

MSFTA Trail Boss's Camp and Trail Etiquette Guide

Goal: To have a relaxed and fun trail ride with your Fox Trotter and fellow Fox Trotter owners

Trail Boss: The Volunteer who has offered to lead a day or overnight ride

Rider Safety: Foremost concern is rider and horse safety. It is the Trail Boss's responsibility to be sure the trail is safe, the rider can handle their horses in a safe, considerate manner, and the environment around the trail group will support that goal. As always, the trail boss has the final decisions on who can or cannot safely ride with the group.

Trail Boss's Duties

4-6 Weeks Prior to Ride

- Consult the Trail Committee as to start time and other organizational issues or questions
- Provide a write up and send it to your Trail Committee for publishing (Pictures?)
- Obtain a hold harmless form from your Trail Committee

1-2 Weeks Prior to Ride

- **Pre-ride the trail**, even if you are familiar with the trail. Access may have changed or been blocked or prior camping areas changed. New hazards on the trail need to be discovered.
- Obtain a map of the trail. Make copies for the attendees in case someone gets separated or has to turn back early.
- Make sure the driving directions have not changed. Access points, mileage, etc. Possibly make some direction signs to be placed on the road to camp.

Day of Ride

- Get signatures of every attendee in camp on the Hold Harmless Release form. Retain forms and mail to Trail Committee
- Carry a basic First Aid Kit. If you don't have one, talk to the Trail Committee. Also recommended is some basic bandage/first aid material for Equines as well; i.e., a tampon and ace bandage makes a quick, efficient compression bandage, and can be used for human or horse.
- If there is cell reception, carry a phone for emergency. Have emergency numbers programmed into the phone; i.e., local forestry service, sheriff, etc. If no cell service, consider an alternate plan in the event a member or their horse is injured. Find out if someone has a GPS and make sure it goes on the trail with you.
- If there are more than 12 riders in your group (25 heart beats for National forest) consider breaking your group into smaller groups with another trail boss. A Fast and slow group is always recommended due to the variety of riding skills and their horses capabilities.

As with all rides, the main concern is to be as safe as possible. The Trail Committee recommends that before you head out on the trail, gather everyone and talk about the requirements of conduct and safety concerns. Be aware of the riders and condition of their horses. You may have to slow down to accommodate different riders. Prevention is the best policy.

Etiquette on the Trail

- No cantering upon another rider-unless you have asked them and the trail boss if they are okay with that action
- If a rider/horse is in trouble, call out and ask if you can help and how.
- Dogs – No dogs on Trail Rides. Dogs to be on leash at all times in camp
- Remember, that you can adjust as needed the guidelines and that the MSFTA board will support your decisions.

HAVE A SAFE AND FUN RIDE