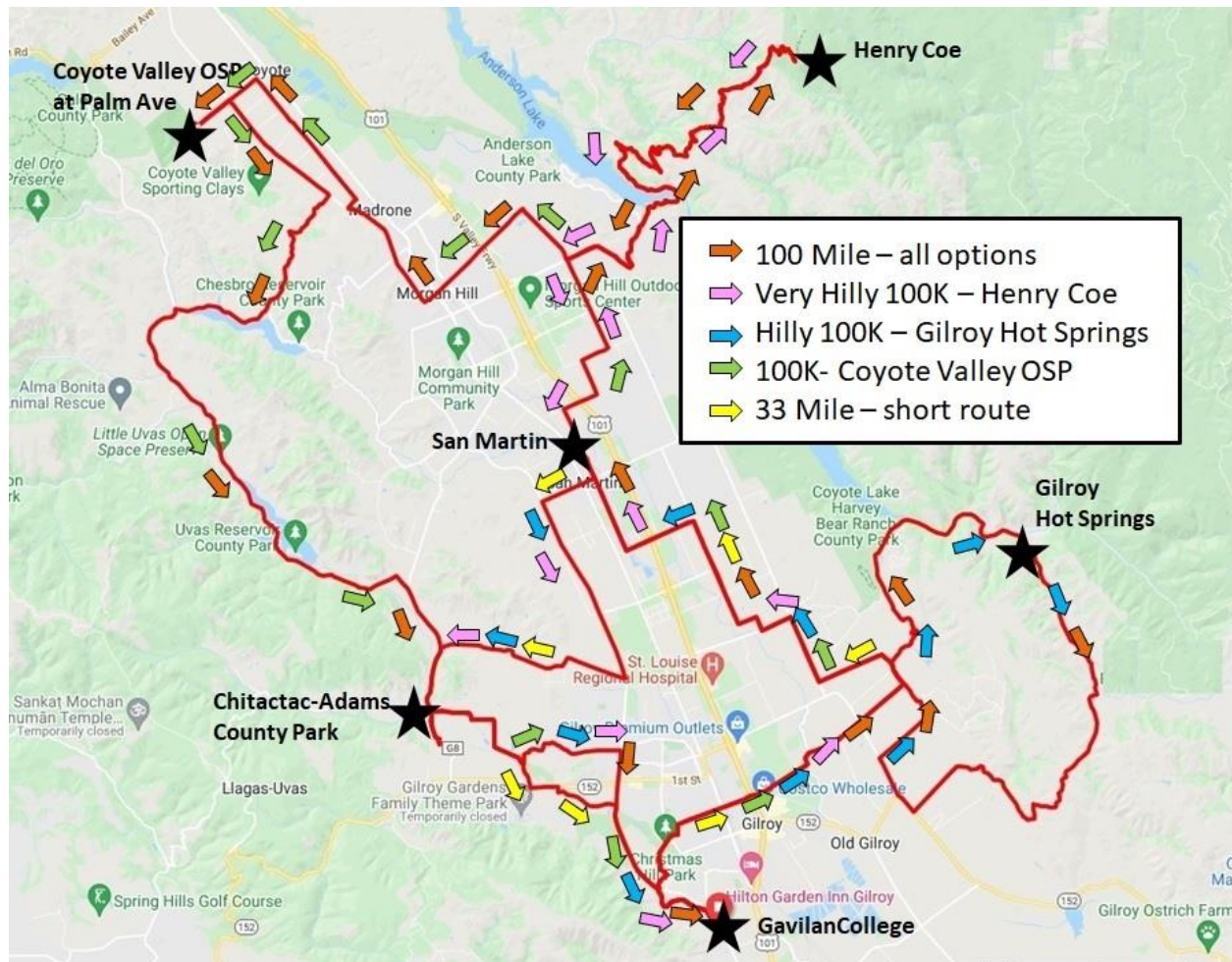


## Tierra Bella Routes Report 2022

People had been asking for new routes for a few years, so for Tierra Bella 2020 I had come up with a new set of routes which 1) eliminated one reststop and changed location of two other reststops, 2) had a totally new short route, and 3) gave riders more choices. Both 2020 and 2021 ended up being canceled due to Covid-19, so for 2022 the routes were kept the same as 2020, but this would be their first year to actually be used.



