



## JCHA General Rules & Guidelines

- 1) Stallions and dogs are a potential hazard and are not allowed on any Club ride.
- 2) Riders under 18 are welcome when accompanied by a responsible adult rider.
- 3) All children 12 years of age and younger will be required to wear a safety helmet while riding in any event or activity sponsored by the Club.
- 4) A current member must accompany guests on Club rides.

### **Trail Etiquette for Club Rides**

All riders assume responsibility for themselves and their horses, especially under Oregon Equine Inherent Risk laws.

The trail boss is in charge of the ride. He/she will lead the ride, determine breaks, and give assistance when requested. The drag rider will assist the trail boss by being the last rider at all times. Both have the authority to make decisions on the ride. Both will also carry basic horse/human first aid kits.

Riders and guests **MUST** be familiar with the Club rules and trail etiquette guidelines. Riders not following the rules and guidelines and causing problems for other riders may be asked to not ride with the Club. **REMEMBER:** The safety of all riders and their horses is the most important thing on a trail ride.

Be sure you and your horse are in adequate physical condition for the trail ride. Use the trail levels and definitions below to help you decide which rides are best for you and your horse. Be honest with yourself regarding your physical condition and the physical condition of your horse. Diseased or ill horses should not be brought to trail rides

If you are new to trail riding, let the trail boss or drag rider know BEFORE the ride begins. Riders MUST check in with the trail boss at breakfast or before starting the ride. Members with guests must also sign the guest liability waiver.

If not already planned, the trail boss will be asking for a volunteer drag rider before the ride begins. Please consider volunteering on occasion.

Check your equipment to be sure it is safe and good repair BEFORE the ride. Shod horses are strongly recommended for all trail rides

Riders should take a halter and tie rope along on the ride

Arrive early and BE READY TO LEAVE at the designated departure time. It is strongly recommended that you call the trail boss AT LEAST THE NIGHT BEFORE the trail ride so the trail boss will have an idea of how many riders will be attending the ride, and if there is a last-minute change, you can be notified.

Animals may kick when crowded. If your animal kicks, tie a colored ribbon to its tail to warn others. (The trail boss has colored flagging)

Know your riding limitations and the limitations of your horse. Don't put yourself and others in danger. Identify the problem and ASK FOR HELP. It is very important to communicate with the trail boss, drag rider, or closest rider if you are having a problem.

If no one volunteered to be drag rider, riders need to keep up with the main group. If you become separated from the main group, you will be responsible for yourself and getting back to the staging area.

If riders want to move out at a faster pace, please ask the trail boss, and on approval, go out ahead of the group after notifying the trail boss. You will be responsible for yourself and getting back to the staging area.

BE AWARE OF THE RIDERS AROUND YOU. You should always keep another rider in view. Riders also need to be aware of their surroundings and/or landmarks in case you need to turn back.

Keep your distance when riding. Rule of thumb is you should always be able to see the back feet of the horse in front of you.

When approaching or leaving other riders, do so in a slow and controlled manner. NEVER trot/canter up behind or away from other riders.

Always be alert and observant of hazards such a wire, bad holes, bees, etc. Signal riders behind you of hazards. If bees are encountered, move down the trail quickly while maintaining control of your mount.

Walk down into gullies or inclines at a safe distance; NEVER lunge or gallop into or out of them. This could cause a serious accident by unnerving other horses. Pass only on sections of trail that are safe. Give riders behind you time to cross creeks or other obstacles before riding on.

Do not leave the group without notifying the trail boss, drag rider, or ask the closest rider to pass on to the trail boss/drag rider that you are leaving the ride.

During short stops, tie your animal safely and securely to a solid object that will not break or pull off if the animal pulls back. Be certain to tie rope so it cannot slip down where your animal can get a foot over it. Keep distance between animals when tying. Be aware of pawing and cribbing. Repair ground damage and spread manure after stops on the trail.

Do not leave trash on the trail or at the staging area. All riders should clean up the manure around their trailer at the staging area.

The trail boss, drag rider, or person designated by the trail boss/drag rider will remain until all riders are accounted for at the trail head. This person will also wait for horses to be loaded up and riders are ready to head home. **BE COURTEOUS TO THIS PERSON – DON'T MAKE HIM/HER WAIT FOR YOU UNNECESSARILY!** If you are having a problem, let this person know.

### **Trail Level Definitions**

L1 = Easy. Mostly flat, a couple of easy bridges and/or water crossings. Primarily old roads that are wide, good footing, no side hills. Recommended for beginner riders and controllable horses in fair condition having some trail experience (2 to 3 trail rides).

L2 = Moderate. Varied terrain, but no steep hills or side hilling. Trails and roads. Few bridges and/or water crossing but easy to negotiate. Some rocky areas. Recommended for beginner/intermediate riders and controllable horses in good condition with experience on several trail rides.

L3 = Somewhat Difficult. Varied terrain, including steep sections. Some side hilling, but on wider trail. Rocky trails, more water crossings, some more difficult. Recommended for intermediate riders and horses in good condition and experience in all types of trail obstacles.

L4 = Difficult. Mostly steep, up and down and side hilling. Water crossings may be more difficult (steeper approaches, deeper and faster water). More difficult bridges (narrow, step-ups, no rails, etc.). Trails are narrower and rocky. Recommended for advanced riders and horses with substantial experience on all types of trails and conditions.

L5 = Very Difficult. Steep, narrow, side hills, rocky, footing issues, tight switchbacks, difficult water crossings. Recommended for advanced riders and horses in very good condition with lots of trail time.

**REMEMBER:** Trails may be a combination of ratings, starting easy and then having a difficult area. Trails may have a different rating depending on the time of year as well. Wet conditions, erosion, or high water run-off in the creeks can make an easy trail more difficult.