

By Mary Forgione Los Angeles Times Daily Travel & Deal blogger

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Bicyclists who love to pedal along a stretch of scenic Highway 1 between [Cambria](#) and the San Luis Obispo/Monterey county line have encountered a very bumpy -- and dangerous -- ride ever since a resurfacing project left behind chunky aggregate on the road's shoulder.

It's a popular cycling route that runs along the Central Coast past San Simeon and Hearst Castle to points north. Now relief might be on the way. Caltrans on Monday will begin working on a test section of the shoulder with heavy equipment to try and smooth out the roadway for cyclists. "It's experimental," Caltrans spokesman Jim Shivers said Friday. "We'll roll it, measure it and then look at it over several weeks."

The problem arose last fall after Caltrans completed a chip-seal project on the 25-mile stretch that left "chips," or aggregate, behind, making the road surface unbearable to cyclists. The nonprofit [Adventure Cycling Assn.](#) posted on its blog in January that the repaving created "an unstable surface (especially for skinny-tire bikes), masks potholes and other hazards, and results in big piles of the aggregate taking over the shoulder, which forces cyclists into the travel lane."

Caltrans is working with the UC Davis Pavement Research Center (who knew the university had such a department?) to come up with a solution to the problem.

The smoothing test is expected to be completed in May, but the agency also is looking for a long-term solution, i.e., pavement that will produce "a better bicycle ride quality" that it could use statewide. "The issues raised has forced us to look for a new technology," Shivers said.

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