Making major changes such as “reduce the number of reststops”, or “change the start location”, each requires a complete re-do of the routes. Route selection already has to deal with things like high-traffic road crossings, too-steep climbs or descents, poor pavement, too urban, too many traffic lights, etc.

Almost all other sections of the Tierra Bella depend on the routes being defined first. Therefore the routes need to be decided early on. Major changes will result in relocating reststops, changing the timing and total number of riders through each reststop, food distribution, permits, safety assignments, route marking, etc.

# Tierra Bella Routes Report 2022

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Here are comments/suggestions from after the ride -

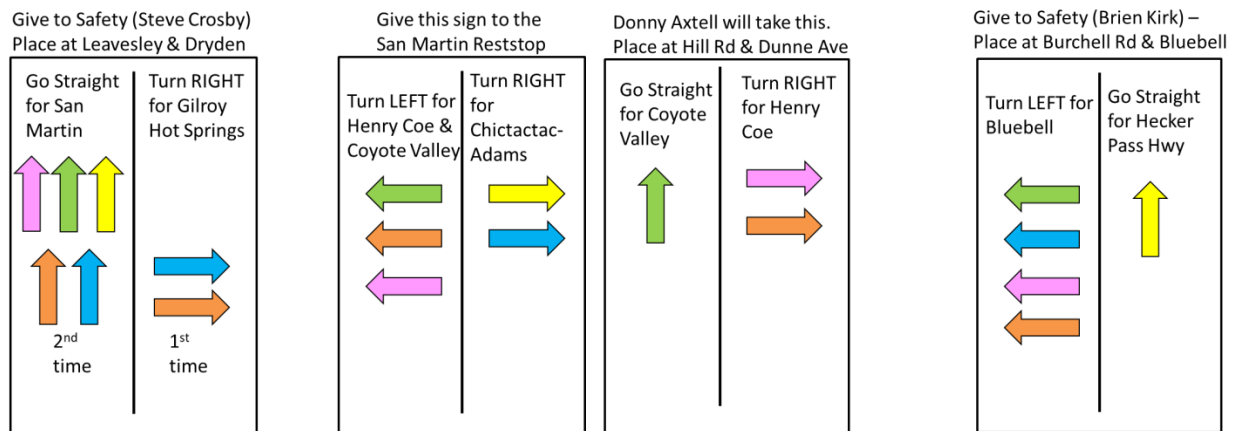
- Hi, I loved the ride this year. Loved all the new sections.
- 
- I talked to a guy yesterday at a Western Wheeler event. He planned to do the 75 miles route which has a blue route sheet. He followed the blue arrows and ended up back at Gavilan much earlier than expected. He didn't study the back of the route sheet and to figure out he needed to change colors to do his route. He was pretty unhappy and had been complaining to others, that is how I found out. It needs to be more obvious if you need to change colors. BTW, I did the 75 mile route using ridewithgps and didn't have a problem.
- 
- I was talking to many riders as they came into the Chitactac Rest Stop. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive.
- 
- The one feedback I did get from several rider groups was that the combined Blue+Green route was confusing. Several groups ended up at Chitactac surprised that they were only 8 miles from finishing but had only ridden under 50 miles and were expecting to do 70. The Blue route sheet with the "long" and "short" options might have confused some if they forgot there were separate columns for Short and Long and they just started following the next column which was the Short (all Blue) route though this seemed like a logical way to present their choices. One group of three women also were adamant that their GPS guidance for the long route also sent them back on the short route but when I looked at their GPS map to understand it, the route clearly continued north after the San Martin rest stop (onto the green arrow route) so I am not sure why they would have been getting bad GPS guidance though they did ask others if they were on the correct road for "BLUE" rather than "Green" so they clearly didn't realize they should have switched arrow colors.
- 
- In general, from a Route Marking perspective, I would like to lobby for less options altogether. One, or at most two, 100K choices seems more than enough flexibility along with the 100M and a "50K" short ride. Laying down 5 arrows in a series of 4 to 5 places (20+ arrows) at each turn surprisingly takes a considerable time. Our one team was thrilled when they made the turn up Leavesley to Gilroy Hot Springs since only two routes' arrows were needed along that segment significantly reducing effort at each turn.
- 
- I heard the same issues about the blue/green route. A couple of very experienced century riders got confused and ended up riding 50 miles instead of 70.
- 
- Lots of positive comments on the route changes.
- 
- I suggest returning to our previous way of handling routes. Previously, for the 20 years I was involved, we had 4 routes, but except for perhaps 20 miles of the 120, just 3 colors. The 120 milers got a route sheet and a separate color if they got to a certain rest stop by a cut off time. Then for the extra 20 miles, just the one color which was likely red.
- 
- Another possible simplification for next year: consider eliminating the printed route sheets. I only saw one group with their route sheets at Oak Glen / Uvas and they had wrapped them around their handlebars (<https://actc.smugmug.com/ACTC-Tierra->

