

## TRAIL ETIQUETTE

As more people are getting outdoors and enjoying local trails during the past year, we need to be reminded that there are guidelines for trail etiquette. This is meant to be followed all year, along with some winter specific rules that need to be followed. The Chautauqua County Overland Trails, Rails to Trails, The Portage Trail, Allegany State Park, Long Point State Park, Lake Erie State Park, and the Audubon Riverside Nature Center are just some of the amazing trails for all to enjoy. These trails and others are open for our enjoyment, but we need to respect the rules and nature while out using them.

When possible, snowshoers and hikers should avoid walking in ski or bike tracks. Walk beside them to avoid damage to the set tracks. It is difficult for the skiers to glide when the tracks are lumpy and have “post holes” from sinking into the deep snow and it makes it difficult for the mountain bikers as well. If the snow is deep be respectful of the other users and wear snowshoes instead of just boots. If you don’t own a pair, consider renting from a local business.

Snowmobilers should be in control of their speed at all times and watching for other users. Other users should always be alert and listen for approaching machines; though you have the right-of-way, they may not see you, and can come up on you fast. Step aside off the trail as much as possible and wait for them all to pass.

### **Winter Trail Etiquette**

- 1- Share the trail and respect Others and Nature; stay on the trail and off private lands.
- 2- Be aware of changing conditions on the trail.
- 3- Make sure your intended use is permitted on the trail you intend to utilize as many trails do not permit motorized vehicles or horses.
- 4- Respect and avoid cross country ski & bike tracks; walk or snowshoe to the side of them.
- 5- Avoid post holing on the tracks; use snowshoes or skis when conditions are appropriate.
- 6- Respect the right-of-way:
  - a. Snowmobiles yield to everyone.
  - b. Bikes yield to skiers yield to snowshoers and hikers.
  - c. Skiers yield to snowshoers and hikers, unless going downhill.
  - d. Everyone yields to horses.
- 7- Respect slower trail users - Keep right - Announce your approach - Pass on the left.
- 8- Move to the side or just off the trail when stopping.
- 9- Leave no trace; pack in and pack out all garbage.
- 10- No camping or fires except at designated camp sites.
- 11- Keep your pet leashed where required. Clean up after your pet and dispose of waste properly.
- 12- Always report any trail issues to the appropriate trail management.

Respecting others and the outdoors are a must and will ensure not only your safety and enjoyment but that of others as well. Everyone needs to follow simple guidelines of being polite, respecting and educating others, following rules, supporting our parks and trails, and having fun. You can be an ambassador for the outdoors and bring a friend to share the beauty of the area and our local trails. Fresh air, natural beauty, majestic views, and great exercise are some of the many benefits you will get!

For more information visit [hikechautauqua.com](http://hikechautauqua.com) or [chautrtrt.org](http://chautrtrt.org) or [chqgov.com](http://chqgov.com) (parks and trails) or [parks.ny.gov](http://parks.ny.gov) (state parks)