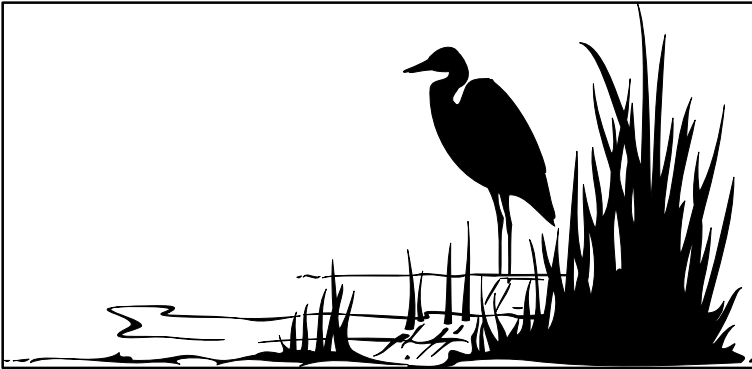


TRAIL USER GUIDELINES



Ohio's rail-tails and shared-use paths are very popular and can become congested on good- weather days.

When all trail users, whether bicyclists, joggers, walkers, in-line skaters or users of wheelchairs use trail etiquette and are respectful of other trail users, everyone can have a safe and enjoyable time.

BE PREDICTABLE: Walk and ride in a straight line, and warn others of your intentions to turn, stop, or pass. Keep children under control and keep your dog on a short leash so he/she's predictable, too.

MAINTAIN CONTROL: Maintain control of your speed at all times and approach turns in anticipation of someone coming around the bend. Fast moving users are responsible for yielding to slower moving users. Slow down in congested areas and be prepared to stop for those not paying attention, and for children and dogs.

KEEP RIGHT: Walk, and operate bicycles, inline skates, wagons, strollers, and wheelchairs on the right-hand side of paths and roadways that make up the trail. Remember that others may be gaining on you at the rear, even though you seem to be alone at the moment. Notice the mid-point of the path, maybe marked by a centerline, and keep to the right side of it except when passing others.

GIVE AUDIBLE SIGNAL BEFORE PASSING: Warn those to be passed of your intention to do so using a bell or horn, or by loudly calling out "passing" or "on your left!" Give the warning when within their ear shot, but far enough away to allow them to move to the right.

PASS WITH CARE: Look ahead and behind to make sure the other lane is clear before pulling out. Pass with ample separation. Do not move back in to the right until safely past, and allow more distance than you think is needed.

DO NOT BLOCK THE TRAIL: When stopped to chat, tie shoes, fix a flat, or wait for others in your group, get off the trail surface.

WEAR A HELMET: It is wise to wear a helmet whenever you ride. The helmets' purpose is to protect your head should you hit something when you are in a crash or maneuvering to avoid one. Always buckle the straps so the helmet will be on your head when you need it.

ROADWAY INTERSECTIONS: Trail users, expect to yield to traffic on cross roads. At most intersections the trail has a STOP or YIELD sign, while the road has yellow warning signs. If you can't see motorists until the last second, they can't see you either. Notify the agency that maintains the path if vegetation blocks your view of oncoming traffic, and provide them with the road name if possible.

TRAIL INTERSECTIONS: Most trails have signs and pavement markings to help you know what to expect. The main trail may have a centerline, while a spur does not – the users of the spur should defer to those on the main trail. Where there are STOP and YIELD signs, use the message to determine whether you must yield to others, or have the right of way. Remember that intersections are the most dangerous points on a trail.

BE SAFE, BE SEEN: Most trails are closed between dusk and dawn, therefore, few trails are lit at night. Most residential or street lights will be too far away from the path to help you see your way. In fact, without a source of light you may not be able to see your hand in front of your face. If you expect to be on the trail around dusk or later, carry a flashlight if on foot, and equip your bicycle or helmet with a headlight. Flashing lights help others see you, but won't help you see trees, the edge of the path, or other people.

RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY: Respect public and private property, including trail-use signs and no-trespassing signs. Stay on designated trails and do not create new ones. Do not disturb pets, wildlife or livestock.

CLEAN UP LITTER: Please do not add to the litter along trails – carry your throw-away items to a trash receptacle.

SHARE THE TRAIL! Everyone can have fun safely

HAVE YOU OUTGROWN TRAILS? Trails have engineering and design limitations. If your bicycling speed or style is endangering other users, look around for alternative routes that are better suited to your needs.



Ohio Department of Transportation
Division of Local Programs
Office of Local Projects
Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator
P.O. Box 899
Columbus, Ohio 43216-0899

TRAIL USER GUIDELINES.doc
February 14, 2008