# Tierra Bella Routes Report 2022

[Bella/Tierra-Bella-2022/Oak-Glen-and-Uvas/i-Rf7mc9R/A](#)) in a way which would make them impractical to read. While there would be time savings (and savings on printing costs), there are a few downsides:

- - As a luddite, I like to have something analog/printed with the route links and SAG phone numbers.
- - We should probably still have a sheet (or a nice solid 4x6 card) with this information. - Route sheets are good for a quick check on "when is that next rest stop?"
- - It's hard to annotate shortcuts/alternate routes on electronic RwGPS routes, especially when it's getting late in the day. The route sheets make these options clear.
- Any thoughts on how much riders actually use route sheets before or during the ride?
- 

Most people's route errors were made at the few junctions where the routes split off from each other. Each of these locations was supposed to have a directions signboard as well as the arrows on the road.



The Blue routes changed directions and colors at San Martin Reststop. If Blue exited Right, then they were on the short Blue route. If Blue exited Left then they were on the Long Blue route and they should now follow the Green arrows. This is all clear if they look at the the sign or look at their route sheet. We should probably add a map at these locations to make it totally clear.

The 2022 routes crossed Freeway 101 4 times, but each of the crossings was one without any on or off ramps. The route had to cross two busy roads (crossing Furgesson Road at Dunlap, and crossing Hecker Pass Hwy at Burchell). Each of these crossings was made as safe as possible, using volunteers to hold the bikes until it was clear to cross, and even asking CHP to assist at these crossings.

The 2022 routes kept the traditional climb up to Gilroy Hot Springs (Orange, Blue Short and Blue Long). This 20-mile loop has almost no traffic or stop signs. The only bad part of this Canada Loop is that it puts the riders onto busy Pacheco Pass Hwy for a quarter mile.

The 2022 routes also kept the Henry Coe climb for the long route (Orange), but also added a short route (Pink) where riders could choose to climb Henry Coe without having to do a full 100 miles.

## Tierra Bella Routes Report 2022

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The 2022 routes eliminated Machado School reststop. This stop had been on every Tierra Bella before this year, but its reststop captains had finally decided to retire, and it was easier to remove this reststop instead of trying to find a new captain.

Removing Machado School made it possible to completely re-route the short route (Yellow). The new short route takes the riders over to the East side of the valley, so all new scenery for them to enjoy.

The 2022 route eliminated the 200K option that used to go to the summit of Hicks. Almost no riders did that option anyway so it was easy to remove. The route also stayed more to the south, by taking out Bailey Road which has very poor pavement.

These changes allowed the relocation of the Calero Reststop, to now be at Coyote Valley Open Space Preserve, on Palm Ave off of Santa Teresa. This was the first time using an Open Space Authority preserve. The intent was to make riders aware of this parks existence, so that they would come back and check it out further.

The same reasoning was used for relocating the Uvas Reservoir Reststop to Chitactac Adams County Park. This location is a history park for the native americans that used to live here.

Another new addition for 2022 was using Burchell Road, which before was hard to use as it connected with Hecker Pass Hwy. Now there is a newly built bike path just to the south of Hecker Pass Hwy that was used for only the short (Yellow) route. The other routes took Burchell and then turned left onto BlueBell to go up and over the hill.

Also new this year was the use of Mesa Rd at both the beginning and at the end, instead of using Santa Teresa. This was a very good change.

After the routes have been defined, I then take the distance and amount of climbing between each section, and estimate a range of times for each route, from fast rider to slow rider. This then provides reststop times.

