

Cyclists & Equestrians: How To Be Safe Together on The Silver Comet Trail ☺

A Public Service Announcement / Educational Note About Horses...

Horses are "prey" animals and have a natural, uncontrollable instinct to react fearfully to something coming up behind them. This is their natural Flight reaction. This reaction may include spinning, rearing, side-stepping or even kicking out....all of which can be dangerous to the horse, the rider and/or you & your bike! So firstly, please be aware that horses are out on the SCT. Next, the moment you see a horse and rider, immediately let the rider know you are coming up behind them with a clear "On Your Left!"....loud enough for the rider to hear and respond. Then slow down as you pass the rider. Whenever possible and safe, please pass with a wide margin.

Note: For the most part, equestrians can safely ride on the dirt side of the SCT's paved concrete path or ride within the tree-lined trails running parallel. However, some parts are just too narrow for the horse to safely negotiate, have a severe drop off, a mile-marker sign or may have water/mud that a horse will not go through. Therefore, there may be times when you will come upon a horse/rider on the concrete itself. Again, just let the rider know you are there and pass slowly.

If you are stopped on the side to take a break and a horse/rider passes you, please do not approach to pet the horse without asking permission first. The rider may be training their horse and cannot stop or would prefer to keep a safe distance from you for their personal safety if riding alone....especially in light of unfortunate incidents of the past. If you are biking with your child(ren), instruct your children to immediately stop their bike and wait as the horse passes. Children often become enamored at the sight of a horse and forget to watch where they're going! ☺ Same rules for kids petting horses: *Just Ask First!* (and please do not be offended if the rider says "no." - It's not personal nor does it mean the horse bites/kicks. We're just being safe.

When Approaching Any Of The Bridges:

Georgia Law is Clear: *Horses and Pedestrians have right of way over any wheeled vehicle, including bicycles.* When you see a horse/rider crossing a bridge (whether mounted or not), **please**.....just take the 20 or 30 seconds necessary to wait until the horse and rider have crossed to the other side.

Coming straight on at a horse & rider or, worse yet, coming up behind a horse on a bridge is an accident waiting to happen for all parties. Should that horse spook and wheel around, you and your bike could go over the side. Should that horse spook and rear, the rider may be dismounted and the horse take off.

ENJOY YOUR RIDE ON THE SILVER COMET TRAIL!!!