

DEFINING THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN CYCLIST

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**THE FIRST COLORADO TRAIL RACE
RIDE INTO A DEEPER SHADE OF GREEN
PRECISION FRAME BUILDING
OFF-CENTER OF THE CYCLING UNIVERSE**

Ellsworth Handcrafted Bicycles

“I was a skinny little kid not good at anything except running cross-country and long-distance in track,” said Tony Ellsworth, president and chief executive officer of Ellsworth Handcrafted Bicycles.

“Biomechanically, I made a good motor for any bike I go on. So, it’s always been a passion of mine.”

Ellsworth has turned this passion into crafting some of the most sought-after, technically advanced bikes in the world.

Not only are Ellsworth’s frames turning heads within the industry; his environmental offices and warehouse space in Ramona, Calif., have garnered a lot of attention. The facility was built in an abandoned avocado grove. The grove has since been restored and is producing organic avocados. The buildings themselves are composed of American PolyStell insulated concrete forms. The high quality of this material’s insulation means there’s no need for centralized heating or cooling, which saves energy and eliminates the need for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) used in air conditioning.

Most of the facility’s power comes from solar cells operating on a “net metering” system. Excess power is fed back into the local electricity grid to offset future power consumption. “At the right time of year, we can get 100 percent” of our energy from solar said Ellsworth. “We’re still a net consumer but we consume a fraction of what we would.”



Ellsworth's solar-powered, green-built facility was constructed in an abandoned avocado grove in southern California. Recent wild-fires destroyed the avocado grove but the factory was saved, due in part to its polysteel cement structure.

“The 40,000 bucks I spent on the solar was exactly what I spent to put the roof on, “ said Ellsworth.

“You think about it, \$40,000 amortized over 15 or 30 years, why shouldn’t every body be doing that? It’s less than a freakin’ car payment. It’s like 1.6 gallon flush toilets. They make us put those in; they should make us put solar panels on when we build a new building.”

Ellsworth operates on a smaller scale, making it easier to experiment and to quickly change course. This approach allows the company to set trends in its bike designs. It also means that once ideas are successful they are often copied. However, when it comes to “going green,” nothing would make him happier than to have the bigger fish follow his lead.

“I want to empower others who have a bigger footprint than me to do it right and to be rewarded for being good corporate citizens,” said Ellsworth. “You want to copy something on my bikes? Well, copy this. If I’m an industry leader and people are watching me to see what I’m doing: watch this.”

Ellsworth plans to build a green factory in Washington, expand the Ride line of commuter bikes and work on other alternative transportation projects. “We’re staying focused on making the best technical bikes in the world too,” he said.