

## Freeport 2011

The weather gods played a long and twisted game for almost two weeks with our planned ride date of Saturday. As I stared at the weather forecasts in the weeks before the ride, it was showing rain all weekend. Then near the end, it was getting iffy for Saturday, then Sunday, then... They just kept playing with our heads. Finally, Saturday was rained out, but Sunday showed some promise. I rode out to the Texas Roadhouse on cold, damp roads, but no rain. Amazingly, we had a total of eleven bikes show for the ride. The regulars were Mark McCoy, Frank White, Gary Helm, Charles & Jean McPeck, Skip Moffatt, Greg Leopold, Douglas Benne, Kory & Abby Rivera, Ken Pollett, and myself. New to the group was Doug Scott.

Skip asked if we were going to run Montezuma Hill Rd in the morning – as the route is designed. Let me see... back roads that have not had any traffic to dry them out. No! Route change. That change turned out great. We left the parking lot with Charles and Jean as the planned tail gunner, but I noticed Doug was back behind them. The run out the newly repaved Hwy 12 was boring, but at least it was smooth and we hit traffic just at Rio Vista. We took a short break right at Hwy 160 so I could make sure everyone was doing fine. Some cold fingers and I had cold toes. Up Hwy 160 we took off. I kept the speed at a little over 55. If I saw 60, I slowed down. I only took one or two turns where I had to really lean the bike over. Honest. No traffic at all. It was a fantastic run of good luck. We stopped for gas and chat up in Freeport before heading back down.

Since we altered the planned route, my mileage numbers were wrong. I was doing math in my head while riding and making sure everyone was behind me and was ok. Plus I had trouble reading the road signs looking for County Rd 141. My eyes aren't perfect, the sign lettering is small, and the light was behind the signs. So I made a wrong turn into downtown Clarksburg. Looks like a cute downtown area. The good news was there was plenty of room to make u-turns. Sorry folks. Got back on S. River Rd and found the right road.

These back roads are narrow and rough in spots but they provide us with a different view of the delta and also -- no traffic. We rode at a mild pace alongside unmoving, murky water, filled with branches and semi-sunken boats, and poles sticking up where small docks used to be. We did come up behind a pickup truck. But luckily he wasn't going too slow and he pulled off soon enough. The road did have some debris and dampness, but not too much or too often. After a short jog back on Hwy 160, we took Grand Island Rd. This is a nice road that again had no traffic.

We finally made it back to Hwy 160 just north of Isleton and aimed south. We made the turn onto Hwy 12 and pulled into the gas station as planned, but no one needed gas. Frank rolled on without stopping. So off we went to Shelby's for food. We found plenty of parking and they sat us at their banquet table. It holds 10, but we added a chair. Hmm. Should have been 12 bodies. Someone else must have rolled on. I opted for eggs and sausage, while others ordered lunch. The food was good and moderately priced. The service was pleasant and easy going. We took the group photo after lunch. About half of the group headed straight for home while the other half followed me to run through the windmills.

Now as I had altered the route and the eatery, I did not know how to get to Montezuma Hills Rd the easy way. I knew how to get there from the road behind the gas station, making a big loop and going under Hwy 12. Just as I pulled the group into the left turn lane for Virginia Dr, I saw the small sign that would have made it much easier. Well tough, this was more scenic as we rolled along the river. Next time I will be better prepared. After gently rolling through Rio Vista, we got onto Montezuma Hills Rd. The sun had done its job and the road was dry. The windmills looked graceful against the blue skies, green fields, and puffy clouds. The goats looked up and a few scattered as we rode by enjoying the twisties. We hit the twisties at a mild pace and enjoyed ourselves. Alas, we came back up to boring Hwy 12. A great day, but my toes were still cold.