

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



To learn more, contact Tread Lightly! at
Phone: 800-966-9900
Email: treadlightly@treadlightly.org
Or visit us on the web at www.treadlightly.org

Brought to you by



www.ForemostOutdoors.com



FISHING FISHING



TREAD LIGHTLY!'S
RESPONSIBLE RECREATION TIPS

TRAVEL RESPONSIBLY

Travel responsibly on land by staying on designated roads, trails or areas. On water, stay on designated waterways and launch watercraft in designated areas.

- ✔ Travel only in areas open to your type of watercraft or on routes open to your mode of transportation.
- ✔ Carry a Coast Guard approved life vest (PFD) that is wearable and comfortable for each person.
- ✔ Always maintain your watercraft at a manageable speed.
- ✔ Keep an eye out for other boaters, objects, and swimmers.
- ✔ Do not create new routes on roads and trails or expand existing trails. Go over obstacles, not around, to avoid widening trails.
- ✔ Cross streams only at fords where the road or trail crosses the stream.
- ✔ Comply with all signs and respect barriers.
- ✔ Buddy up with two or three anglers, reducing vulnerability if you have an accident or breakdown.

RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Respect the rights of others, on land, including private property owners, recreational trail users, campers and others so they can enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed. On water, respect anglers, swimmers, skiers, boaters, divers and others so they can enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed.

- ✔ Be considerate to all recreationists on and around waterways and on the roads and trails to fishing spots.
- ✔ Be a sportsman; practice catch and release and keep only what you need.
- ✔ Be courteous to other boaters while in boat ramp areas. Launch and retrieve your watercraft as quickly as possible.
- ✔ Leave ample room for other anglers, so you don't disturb their fishing experience.
- ✔ If fishing by boat, don't crowd other anglers or watercrafts.
- ✔ Keep the noise down especially around shore and other anglers.
- ✔ Be considerate of others on the road or trail.
- ✔ On roads and trails, horses always have the right of way and when driving yield to hikers and bikers as well.

- ✔ Leave gates as you find them.
- ✔ If crossing private property, be sure to ask permission from the landowner(s).

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Educate yourself prior to your trip by learning rules and regulations, planning for your trip, taking recreation skills classes, and knowing how to operate your equipment safely.

- ✔ Obtain a map or chart of your destination and determine which areas are open to your type of travel and recreation.
- ✔ 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.
- ✔ Know your local fishing laws and regulations. Many states have restrictions for certain waters, such as use of artificial flies and lures, single hook flies and lures, barbless, or no live bait.
- ✔ Know bag limits and legal length/size of fish you intend to keep.
- ✔ Be prepared with alternative fishing locations if you arrive at an over-crowded area.
- ✔ Make sure your watercraft or vehicle is mechanically up to task. Be prepared with tools, supplies, spares, and a spill kit.

AVOID SENSITIVE AREAS

Avoid sensitive areas on land such as meadows, lakeshores, wetlands and streams. Stay on designated routes. On water, avoid operating your watercraft in shallow waters or near shorelines at high speeds.

- ✔ In the backcountry, be mindful of damaging fragile vegetation and soils along shorelines and stream banks. Choose access to fishing spots wisely.
- ✔ Other sensitive habitats to avoid are 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 fuel, oil and waste, avoiding the spread of invasive species, and restoring degraded areas.

- ✔ Pack out what you pack in and carry a trash bag to pick up litter left by others.
- ✔ Pack out any discarded fishing line. Monofilament line is especially dangerous to all wildlife.
- ✔ Never discard fish entrails in lake shallows or any area where others might come across it. It is unacceptable to bury it near the lake or stream or burn it in camp. Suitable alternatives include bagging and packing out entrails, disposing of it in water at least 25 feet deep, or burying it 100 yards away from any lake, trail, or camp.
- ✔ Use only artificial lures. Live bait has the potential to accidentally introduce exotics and cause more damage to fish when being released, as they often take live bait deeper. If you do use live bait, use only bait native to the area.
- ✔ If practicing catch and release, use barbless single hooks to make release easier.
- ✔ When practicing catch and release, keep fish in the water as much as possible, with air exposure under 30 seconds at a time and 60 seconds total. Handle them as little as possible with wet hands and release them gently into the water so they are sure to survive.
- ✔ Knotless or rubber mesh nets are much easier on fish and significantly increase post-release survival rates.
- ✔ When holding large fish for a photo, hold them horizontally, supporting their weight, not vertically which can cause fatal injuries, even if the fish swims away.
- ✔ Minimize fishing during spawning periods.
- ✔ Release smaller fish as they are forage for many residents of the ecosystem. Larger and older fish are often the best producers, collecting more contaminants, and are less healthy to eat—also making them good choices for release.
- ✔ Observe proper sanitary waste disposal or pack your waste out.
- ✔ Prevent unnecessary noise created by a poorly tuned vehicle or motor or revving your engine without need.
- ✔ Before and after a trip, wash your gear, watercraft, and support vehicle to reduce the spread of invasive species. Remove all plant material from watercraft, motor, trailer, and other gear and dispose on dry land in a garbage container. Drain livewells, bilge water, and transom wells at the boat launch prior to leaving.