

Riding the Winds of Change

Stephen Brown, Cycle the Rockies, '08



Stephen Brown knew that Cycle the Rockies would bring him into an entirely new mode of learning. What he didn't know then was that the mix of challenge, curiosity, and place-based learning that drew him to the course would continue to shape both his career and worldview for years to come.

Among the many miles and moments that stand out from the course, Stephen remembers one long, windy riding day in particular. The group battled intense headwinds, fell behind schedule, and eventually lost their bearings on the way to their next host's ranch.

The rancher, concerned when the group became hours overdue, drove out in his truck to find them. He loaded a few exhausted students into his truck, ferried them back home, and later fed the entire group what Stephen still remembers as "the best tacos of my life."

"That day really set the tone," he said. "Challenges would come, but we'd get through them together. Someone might need help one day, and the next day they'd be the one helping someone else. That spirit of cooperation stuck with me."

"WRFI pushed me in a direction I never expected," he continued. "I didn't just learn about energy, I became interested in being part of that world."

Today, Stephen is exploring opportunities to work in geothermal energy, natural hydrogen, or underground energy storage - fields where his geological expertise aligns with his long-standing commitment to a renewable future.



After undergrad at the University of Montana, Stephen spent time as both a whitewater rafting guide and as a technician for a solar energy company, both inspired by his time with WRFI. He has spent the past decade in France, where he recently completed a PhD that will allow him to pursue a career in geothermal energy.