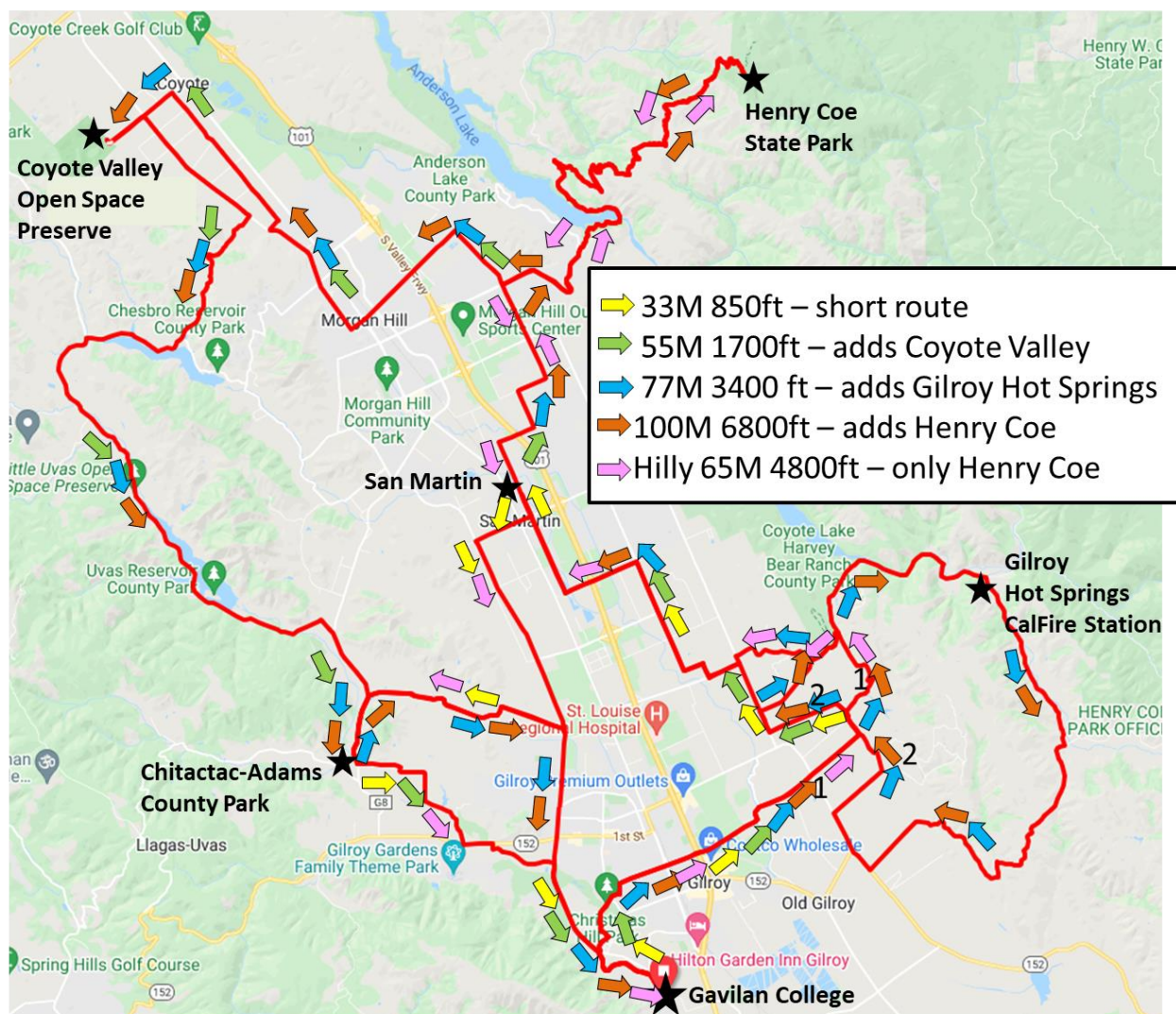
Safety locations and route marking junctions are then created.



# Tierra Bella Routes Report 2022

Changes to be made for next time :

