

Mt. Spokane Trail Safety

A serious issue affecting the park's trail system and its user groups is safety. Safety issues are due to a number of factors, including:

- Signage.
- User group education.
- Trail design & maintenance.
- Congestion of user groups.

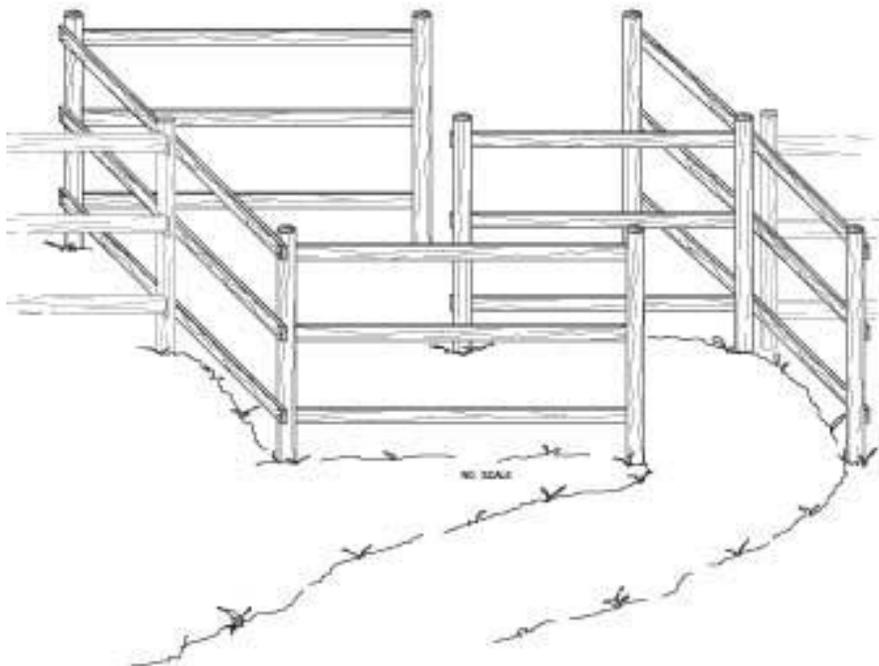
The first two items can be easily rectified. With a user base as diverse as ours, we need to ensure that everyone is properly informed to the type of experience they are expected to have within the park. This starts with proper signage.

Items that should be addressed:

- Trail name.
- Length & Grade.
- Trail Rating (Difficulty marking, ie: Green, Blue, Black, Double Black)
- Trail type (Hiking Only, Multi-use, Directional, etc.).
- Types of users you will encounter (Hiker, Biker, Horse Backer, etc.).
- Trail Etiquette/Courtesy (Yield Triangle)
- Safety Points (Helmets, Travel in Groups, Repair Kits, Food/Water, etc.)

Once the signage has been established, they need to be placed to ensure the users take notice and read them. The easiest way to accomplish this is to install chicane style entrances at all the trail heads. By placing your signage in a location in front of the user as the chicane is navigated provides the greatest opportunity for the user to read the information. Gates of this nature give adequate space for hikers, bikers, and even horses. Similar gates can be installed at trail intersections and merge locations if needed.

- An example of chicane gating:



Trail design and maintenance plays an equally important part in providing a safe and enjoyable experience for all users. The signage and gating has provided the user with an expectation now on the trail, but how do we help to ensure a trouble free experience? By looking at the trail design itself, we can help minimize negative experiences. This needs to happen at both the initial construction phase, and during the maintenance of the trail. Clearing brush away from the trail and opening up lines of sight will enable users to see further ahead and allow time to prepare for encounters.

Good example of proper clearing and line of sight:



The final point of safety has to do with congestion and the overcrowding of the system itself. The park has seen steadily increasing numbers of users over the years, especially with the incredible popularity and growth of the mountain bike industry. Bikers of all levels are now utilizing the trail system from family cruisers to cross-country to downhill. Though the above items certainly will help to alleviate many of the current issues, there needs to be a long term goal to take the burden off of the existing trail system. This would best be done with trail system expansion, but an immediate

Directional trails provide an easy way to establish a relatively encounter free user experience. This solution works incredibly well for bikers as they will gravitate to the trails where they are least likely to encounter other users, especially those coming uphill. The same is true for bike only trails. Unfortunately, these types of trails only work in new construction as removing an existing trail from the current user population often leads to conflicts from users disregarding the new designations.

Bike only trails would be the long term goal of expansion of the trail system. By building additional trails that appeal to today's riders, we can potential eliminate all of the current safety issues with regards to encounter with mountain bikers. The proverbial "If you build it, they will come" holds very true in this regard. By providing a wide range of trail types, something that will challenge rider of all levels, and designating them as bike only, rider will inherently use those trails, thus relieving stress on the existing system.

