

## SouthEastern Association of Trailriders

### Trail Etiquette

Revised 2/5/14



SEAT was established in 1995 and has evolved into a family oriented pleasure trail riding club, organized to promote safe and responsible trail riding. Everyone has concerns when trail riding, especially in a large group, often in unfamiliar surroundings. Common sense should prevail. Developing good trail riding manners comes with experience. All riders should review the following guidelines which are written to enhance the enjoyment and safety of all. Remember, we are all responsible for promoting and developing our horse activity and its reputation!

#### SAFETY

1. The Ride Coordinator will determine the pace of the ride based upon the conditions and ability of horses/riders present, which may include separate groups.
2. Green horses or riders should have a **green** ribbon securely affixed to the tail of the horse. A horse is considered green if he is inexperienced at this type of riding or group outing, skittish, or unpredictable in any way. A **red** ribbon should be affixed the tail of any horse even slightly prone to kick. Stallions must be identified by a **yellow** ribbon in their tails.
3. Keep at least **one horse length** between you and the horse in front, unless you have made a previous arrangement with the other rider.
4. Safety helmets are required for riders 18 and under. Hard hats are highly recommended for all riders regardless of experience level.
5. Juniors must be accompanied by an adult at all times. The adult sponsor cannot leave the junior without permission from the ride management. Juniors must provide a written permission slip if riding with someone other than their parent.
6. The Ride Coordinator will have available the first aid kit at all SEAT rides. Emergency items will be carried on each ride. Full first aid kit will remain at the trailer.

#### COURTESY

1. **Always obtain permission to ride on any land.** Obey all *No Trespassing* signs, unless permission has been given by the land owner or lessee. Assume all fields are planted. Ride on the edge of fields and never between the rows. Do not ride through people's yards. Be considerate of the landowner's rights and unexpressed wishes. Never forget that it is his land, so he is always right. A silent complaint often leads to losing the right to ride.
2. **SEAT abides by the philosophy of Leave No Trace.** Make sure the area around your trailer is free of manure and trash before you leave. If you must clean out your trailer, ask where the manure should be placed. Do not litter on the trail. Make sure you carry any trash out with you, even if there is other litter already on the trail. If you are smoking, dismount and make sure all smoking material is completely extinguished and you carry your butts/remnants with you.

3. Announce your intention to pass and which side you will pass on the trail, well in advance. Pass carefully and considerately, making sure there is adequate room. Accelerate to a pace slightly faster than the horse being passed. Avoid any sudden movements, such as a whip, rein, or hands which may upset the horse. The horse being passed should yield to the faster horse(s). Extra precaution should be used when passing horses with colored ribbons in their tails. If a rider simply wants to go at a faster pace, first announce your intention to all horses around, allowing them a few seconds to prepare.
4. When riding through wooded trails, do not hold back branches as you pass. The limb may cause injury the horse/rider following you.
5. Announce any hazards to the rider behind you, who in turn, should pass it on. Keep it simple, such as "Hole on right."
6. If another horse/rider in your group stops, wait quietly until all are ready to move on. When stopping for water on the trail, do not block the trail. Let your horse drink, move out of the way and wait for your riding partners. Never leave the last rider behind.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

1. Directions to each SEAT ride will be available on our website or from the Ride Coordinator. It is always a good idea to confirm any internet directions. Often a central point is offered for members to convoy with a lead and drag driver. It is suggested you have directions in case you become separated from the group.
2. Experience will teach you what items are necessary to carry on trail rides. Recommended items depending on length of your ride are map, cell phone, water bottle, halter with lead rope, hoof pick, basic first aid supplies, and snacks.
3. Each rider is responsible for their actions and those of their mount. Ignorance of the rules does not absolve the rider of the responsibility should an accident occur.
4. Know your horse's limitations. Avoid over exertion of your horse. Be aware of his condition throughout the ride. Let someone know if you suspect a problem with your horse.
5. Inhumane treatment of a horse is unacceptable.
6. Dogs are not allowed on the trail, however, they may accompany you to the ride. They must remain on a leash, either tethered or under control at all times. Dogs may not roam at large. Please confine your dog to your trailer area, unless invited to surrounding trailer sites. Make sure to dispose of dog waste properly.
7. Violation of the rules is grounds for dismissal from the event and action by the club.