

MORE Ride Leader Guide



Thank you for your interest in becoming a ride leader for MORE. Taking the time to plan and lead a ride is one of the easiest, yet most important contributions you can make for MORE. This guide is intended as a resource to assist you in planning and leading a successful MORE group ride. Suggest an event today on the MORE calendar:
www.more-mtb.org/pages/events

Ride Leader Requirements: A Ride Leader MUST:

- Be a current member of MORE.
- Contact MORE's Ride Coordinator (rides@more-mtb.org) so that your ride can be advertised and included on the MORE calendar. The ride coordinator can help organize the ride and answer any questions you may have.
- Get the MORE Liability Waiver (Electronic or Paper) signed by ALL participants.
- Designate a ride sweeper. The sweeper is an experienced rider assigned to ride at the back of the group and ensure no one is left behind.
- Ride in a safe, legal, respectful, and responsible manner that sets an example to other members and the community.
- Ensure ALL are wearing a properly fitted helmet. No helmet- no ride - no exceptions.
- HAVE FUN!**

Join MORE



rides@more-mtb.org

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Choose a trail you're familiar with. Sharing your favorite route is part of what makes ride leading such a fun experience.

Be mindful of the recent weather and trail conditions. MORE rides should only take place on trails that are open for riding and should be cancelled if the trail is muddy. Ask around, contact the Trail Liaison or local social media sites.

Schedule the ride as far in advance as possible. This gives you and the ride coordinator enough time to advertise your ride.



Advertising your Ride

MORE uses several methods to advertise a ride

1. MORE Calendar
2. Social Media
3. Meetup
4. Golden Volunteer

Contact the Ride Coordinator to answer any questions

rides@more-mtb.org



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Title

Date

Time

Location

Contact Info

Pace

Terrain



In the ride posting, provide relevant information:

Title: Provide a few words to describe the audience, location and level of riding, such as: Women's Night Ride at Schaeffer Farm, or Intermediate Ride at Fairland.

Date and Time: Double check the date and provide a meeting time and a ride-start time. such as: meet at 6PM, wheels rolling at 6:15PM.

Location: Be as specific as possible, often there are multiple parking lots or poor addresses. GPS coordinates also work well.

Contact: Provide your email address and cell number.

Pace: It's important to determine a ride pace and stick to it as advertised. Advertising a casual pace and leading a moderate pace will alienate new riders. See Descriptions on the following pages

Terrain: Provide a short description of the ride terrain. See descriptions on the following pages



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Pace

Use the categories below to describe your ride

Casual (4-6 MPH): This is generally a slow, social or beginner friendly ride. Someone who has little to no experience should be able to stay with the group. Casual rides often have many stops to allow rest and to regroup. The goal is to keep the group together and encourage new riders as needed.

Casual/Moderate (6-7MPH): While still “casual” in nature, this pace will have fewer stops along the way. Riders with average fitness and a few months of regular riding should do fine on this level of ride.

Moderate (7-8MPH): This pace is for the average rider with a season or more of experience and the desire to push the pace a bit. Riders at this level are often starting to further refine their bike handling skills. Moderate paced rides are considerably faster than casual rides and offer fewer breaks.

Moderate/Fast (8+ MPH): This pace is intended for the experienced rider who wishes to push themselves. These rides seldom have regular breaks and require a significant level of fitness and bike handling skills.

Fast (9+ MPH): This is intended for the “hammer heads” of the club. Pushing yourself to your limits is what the fast paced group ride is all about



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Terrain

Use the categories below to describe trail difficulty



Beginner:

An entry-level MTB trail. Minimal obstacles (roots and rocks). Most climbs and descents will be gradual. Ten Mile Creek and Muddy Branch are examples.

Intermediate:

There will be obstacles which require the rider to get their front wheel off the ground to clear successfully. Basic mountain biking skills are required. Short, steep climbs and descents may be encountered. Many intermediate trails may be successfully ridden by more fit entry-level riders. Schaeffer and Lake Fairfax are good examples.

