

By practicing the Tread Lightly! principles, you not only care for the environment and reduce conflicts among recreationists, you help protect access to recreational areas for years to come.

Tread Lightly!® is a national nonprofit organization with a mission to promote responsible recreation through ethics education and stewardship. It is considered the nation's signature ethics message for outdoor enthusiasts that use motorized vehicles while enjoying trails and waterways. Tread Lightly! offers unique training and restoration programs strategically designed to instill an ethic of responsibility in a wide variety of outdoor enthusiasts and the industries that serve them.

- T** TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY
- R** RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS
- E** EDUCATE YOURSELF
- A** AVOID SENSITIVE AREAS
- D** DO YOUR PART

# CAMPING CAMPING



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**TREAD LIGHTLY!'S**  
RESPONSIBLE RECREATION TIPS

## TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY

Travel responsibly on designated roads, trails or areas.

- ✔ While traveling to your favorite camping spot, stay on designated roads and trails.
- ✔ Always practice minimum impact travel techniques for your mode of transportation.
- ✔ Go over obstacles, not around.
- ✔ Don't create new routes or expand existing trails.
- ✔ Cross streams only at fords where the road or trail crosses the stream.
- ✔ If hiking on a trail, walk single file to avoid widening the trail.
- ✔ If there are no trails and hiking is permitted, spread out in open country. Spreading out, rather than following each other's footsteps, disperses impact and avoids creating a new trail. If possible, travel on hardened surfaces such as gravel, rock or in sand washes.
- ✔ Comply with all signs and respect barriers.
- ✔ Buddy up with two or three campers, reducing vulnerability if you have an accident or breakdown.

## RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Respect the rights of others, including private property owners, all recreational trail users, campers and others so they can enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed.

- ✔ Be considerate of others on the road, trail, and campground.
- ✔ Keep noise to a minimum especially in the early morning and evening hours.
- ✔ Be considerate of other campers' privacy, keep your distance and avoid traveling through their campsites.
- ✔ Camping supplies in natural colors blend with natural surroundings and are less intrusive to other campers' experiences.
- ✔ Leave gates as you find them.
- ✔ If crossing private property, be sure to ask permission from the landowner(s).
- ✔ Proceed with caution around horses and pack animals. Sudden, unfamiliar activity may spook animals—possibly causing injury to animals, handlers, and others on the trail.

- ✔ When encountering horses on the trail, move to the side of the trail and stop. Ask the rider the best way to proceed. If riding an OHV turn off your engine, remove your helmet, and speak—you want the horse to know you are human.
- ✔ Keep your pets under control; this protects your pet, other recreationists and wildlife.

## EDUCATE YOURSELF

Educate yourself prior to a trip by obtaining travel maps and regulations from public agencies, planning for your trip, taking recreation skills classes, and knowing how to operate your equipment safely.

- ✔ Obtain a map—motor vehicle use map where appropriate—of your destination and determine which areas are open to your type of travel.
- ✔ Make a realistic plan and stick to it. Always tell someone of your travel plans.
- ✔ Contact the land manager for area restrictions, closures, and permit requirements.
- ✔ Check the weather forecast for your destination. Plan clothing, equipment, and supplies accordingly.
- ✔ Carry a compass or a Global Positioning System (GPS) unit and know how to use it.
- ✔ Prepare for the unexpected by packing emergency items.

## AVOID SENSITIVE AREAS

Avoid sensitive areas such as meadows, lakeshores, wetlands and streams. Stay on designated routes.

- ✔ Other sensitive habitats to avoid, unless on designated routes, include cryptobiotic soils of the desert, tundra, and seasonal nesting or breeding areas.
- ✔ Do not disturb historical, archeological, or paleontological sites.
- ✔ Avoid "spooking" livestock and wildlife you encounter and keep your distance.
- ✔ Motorized and mechanized vehicles are not allowed in designated Wilderness Areas.

## DO YOUR PART

Do your part by modeling appropriate behavior, leaving the area better than you found it, properly disposing of waste, minimizing the use of fire, avoiding the spread of invasive species, and restoring degraded areas.

- ✔ Pack out what you pack in.
- ✔ Carry a trash bag and pick up litter left by others.
- ✔ Repackage snacks and food in baggies. This reduces weight and the amount of trash to carry out.
- ✔ Whenever possible, use existing campsites. Camp on durable surfaces and place tents on a non-vegetated area. Do not dig trenches around tents.
- ✔ Camp at least 200 feet from water and other campsites.
- ✔ In backcountry areas not open to vehicles, camp at least 200 feet from trails.
- ✔ For cooking, use a camp stove. They are always preferable to a campfire in terms of impact on the land.
- ✔ Observe all fire restrictions. If you must build a fire, use existing fire rings, build a mound fire, or use a fire pan.
- ✔ For campfires, use only fallen timber. Gather firewood well away from your camp. Do not cut standing trees.
- ✔ Let your fire burn down to a fine ash. Ensure your fire is completely extinguished.
- ✔ Do not wash in streams and lakes. Detergents, toothpaste, and soap harm fish and other aquatic life.
- ✔ Wash 200 feet away from streams and lakes. Scatter wash water so it filters through the soil.
- ✔ In areas without toilets, use a portable latrine if possible and pack out your waste, otherwise it's necessary to bury your waste. Human waste should be disposed of in a shallow hole (6"-8" deep) at least 200 feet from water sources, campsites, or trails. Cover and disguise the hole with natural materials. Pack out your toilet paper. High-use areas may have other restrictions so check with a land manager.
- ✔ Take a small bag and pack out your pet's waste especially in front country areas or if it is left on or near trails or trailhead areas.
- ✔ Before and after a trip, wash your gear and support vehicle to reduce the spread of invasive species.
- ✔ Build a trail community. Get to know other types of recreationists that share your favorite trail.