On the following pages are additional examples of trail signage used by mountain bike parks and trail systems from all over the world. There are some additional examples trail entrances and gating.

Signage Examples:



MULTIPLE USE TRAIL GUIDELINES

TRAIL COURTESY



BICYCLISTS

Ride on open trails only.
Leave no trace.
Control your bicycle.
Always yield trail.
Never scare animals.
Plan ahead.



EQUESTRIANS

Control your horse.
Avoid cross-country riding.



HIKERS

Yield trail to equestrians.
Allow equestrians and bicyclists to pass.
Don't cut switchbacks.

ALL USERS

For Your Safety Please:

Observe Rules And Regulations
Stay On Designated Trails
Be Alert And Courteous
Avoid Muddy Areas



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I·M·B·A

BOOTCAMP
CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL

 **EASIER**  **ONE WAY BIKE TRAIL**

SOME TECHNICAL FEATURES - USE AT YOUR OWN RISK - SOME ALTERNATE ROUTES PROVIDED -

 **HIKE WITH CAUTION**
BIKES HAVE RIGHT-OF-WAY

 **CLOSED TO ALL OTHER USES** 

Trail System Big Backyard

CAUTION
RIDE AT YOUR OWN RISK

- THIS TRAIL IS NOT SUPERVISED YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY
- JUMPS AND TECHNICAL TRAIL FEATURES IN THIS PARK MAY BE DANGEROUS
- USE ADJACENT WALK-UP TRAILS TO INSPECT ALL JUMPS AND FEATURES BEFORE RIDING THEM
- USE CAUTION AND KNOW YOUR LIMITS. START SMALL AND DEVELOP YOUR SKILL LEVEL
- FULL FACE HELMET AND BODY ARMOR HIGHLY RECOMMENDED
- WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T GO OUT

Trail System Big Backyard

STEP IT UP
CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL

 **MORE DIFFICULT**  **ONE WAY BIKE TRAIL**

SIGNIFICANT TECHNICAL FEATURES - USE AT YOUR OWN RISK - SOME ALTERNATE ROUTES PROVIDED -

 **HIKE WITH CAUTION**
BIKES HAVE RIGHT-OF-WAY

 **CLOSED TO ALL OTHER USES** 

Trail System Big Backyard

MOVIN' ON
CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL

 **MORE DIFFICULT**  **ONE WAY BIKE TRAIL**

SIGNIFICANT TECHNICAL FEATURES - USE AT YOUR OWN RISK - SOME ALTERNATE ROUTES PROVIDED -

 **HIKE WITH CAUTION**
BIKES HAVE RIGHT-OF-WAY

 **CLOSED TO ALL OTHER USES** 

Trail System Big Backyard

PARK RULES

- USE TRAILS AS INTENDED
- DO NOT BYPASS GATEWAY FEATURES
- RIDE RESPONSIBLY. STAY IN CONTROL
- ONLY RIDE FEATURES THAT MATCH YOUR ABILITY
- STAY WITHIN PARK BOUNDARIES. KEEP OFF PRIVATE PROPERTY
- RIDE ONLY ON DESIGNATED TRAILS. BE CONSIDERATE OF NEIGHBORS AND OTHER PARK USERS, ESPECIALLY CHILDREN
- RIDE. DON'T SLIDE. SKIDDING DAMAGES JUMPS AND TRAILS
- DO NOT MODIFY TRAILS OR BUILD JUMPS OR FEATURES. UNAUTHORIZED TRAIL BUILDING MAY RESULT IN PARK CLOSURE
- PACK OUT YOUR TRASH

Trail System Big Backyard

BRAVEHEART
CROSS COUNTRY TRAIL

 **MOST DIFFICULT**  **ONE WAY BIKE TRAIL**

ADVANCED TECHNICAL FEATURES - USE AT YOUR OWN RISK - SOME ALTERNATE ROUTES PROVIDED -

 **HIKE WITH CAUTION**
BIKES HAVE RIGHT-OF-WAY

 **CLOSED TO ALL OTHER USES** 

Trail System Big Backyard

ATTENTION MOUNTAIN BIKERS!

Manners count, especially on the trail. Protect the image of your sport by using the following trail manners:

1. SPEAK UP OR USE A BELL AS SOON AS YOU SEE OTHERS ON THE TRAIL. LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE THERE...
2. SLOW DOWN WHEN PASSING. PASS NO FASTER THAN TWICE THE SPEED OF WHO YOU ARE PASSING...
3. WHEN A HORSE IS COMING YOUR WAY, STOP, STEP OFF THE TRAIL, AND SPEAK TO HORSE AND RIDER...
4. YIELD THE RIGHT OF WAY TO ALL OTHER TRAIL USERS...
5. DON'T RIDE HERE IF THE TRAIL IS WET ENOUGH TO LEAVE RUTS AND TRACKS...
6. STAY ON THE TRAIL...