Advanced:

Assumes the rider has mastered fundamental mountain biking skills. Significant obstacles will be present including: rock gardens, large log overs, and drops. Climbs and descents could be long and steep. There may be sections where even experienced riders will need to walk their bikes. The Frederick Watershed and Elizabeth's Furnace are examples.

Extreme:

A mastery of mountain biking skills is required along with good fitness. Slow riding or "trials" skills may be required to ride some sections. Areas of the trail may be exposed, with large drops, jumps, and technical riding.



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The Ride!

Show Up - Show up on time and lead your charges- people are counting on you to guide their day's adventure.

Introduce Yourself: Before heading out on the trails, take a moment to welcome the riders, thank them for participating, and introduce yourself as a volunteer on behalf of MORE. Share that in addition to sponsoring group rides MORE also maintains the many local trails and takes a prominent role in local trail advocacy. Be sure to mention the MORE web site so they can get more information and to become a member. You may want to share your cell phone number with the group so they can contact you if needed during the ride.

Introduce the Sweeper: The sweeper is a critical part of any successful ride and will ensure that no one is left behind. This individual agrees to ride at the rear of the group and make sure everyone remains with the group during the ride. Every great ride leader needs an equally great sweeper to be successful. Make sure you have the cell phone number for the Sweeper and vice-versa!

Get waivers signed: A MORE liability waiver MUST be signed by ALL participants! Double-check that all participants have signed the waiver before you head out onto the trail.

Introduce the Trail: Provide a short description of the trail, notable technical sections and how long the ride is expected to last.

Review the basics of MTB Trail Etiquette (see following pages).

If the ride needs to be cancelled: The decision to cancel a ride is the responsibility of the ride leader. Rides should be cancelled if weather conditions are unsafe, or if the trails are closed or muddy. Ride cancellations should be communicated via social media and the MORE calendar as soon as possible in advance of the ride, ideally at least a few hours ahead of the scheduled ride. If circumstance arises that make it impossible for you to attend, try to find another qualified member to take your place. If this fails, contact the Ride Coordinator at ride-coordinator@more-mtb.org for assistance in finding a replacement leader or canceling if necessary. If you do find yourself the only rider at the trail head wait at least 15 minutes before deciding to make the call to ride solo or cancel. You will still get credit for leading the ride regardless of attendance.



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The Ride!

- This is your ride, but not really! Make sure everyone behind you is having a good time. You want them to come back and enjoy the experience.
- Make sure everyone knows your general plan.
Remind riders of the pace, are you stopping at all intersections, will there be a break, etc.
- Check behind you- is anyone there?

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Sweeping a Ride



Ride Sweepers:

- Fill a critical role in a successful ride.
- Should be identified before the ride begins.
- If a rider is significantly slower than the rest of the group:
 - Encourage the rider to stay within their comfort zone at a pace they are comfortable with.
 - Provide pointers as appropriate to help the rider learn skills and techniques.
 - Be friendly, provide positive feedback, and practice your slow skills along the way.
 - If a rider is in over their heads, consider asking if they'd like to turn around and head back to the trailhead (proceed after communicating with the Ride Leader and task another to sweep if needed!).
- Should be strong riders who have some knowledge of first aid and trailside repair.
- Remain in the back of the group and make sure NOBODY is left behind.
- Communicate all riders are present when stopped at intersections.
- There are a lot of sweeping strategies you can use. Share your favorite with other ride leaders and sweepers.
- Want to lead a ride? Try sweeping a few rides first!



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Issues:

Lost Rider:

If you find you've dropped a rider stop the group immediately. Often a rider needs is a few minutes to catch up to the group. If after giving the rider 10 minutes or so, consider doubling back to look for them.