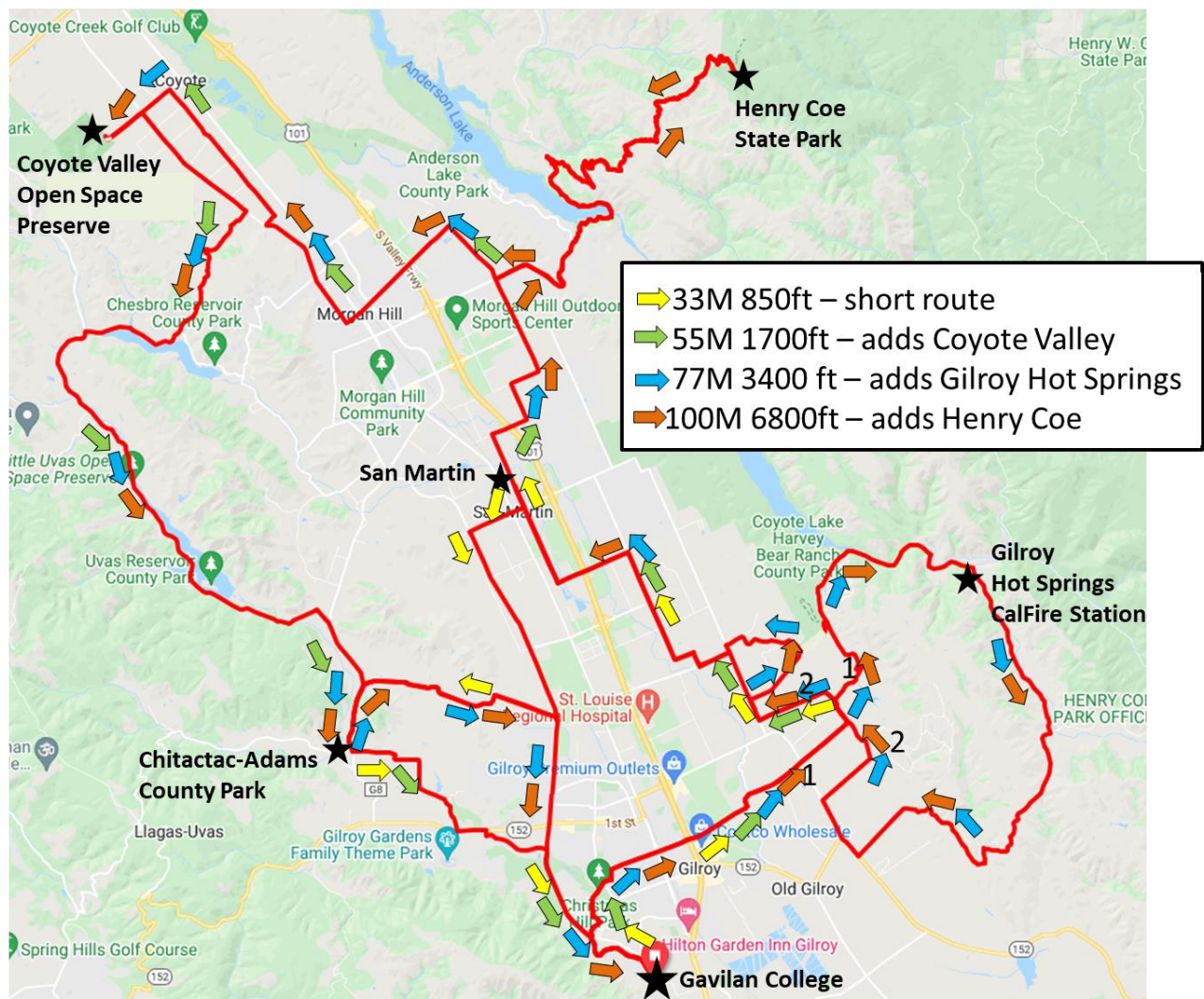
- Remove 100K from all route names
  - Yellow (33M 843 ft) – San Martin and Chitactac-Adams
  - Green (55M 1681 ft) – adds Coyote Valley
  - Blue (77M 3383 ft) – adds Gilroy Hot Springs
  - Orange (100M 6803 ft) – adds Henry Coe
  - Pink (Hilly 65M 4800 ft) – only Henry Coe
- Remove Bluebell
  - Yellow and Green take Burchell to Hecker Pass Hwy
  - Blue and Orange take Day Rd to Santa Teresa
- Add Roop, Estates, Bannister to Blue, Orange, and Pink routes



# Tierra Bella Routes Report 2022

Here is another option, leaving out the Pink route, for 4 routes total:

- Remove 100K from all route names
  - Yellow (33M 843 ft) – San Martin and Chitactac-Adams
  - Green (55M 1681 ft) – adds Coyote Valley
  - Blue (77M 3383 ft) – adds Gilroy Hot Springs
  - Orange (100M 6803 ft) – adds Henry Coe
- Remove Bluebell
  - Yellow and Green take Burchell to Hecker Pass Hwy
  - Blue and Orange take Day Rd to Santa Teresa
- Add Roop, Estates, Bannister to Blue and Orange routes



-Donny Axtell  
Routes Chair