



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 17, 2018

***Announcing Virginia's Blue Ridge IMBA Silver-Level Ride Center™
Staking our Claim as America's East Coast Mountain Biking Capital***

Roanoke, VA – Virginia's Blue Ridge has been awarded a Silver-Level Ride Center™ designation by the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) elevating this region to a whole new level as a mountain biking destination. **David Wiens, Executive Director of IMBA**, made a special trip from Colorado to officially announce the Ride Center™ designation. Wiens stated, "Virginia's Blue Ridge IMBA Silver-Level Ride Center status solidifies the enthusiasm for mountain biking along the East Coast and puts Virginia on par with some of the greatest mountain bike destinations. We look forward to the many ways Virginia's Blue Ridge will thrive with its new Ride Center designation."

The designation did not happen overnight. "It took nearly two years of hard work by many people throughout Virginia's Blue Ridge to get to this point. This announcement is a real game changer," stated **Lee Wilhelm, Chair of Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge**. The Ride Center application criteria served as a blueprint for achieving and improving the trail systems. "We see it as a catalyst for increased investment in our current trail systems and it will help develop new trail projects similar to those at Explore Park as well as throughout Virginia's Blue Ridge," said **Kristine McCormick, President of Roanoke IMBA**.

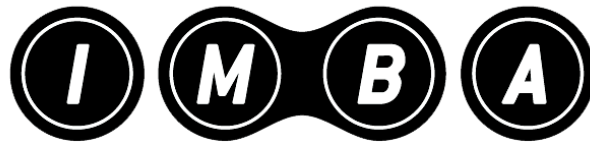
With only fifteen Silver-Level Ride Centers in the world and the only Ride Center on the East Coast, we are ready to stake our claim as "America's East Coast Mountain Biking Capital." The growth and expansion of mountain biking in Virginia's Blue Ridge will attract biking enthusiasts of all levels to experience a Metro-Mountain Adventure through the variety of trails and destination amenities.

VBR Mountain Biking Website - www.visitvbr.com/mtb and video - <https://youtu.be/fb-KMnn9qns>

Contact information –

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INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

IMBA 2018 RIDE CENTER FACT SHEET

Announcing Virginia's Blue Ridge IMBA Silver-Level Ride Center™ May 17, 2018

The IMBA Ride Center designation recognizes the pinnacle of mountain biking communities. These are communities with something for every rider, from a variety of mountain biking experiences for locals and visitors alike, to robust local accommodations for visiting mountain bikers.

IMBA Ride Centers will be extensive trail networks, masterfully designed for mountain bikers of every skill level and built by professional trail builders and local volunteers. From backcountry adventures to shuttle-served gravity trails, and from expert-only trails to family-friendly riding, mountain bikers can expect the best the sport has to offer at an IMBA Ride Center.

What it means to be a Ride Center: The Ride Center designation recognizes progressive trail communities that value mountain biking and have a trail-forward approach that serves their community members alongside recreational tourism. A Ride Center designation will bring major economic benefits to a community. Helena, a Silver-Level IMBA Ride Center, saw 63,000 visitors in the summer of 2017, who generated \$4.3 million in economic activity and supported 60 jobs.

What it takes to be a Ride Center: This designation is just as much about the process as the award itself. The application criteria serves as the blueprint for achieving and improving a trail system and is comprised of multiple factors with both trail experience and surrounding community amenities being measured. This designation is designed to support local stakeholders and land managers in their effort to create the ultimate mountain biking destination trail system.

Quick stats on IMBA Ride Centers:

There are currently 39 IMBA Ride Centers—30 in the U.S. and 9 international. For a full list of individual Ride Centers, see the bottom of this document.

- 6 Gold-Level Ride Centers
- 15 Silver-Level Ride Centers
- 18 Bronze-Level Ride Centers
- 9 of those are international Ride Centers (two gold, three silver, four bronze)
- The Teton Ride Center spans Wyoming and Idaho. With this, Idaho has four Ride Centers.
- Four U.S. states now have three Ride Centers: Arkansas, Colorado, Minnesota and Virginia.
- Arizona and Michigan have two Ride Centers.
- Internationally, New Zealand has three Ride Centers. British Columbia (Canada), and Czech Republic have two Ride Centers.