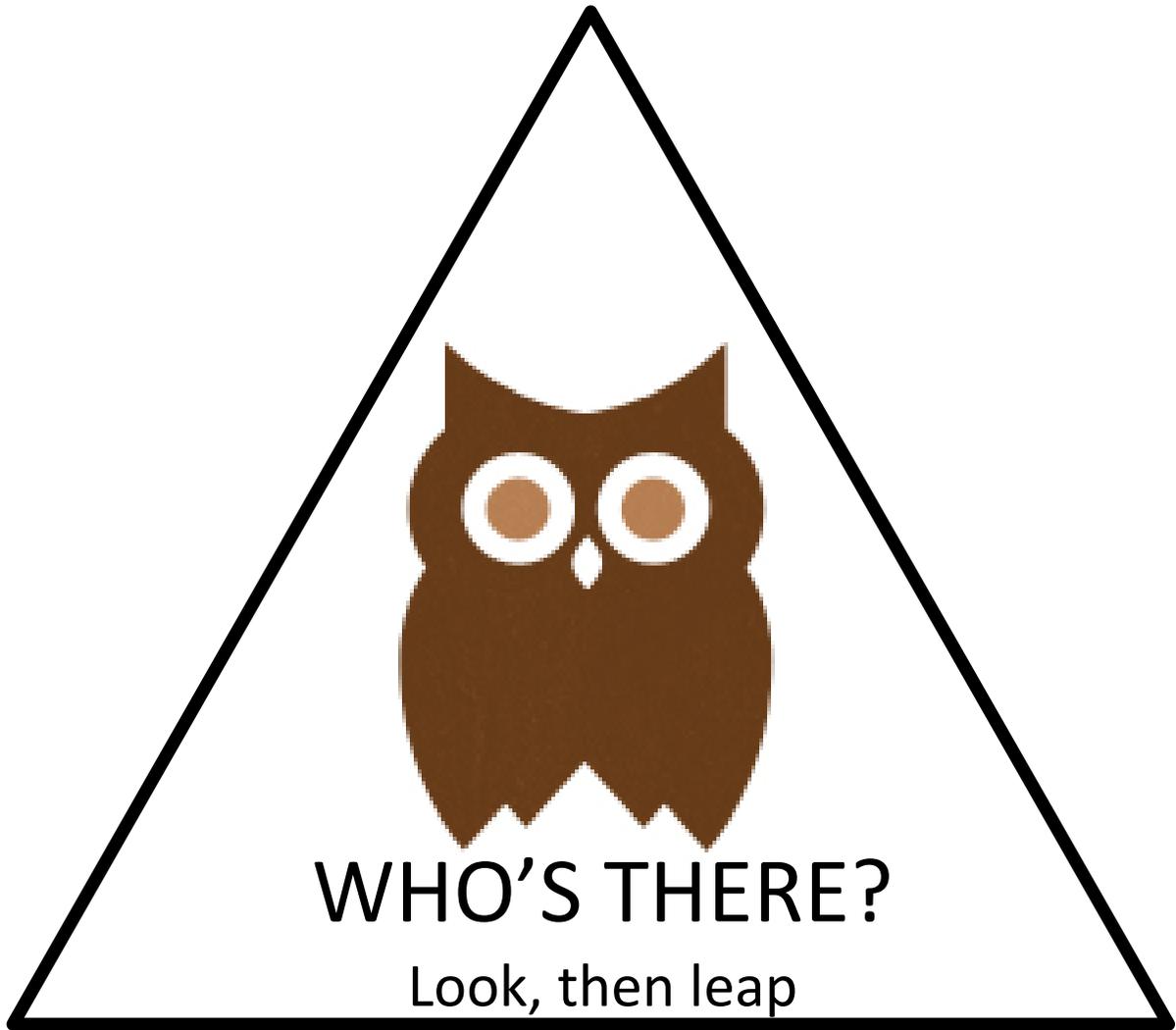
 **Creekside** 

 **ATTENTION:**
Creekside trail is recommended for expert riders only. Extreme terrain ahead.

CAUTION

EXPECT 2-WAY TRAFFIC ON ALL TRAILS



This sign could be placed before areas of known visibility restriction, either uphill or down, to encourage users to keep their attention focused on who or what could be around the bend.

Gate/Entrance Examples:

