

Questions and Answers About the Off-Road Cycling Permit



What is the Off-Road Cycling (ORC) Permit? The ORC is an annual permit required for cyclists wishing to access and use mountain bike trails on state park, reservoir and state forest properties with trail ratings above beginner. Each rider must possess and be able to produce the permit while engaged in off-road cycling activities.

What is the cost? The cost of the annual ORC Permit is \$20. A daily ORC may be purchased for \$5.00.

When and where may an ORC be purchased? ORC permits will be available for sale beginning November 1, 2015. Trail riders must carry and be able to produce their permits beginning January 1, 2016. Permits may be purchased at all state park, reservoir and forestry property offices and or gate houses during regular business hours. You may also purchase an ORC online at Mother Nature's Mercantile at www.innsgifts.com.

Are all bike riders required to have an ORC permit? Only off-road cyclists riding designated mountain bike trails that are rated as above beginner level will be required to possess an annual or daily permit. Cycling on property roadways, riding on paved bicycle paths and in other authorized riding areas will not require a permit.

Are all mountain bike trail users required to purchase an ORC permit? No. All mountain bike trails have a designated level of difficulty. Any trails identified as "Beginner" using International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) standards, will not require a permit. This will allow newcomers to the sport to engage in and practice riding on trails before investing further or before tackling more challenging riding opportunities. At this time, all mountain bike trails at Potato Creek State Park are identified as "Beginner" level trails. This means no permits will be required to ride at Potato Creek. IMBA and local chapters will work with DNR to ensure that all trails are rated, marked and signed appropriately.

Do children and teenagers who are riding mountain bike trails need a permit? Yes. Anyone planning to ride on a designated mountain bike trail (other than those designated as "Beginner") must have a permit.

Can the ORC be used in lieu of the Annual Entrance Permit? No. The ORC is a separate permit for the use of mountain bike trails (with the exception of beginner trails). The standard gate entrance fee is required when gates are staffed.

Can the ORC be used in lieu of a Pedestrian & Bicycle Pass or vice versa? No. The ORC is a separate pass for the use of mountain bike trails (with the exception of beginner trails). If a mountain bike rider enters the gate on his or her bike, the standard pedestrian or bicycle fee or pass OR an annual entrance permit is required as gate admission when gates are staffed.

Will trail volunteers be exempt from purchasing an ORC? Volunteers who contribute at least 125 hours of service to the division in a year may earn an off-road cycling permit, an equestrian permit, or a lake permit for the next year. This recognizes the work that volunteers contribute towards maintaining and constructing trails and a wide variety of other services performed on Department of Natural Resources properties. All volunteer hours must be recorded through the property volunteer coordinator. Please contact the property where you have interest in serving to register before beginning any volunteer activities.

Where does the money go? All user fees are collected and deposited into dedicated accounts for each division that helps defray operating costs.

How will we know if a person using a mountain bike trail has an ORC or daily permit? Similar to an Annual Horse Tag or Annual Lake Permit, Indiana Conservation Officers and authorized property representatives will conduct periodic checks along trails. The ORC should be visible or be available for presentation upon request.

Trail Etiquette Guidelines*

Ride Open Trails: Respect trail and road closures. Ask the property if you are uncertain about a trail's status.

Leave No Trace: Be sensitive to the soil beneath you. Wet and muddy trails are vulnerable to damage. When the trail is soft, consider other riding options. Pack out at least as much as you pack in.

Stay on Existing Trails: Don't cut switchbacks or go around wet spots.

Control Your Bicycle: Inattention for even a moment can put you and others at risk. Obey speed regulations and ride within your limits.

Yield Appropriately: Bicyclists should yield to other trail users unless the trail is clearly signed for bike-only travel. Let your fellow trail users know you are coming with a friendly greeting or bell. Anticipate other riders as you ride around corners. Bicyclists traveling downhill should yield to ones headed uphill unless the trail is clearly signed for one-day or downhill only traffic. Make each pass a safe and courteous one.

Never Scare Animals: You are in their habitat, and they may be easily startled by an unannounced approach, sudden movement or loud noise. Give animals enough room and time to adjust to you. When passing horses, use special care and follow directions from the riders (ask if uncertain.) Running cattle and disturbing wildlife are serious offenses.

Plan Ahead: Know your equipment, your ability and the area in which you are riding and plan accordingly. Keep your equipment in good repair, and carry supplies for changes in weather and other conditions. Always wear a helmet and appropriate safety gear.

*Based on IMBA guidelines

Are the mountain bike trails open and accessible all year? Yes, barring any posted closures due to weather/trail conditions or as required for maintenance, construction or for the health and safety of riders. It is important that off-road cyclists avoid riding trails that are wet or muddy. Riding during these conditions may severely damage trail surfaces or present riders with hazardous conditions. If questions arise about whether it is safe and appropriate to ride, contact the property office before you visit. The Hoosier Mountain Bike Association also notes trail conditions and recommended status due to weather at www.hmba.org.

What properties have mountain bike trails?

- Brown County State Park
- Fort Harrison State Park
- Harmonie State Park
- O'Bannon Woods State Park
- Potato Creek State Park (beginner trails)
- Spring Mill State Park
- Versailles State Park
- Salamonie Lake
- Interlake State Recreation Area
- Redbird State Recreation Area
- Clark State Forest
- Covered Bridge State Forest
- Deam Lake State Recreation Area
- Ferdinand State Forest
- Jackson-Washington State Forest
- Martin State Forest
- Owen-Putman State Forest
- Starve Hollow State Recreation Area

Where can I find more information about mountain bike trails in DNR, ratings, safety and more?

- Mountain Bike Trails <http://www.in.gov/dnr/outdoor/4450.htm>
- International Mountain Bicycling Association www.IMBA.com
- Hoosier Mountain Bike Association www.HMBA.org
- Indiana Department of Natural Resources www.DNR.IN.gov
- Indiana Division of State Parks www.stateparks.IN.gov



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