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Current IMBA Ride Centers, by level and alphabetical order by state/country:

Gold-Level Ride Centers:

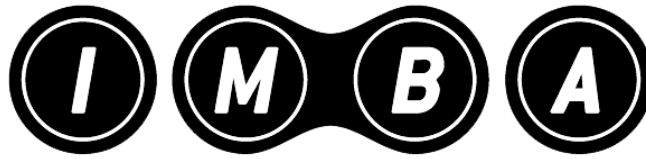
- Boise-Eagle: Boise, Idaho, USA
- Duluth: Duluth, Minnesota, USA
- Oakridge: Oakridge, Oregon, USA
- Park City: Park City, Utah, USA
- Nelson: Nelson, New Zealand
- Rotorua: Rotorua, New Zealand

Silver-Level IMBA Ride Centers:

- Bentonville: Bentonville, Arkansas, USA
- Tucson: Tucson, Arizona, USA
- Steamboat Bike Town: Steamboat Springs, Colorado, USA
- Vail Valley: Eagle County, Colorado, USA
- McCall: McCall, Idaho, USA
- Sun Valley: Sun Valley, Idaho, USA
- Bike Taupo: Taupo, New Zealand
- Livingo: Livingo, Italy
- Silver Star Resort: Silver Star, British Columbia, Canada
- Copper Harbor: Copper Harbor, Michigan, USA
- Cuyuna Lakes: Crosby, Minnesota, USA
- Helena: Helena, Montana, USA
- Santa Fe: Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA
- Virginia's Blue Ridge: Roanoke, Virginia, USA
- Teton Region: Jackson Hole, Wyoming and Driggs, Idaho, USA

Bronze-Level IMBA Ride Centers:

- Coldwater Mountain: Anniston, Alabama, USA
- Fayetteville: Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA
- Hot Springs: Hot Springs, Arkansas, USA
- Valley of the Sun: Phoenix, Arizona, USA
- Roaring Fork/Aspen Snowmass: Aspen, Colorado, USA
- Santos: Ocala, Florida, USA
- Central Savannah River Area: Central Savannah River Area, Georgia/South Carolina, USA
- Brown County: Nashville, Indiana, USA
- Burns Lake: Burns Lake, British Columbia, Canada
- Rychlebské Stezky, Černá Voda: Černá Voda, Czech Republic
- Singltrek pod Smrkem: Singltrek pod Smrkem, Czech Republic/Poland
- Mt. Buller: Mt. Buller, Victoria, Australia
- Marquette: Marquette, Michigan, USA
- Twin Cities: Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
- Reading: Reading, Pennsylvania, USA
- Harrisonburg: Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA
- Richmond: Richmond, Virginia, USA
- Chequamegon Area: Cable, Wisconsin, USA



INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

How to reference the Ride Center designation in materials:

Always include “IMBA” and “Ride Center.” Hyphenate the designation level. Ride Centers can be attributed to locations such as the city, local region, or state if referencing multiple Ride Centers. Here are examples of how the designation can be written, using Roanoke as an example:

IMBA Silver-Level Ride Center™ or Silver-Level IMBA Ride Center™

Virginia’s Blue Ridge IMBA Silver-Level Ride Center™

Virginia’s Blue Ridge IMBA Ride Center™

IMBA and Ride Center should always be capitalized. On the first instance of the designation in any written material (press release, web page, etc.), Ride Center should appear with the trademark symbol (Ride Center™.) After the first reference, the symbol is not needed.

About IMBA - *The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit educational association established in 1988. Its mission is to create, enhance and protect great places to ride mountain bikes. IMBA believes mountain biking changes lives and improves communities, and works to influence more places to ride mountain bikes close to home.*

The International Mountain Bicycling Association is the leader in mountain bike advocacy, education, promotion and trail creation. Since 1988, IMBA has taught and encouraged low-impact riding, grassroots advocacy, sustainable trail design, innovative land management practices and cooperation among trail user groups.

IMBA is led by Executive Director Dave Wiens, six-time Leadville 100 champion, a member of the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame, Founder of the Mountain Sports program at Western State Colorado University and legendary mountain bike advocate and race promoter in Gunnison, Colorado.

About Roanoke IMBA – The local chapter was chartered in 2012 by a group of dedicated and passionate volunteers with the mission to create, enhance and preserve trail opportunities for mountain bikers in the valley and the surrounding areas. Current President – Kristine McCormick – president@roanokeimba.org or <http://www.roanokeimba.org/>

Contact information -

For more information about the destination contact Catherine Fox, VP of Public Affairs & Destination Development at Visit Virginia’s Blue Ridge – cfox@visitvbr.com www.visitvbr.com/biking/mountain-biking/

For further IMBA questions on media and announcements, please contact Eleanor Blick, IMBA Communications Manager, eleanor.blick@imba.com.

For further questions on IMBA Ride Center designations, please contact Shane Wilson, IMBA Trail Solutions Project Manager, shane.wilson@imba.com.