Depending on how far out you are, you could either assign an alternate ride leader to continue with the group, while you or a small group double back for them, or you could have a volunteer who knows the trail or someone else go back while you finish with the group

Manage Mechanicals:

If a rider has a mechanical issue, do your best to assist them and or find someone in the group who can help. In the worst-case scenario find someone to accompany the rider out should they need to bail on the ride. No one should have to walk a bike out alone. Share cell phone numbers with any participants leaving the ride and check in on them to be sure they made it back to the trailhead

Injuries:

If its an emergency call 911! Stay calm and work with the group to manage the situation. For serious injuries, report the situation to rides@more-mtb.org within 4 hours. Most minor injuries just need the group to get the injured rider off the trail and to their car. Walk back with the individual and advise them to seek professional care.

rides@more-mtb.org



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Trail Etiquette

The following are basic rules to follow for group riding and general trail etiquette



- Riders must stay between the Leader and the Sweeper at all times.
- If anyone wants to go slower or faster on their own and leave the ride group, they must alert the leader or sweeper!
- Right of way triad - Bikers yield to horses and hikers, and uphill riders have right of way over downhill riders.
- Remind riders that the trails are used by many people – always be kind and pleasant!
- Shout ‘stopping’ when stopping and **move off the trail when stopping**.
- Shout “hiker up”, “rider up”, etc. when approaching other trail users and ask that riders keep shouting to the back of the group.
- Ask all riders to be responsible for the person behind them. This means when making a turn or passing a trail intersection you yell which way you are going. If you do not hear the person behind yell out the same message to the person behind them, STOP and tell the person in front that you are waiting for the person behind to catch-up.
- If a rider gets to an intersection and they are not sure which way to go, ask that they just stop and wait for sweeper to catch up.
- Maintain some distance between riders to avoid rear-end crashes, and “tailgating” is not comfortable for some riders.
- Faster riders should ride in the front part of the group with more relaxed/slower riders toward the back of the group.
- Allow others to pass you when it is safe to do so and kindly request if you want to pass the rider in front of you.
- Ask riders to share any concerns/issues with the Leader or sweeper – we are here to have FUN!



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After the Ride

Take a moment to thank the folks who came out for your ride. Making folks feel welcome on our club rides is a sure way to recruit new members and continue to strengthen our club.

Make sure everyone has directions and is clear on how to return home.

Remind those who are not already members to check out the MORE website at <http://www.more-mtb.org> and consider joining. If you happen to know of any upcoming trail workdays in the area take a moment to mention them to the group as well.

Consider heading over to a local restaurant for post ride refreshments.

Please take the time send an email to the ride coordinator at ride-coordinator@more-mtb.org with a brief summary of how the ride went, how many riders showed up, and what the conditions were like. Be sure to report any problems you may have had or share any stories from the day! This type of information is helpful in planning future events.

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Top 5 List of Why Ride Leading is Good.

1. Don't be a follower and eat other people's dust instead everyone eats your dust.
2. PLB's appear magically most of the time
3. Spiderman Fan? You will learn to love spider webs.
4. You always get to set the pace when it starts off. But don't drop folks!
5. Be a hero, make new friends, get recognized for being a leader.

Thank you for your interest in becoming a MORE ride leader!

Without our dedicated group of ride leaders, we would be unable to engage with the local MTB community.

While the information above may seem like a lot to remember at first glance, once you've led a ride or two, all the information will become second nature. If you have any questions and or comments please don't hesitate to contact the Ride Coordinator at rides@more-mtb.org.

RIDE LEADERS WELCOMED

If you are a MORE member can you:

- Organize weekly, monthly, or even an annual ride?
- Ensure waivers are signed and saved?
- Make sure your riders wear a helmet?
- Post details on the MORE calendar?
- Ride as an ambassador for MORE?

HAVE FUN?

If you are not a MORE member join here:
<https://more-mtb.org/pages/join-more>





rides@more-mtb.org

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MORE members typically lead rides because they enjoy it and find it incredibly rewarding. How can MORE, as an organization, best recognize your efforts? Send us a message and let us know - rides@more-mtb.org

Have an idea to share? Weekend camp and ride? Day trips? What's your vision for MORE rides?



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