

Tierra Bella Henry Coe Reststop Report 2024

This was the 15th year with a reststop at Henry Coe Headquarters (since 2008)

Volunteers – Holly Wong (chair), Don Axtell (co-chair), Kim Carr, Anna Huynh, Jay Orbon, Lou Galbiati, Frances Bui, (7 total), plus Zoey (Holly's dog). We also had 3 ham radio people.

Campsite reservations need to be reserved 6 months in advance. This year I was late and #19 was already gone, so I reserved #18. Paul Vlasveld handled the Henry Coe permit, so he included all four needed sites, # 1, 2, 19, and 20.

The two porta potties were already in place by Friday morning. This year they were placed inside of site #2, which made them closer to the reststop. Larry Edson had continued his plan of placing the toilets one day earlier. That is a good plan.

I used my Honda Odyssey van to haul all of the reststop supplies. This took two trips. On Thursday I went to the ACTC shed and loaded most of the reststop gear. Then I went home and loaded the signs and my camping gear. The van was now totally filled.

On Friday morning I went to the ACTC shed at 7:30 and met Dzung and the big truck at 7:45. Dzung had put out an email asking for help, so we got about 6 helpers. We loaded everything into the big truck, and were finished by 9:05. I then drove my van up to Henry Coe.

During the climb I placed most of my signs. I met all of the reststop campsites were marked correctly, and everything was in order. I unloaded all the gear into site 20, and set up the the 20x20 canopy, making sure to tighten all of the screws on the vertical poles and concrete cans. I also tied a rope at two corners, as the 20x20 was going to be up all night and I did not want it to blow away.

I then went to pick up Holly and Zoey. From there we went to the church to collect the tables and food, arriving about 1:20. Reststop supplies were grouped in separate parking spaces, food was all sorted. Ice was already in the igloos and coolers. I assisted some of the other reststops to make sure that gear was distributed correctly. By 2:30 everything at the church was finished.

We headed up to Henry Coe, arriving about 4:00. I unloaded the 6 tables, 4 ice chests, and 5 igloos, but we kept the food inside the van.

I set up the big pot and cooker and practiced heating some water to make sure it was working.

New this year, our reststop was going to have a theme. Holly had purchased lots of Hawaiian theme decorations. We had leis to give out, flamingos to place, and even a balloon arch was in the plan.

Friday evening Holly and I kept busy blowing up balloons that were going to be an arch. We finally had to search for a YouTube video on how to tie a balloon. We blew up 3 large trash bags full of balloons which I kept inside my tent. Holly and Zoey slept in my van while I slept in my tent, which I had put directly under the 20x20 canopy. I had also put up two blue tarps to block the wind along one wall.

The reason behind the extra work on putting up the 20x20 canopy and wall was because it was predicted that a storm was coming in overnight. I had also taped a rain gauge to one corner. The prediction was correct, as the rain started at about 3:30 AM. Mostly a light but steady rain. By morning we had 0.35" and counting.

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My original plan was to put a line down the road with a flour/sugar mixture, which I had mixed together last night. 50 lbs worth. But I scrapped that plan, no line marking today.

By 8:00 Am all of our volunteers had arrived, even though it was still raining. Our three ham radio guys also arrived. Two of the radio guys set up in one corner of the 20x20 canopy, while one stayed in his truck. We moved my tent over to another corner but did not bother taking it down, and the volunteers were in the other half of the 20x20 canopy. The ham radio guys put up an additional two walls, so we now had three walls covered. We were all just trying to stay warm and dry, and discussing if there would be any riders coming at all.



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By 10:00 Am it was decided to let the volunteers that wanted, to go home. We did not think that anybody was really coming.

About 10:30 our first rider arrived. Boy were we surprised. Then a few more kept coming. Never more than about 4 to 6 were there at any one time, but I estimate the total riders to be about 50, with the last rider arriving about 2:30. I had set up one bike rack, and I had brought one igloo of water up into our "house". When a rider would arrive, I would point out our "door" and they would go inside. Lou would offer them a cup-o-soup, which most would take, and offer them a seat next to the burner so they could warm up.

We never did try putting up the 10x10 pop-up with its mesh walls. The food-support wooden pieces were used to hold down the bottom of the walls. We did not cut any wraps, but just let the riders take a whole wrap if they wanted. We still had enough food to offer the riders a selection. Besides the cup-o-soup, the homemade cookies were also a big hit. We also offered the riders a trash bag to use as a raincoat, and latex gloves for under their gloves.

Two riders decided to SAG in from our reststop but all of the others descended the hill on their own. They were all a very hardcore bunch.

At one point we could see the rain had changed to snow, but it never collected on the ground. Sometimes the rain would stop for awhile. By closing time the rain gauge was showing 0.70".

New this year, I gave each reststop a camping coffee pot to go along with the big 60-qt pot. At Henry Coe we only used the camping coffee pot, which worked fine, heating the water quickly.

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We had a visitor poke his head in a few times. A fox has gotten used to hanging around the campground. The fox also got into my van but did not find anything to take.

Just before closing we had a balloon-popping party. I emptied the 3 trash bags full of balloons onto the ground, then everybody starting stepping on them. It sounded like gun fire, so good thing that no other campers were near by. We then had to pick up all of the little balloon pieces.

We finished closing down the reststop at 3:30, loading tables and ice chests into my van. I arrived at Christmas Hill Park at 4:30. After dropping off the gear, I headed straight back up to Henry Coe. Back in the campground, it was again raining lightly, but now the wind was coming in the opposite direction, so we were now on the other side of the storm.

I started packing everything away. I had some trouble taking down the 20x20 canopy in the rain and wind, so the tarp got folded up very wet, and many of the poles got bent. But they can be straightened later. Everything was able to fit in my van. I left about 7:15 to head for home. I was home by 8:30.

Sunday morning, I swept out the ACTC shed before the big truck arrived. We then put everything back in the shed, knowing that it was all still wet, and finished by 10:15.

Total for my Honda Odyssey was 230 miles. The Hawaiian decorations will be stored until next year. The flour-sugar mixture was put into large zip-lock bags to use for next year. I forgot to pick up one of my signs, the one that said Reststop Ahead, with an arrow. Our leftover food was kept for my upcoming 4-Day Ride to Coloma, and any food left from that will be passed onto the Sierra to the Sea Tour.

Tuesday was sunny and a high in the 70s so I asked for helpers to come pull everything back out of the shed to dry. I got 8 people, working from 12:00 till 3:00. We completely dried the ice chests, igloos, coffee pots, canopy tarps, safety vests, 10x10 popups, and camp chairs.