

**SUMMARY OF
MAINE LIGHTHOUSE RIDE
2003 - 2012**

The first fundraising bicycle ride hosted by the Eastern Trail Alliance was the “8-Lighthouse Ride” in 2003, a single, 40-mile loop from Bug Light Park through South Portland, Scarborough, and Cape Elizabeth. About 30 hardy souls braved high winds and driving rain to complete the ride, while our volunteers ferried hot coffee to the rest stops.

Since 2003, the original 8-Lighthouse Ride has evolved into one of the most popular rides in New England, with as many as 700 riders. The Maine Lighthouse Ride now encompasses four rider options: a century (100-mile), a metric century (62-mile), the flagship 40-mile loop, and a 25-mile ride. The 40-mile ride is still the most popular, but the century is a close second! We have partnered with Southern Maine Community College to host the ride, with registration and the start and finish occurring at the beautiful oceanfront campus in South Portland. In addition to five rest stops along the routes, we serve lunch to the riders upon their return to SMCC.

The Maine Lighthouse Ride (MLR) has become the major source of revenue for the Eastern Trail Alliance, surpassing the income from memberships. In 2010, the ETA netted about \$22,000 from MLR. In 2011, we raised approximately \$28,000. This money is used to pay our part-time staff, promote the Eastern Trail, and fund miscellaneous trail enhancements. As of May, 2012, we are well ahead of last year in the number of registrants. With a bit of luck and good weather, we expect 2012 to be the best Maine Lighthouse Ride ever!

Bob Bowker,
ETA Vice President and
“Father” of the Maine Lighthouse Ride