

HORSE USE POLICY  
C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Horseback riding is a prime activity enjoyed by many visitors to the C&O Canal National Historical Park. Historically, horse use is a consistent activity on the C&O Canal since horses and mules were used to pull the Barges during the Canal's days of operation. The enclosed information regarding the policy on the C&O Canal National Historical Park, when utilized by horse users, should be adhered to.

1. All applicable local, state and federal regulations concerning horse use must be complied with.
2. There is no horseback riding from Swain's Lock (Lock 21, Mile 16.6) to Georgetown (Mile 0). This is a highly congested area of the towpath.
3. As a matter of courtesy and safety, when horse groups meet hikers or bikers, the horse users are asked to slow their animals to a walk and maintain a single file on one side of the towpath, permitting the hikers and/or bikers to pass.
4. For reasons of safety and sanitation, horses are not permitted at campsites or picnic sites. Animals must be tethered at least 50 feet from campsite and towpath.
5. In order to prevent over congestion, we ask that horse users move along the towpath in small units; i.e., five or less riders.
6. For reasons of safety we ask that riders dismount and walk their animals across aqueducts.
7. Horses may not cross narrow footbridges since the weight limit may be exceeded.
8. For reasons of safety, we ask that horses not proceed through the Paw Paw Tunnel, but rather take the Tunnel Hill Trail over the top of the Tunnel.
9. The use of horse-drawn buggies or other vehicles may only be with the approval, in writing, or the Superintendent, C&O Canal National Historical Park.
10. Riders are reminded not to block Park roadways and access gates with vehicles and/or trailers.

If you need additional information or clarification, please feel free to write the Superintendent, C&O Canal National Historical Park at the below address or call at 301-739-4200.

C&O Canal National Historical Park  
P.O. Box 4  
Sharpsburg, MD 21782