



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 2020

Board of Directors, STA

Avoid Muddy Trails!

Why is Sisters Trails Alliance (STA) asking you stay **off** the trails? Our mild winter and freeze-thaw cycles have left the area trails with a surface of soft mud in many locations. Riding, running or hiking on muddy trails creates tread damage that requires many hours of volunteer time to repair. Deep ruts created by mountain bike tires and footprints are unsightly and create low spots for melting snow or rain to settle. To avoid these puddles, trail users tend to divert around the muddy patches and thereby inadvertently do even more damage to the delicate soils and plants adjacent to the trails. The resulting scarring and widening degrades both the quality of the tread and the aesthetics of the trail experience.

STA is asking users to keep in mind some tips for using the trails responsibly under these conditions:

- Ride early in the day before the ground thaws.
- Turn around when you encounter soft trail conditions.
- If you encounter a section of soft trail, ride or walk through the middle of the trail tread rather than going around the soft spots.
- To some degree, fat tire bikes can be used in softer conditions. Use good judgement, if the trails are a muddy mess, consider finding another place to ride.

Ian Reid, Sisters District Ranger, says, “the Forest Service appreciates the support and voluntary compliance in ensuring the sustainability of our trail systems”. STA joins him in that sentiment.

STA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to connect people and communities to each other and their natural surroundings. STA volunteers maintain close to 200 miles of trails, including the Peterson Ridge Trail System, produce a free trail map, host an annual speaker series, and support trail-related advocacy, activities and events throughout the year. Trail users and trail lovers can support the work of STA by volunteering, becoming a member or donating at www.sisterstrails.org.

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