

# BICYCLE RIDES NW SAFETY POLICIES FOR THE ROAD

Bicycle Rides Northwest (BRNW) conducts bicycle rides on open roads with vehicular traffic present. These roads include both marked and unmarked hazards. Our number one priority is your safety.

By state law in Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana, & Washington, bicyclists are operators of vehicles and must comply with all traffic laws. Cyclists who violate traffic laws may be subject to citation by law enforcement officials.

Our rides take us on a variety of roads and we must obtain permits from various authorities such as each state's Department of Transportation, Forest Service, County Road Depts., and communities. Each entity has its own rules and they seem to make it more difficult each year for us to obtain the necessary permits to use their roads. In working with these officials, the theme seems to be consistent . . . too many unsafe cyclists on their roads. Together let's make our rides safe.

## Safety Policies

Though we go to great lengths to make our rides as safe as possible, you are only as safe as you ride. Always remember that your safety is in your own hands and we request that you abide by these safety policies:

- Beware of and yield to vehicle traffic. Ride single file when a car or truck is behind you.
- Call out "Car back" or "Car up" to other cyclists around you.
- Obey traffic laws, signs, and signals
- Use hand signals to indicate left or right turns, slowing or stopping. Sometimes it is easier to call out your intentions when slowing or stopping.
- Never assume motorists see you or that you have the right-of-way. Use common sense and courtesy towards motorists and other cyclists.
- Ride as far to the right as possible. Only ride two abreast when the shoulder is wide enough. Be alert to traffic behind you, as well as, in front of you. Share the road! ***It's the law!***
- Point to road hazards and/or call out to cyclists behind you: "Gravel," "Hole," "Tracks."
- Be predictable. Ride in a straight line.
- Ride defensively – always be aware of other cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians.
- When passing other cyclists, do **NOT** cross the yellow centerline at any time.
- Accidents often occur in pacelines. If you are inexperienced with drafting, do not draft. Maximum paceline length is 5 cyclists. It is difficult for traffic to pass pacelines.
- Expect the unexpected; your first responsibility is to be safe.
- Only pass cyclists on their left. When passing, warn cyclists by saying, "On your left."
- Be especially attentive and careful at railroad tracks, cattle guards, and busy intersections.
- Beware of rumble strips - ride to the right.
- Move completely off the road and shoulder when stopped and resting.
- All cyclists must wear an approved helmet at all times when on their bicycle.
- Rearview mirrors and two water bottles (or equivalent) are strongly recommended.
- All ride support and safety services are provided on the designated and marked route ONLY.
- The Board of Directors of BRNW reserves the right to expel any cyclist who demonstrates a reluctance to ride in a safe and lawful manner or who repeatedly and/or flagrantly violates our safety policies.

### **SAG Vehicle Support**

There will be multiple SAG (support and gear) vehicles on the course each day. They are available to transport cyclists as needed due to mechanical problems or medical injuries and are occasionally available to transport cyclists up or down a steep hill so that cyclists are able to finish the day's ride. They also have extra water, tubes and a floor pump, if needed.

**Assistance** - If at any time you need assistance, please signal a SAG by placing your hand on top of your helmet – the drivers can see this clearly in their mirrors.

**Emergency** - when a SAG is responding to an emergency, the SAG will have a special flag on the driver or passenger window (whichever side is facing riders) and they will not stop to assist other cyclists. When the SAG is approaching the emergency situation, have a cyclist place their arms up in the air in a cross – this will show the driver where they need to be.

