

**cyclingschools.org**



**A Bike Adventure For Kids!**

# Information Packet

2018 Version Revised

Essential information for a successful field trip to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park

# Cycling Schools Information Packet

## Table of Contents

- Introduction to Cycling Schools ..... 3
  - Mission Statement ..... 3
  - Overview of the Cycling Schools Program ..... 3
  - About Cycling Schools Volunteers ..... 4
  - Cycling Schools Contacts ..... 4
    - School Liaisons: ..... 4
    - Cycling Schools Website: ..... 4
    - Cycling Schools E-mail: ..... 4
    - Cuyahoga Valley National Park Contacts: ..... 4
- Preparation Before the Ride ..... 5
  - Preparation by the School ..... 5
    - Kick-off Meeting with the School and Cycling Schools ..... 5
    - Schedule the Event ..... 5
    - Arrange Transportation ..... 5
    - Inform the Cycling Schools Liaison of your School’s Plans ..... 6
    - Deciding Who Should Attend ..... 6
    - Assign Teachers and Invite Parents or Guardians or other School Volunteers ..... 6
    - Bring Lunches ..... 7
  - Preparation of the Students ..... 7
    - Classroom Preparation ..... 7
    - Parent or Guardian Permissions and Ride Safety ..... 8
    - Waivers for Teachers, Parents or Guardians and Other School Volunteers ..... 8
    - Assign Students to Riding Groups ..... 8
    - Address the Special Needs of Students ..... 9
    - Advise Students How to Dress and to Comb Hair Down for Riding a Bicycle ..... 9
- The Day of the Ride ..... 10
  - Before Boarding the Bus and the Bus Ride ..... 10
    - Review the Day of Ride Checklist ..... 10
    - Cell Phone Call from the Bus ..... 10
    - Directions and Map to Cycling Schools ..... 10
  - A Typical Day at Cycling Schools ..... 10

## Table of Contents

The Safety Orientation .....	10
Assemble into Riding Groups and The Leadership Briefing .....	10
Select a Bicycle and Adjust the Seat Height for the Student .....	11
Select and Adjust the Bicycle Helmet for the Student.....	11
Teachers and other School Volunteers Select their Bicycles .....	11
Pre-ride Check-out .....	11
Riding Northbound on the Towpath Trail.....	11
Riding Southbound on the Towpath Trail.....	12
What Happens if Students are not Riding Safely .....	12
Activity for Non-riders.....	13
The End of the Ride .....	13
Follow-up after the Ride .....	14
Student Reflections.....	14
Teacher and other School Volunteer Evaluation and Suggestions.....	14
Appendix .....	15
Student Safety Pledge.....	16
STUDENT RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT .....	17
PARTICIPANT RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT .....	19
Day of Ride Checklist.....	20
Map to Cycling Schools from Cleveland.....	21
Map to Cycling Schools from Akron.....	22
Safety Orientation.....	23
Leadership Briefing .....	24
Teacher and other School Volunteer Suggestion Form .....	25

# Introduction to Cycling Schools

## **Mission Statement**

Cycling Schools, Inc. is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that provides a day of bicycle riding along the Towpath Trail in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders from urban schools. The Cycling Schools program allows elementary school age children to experience bicycling as a safe and challenging yet enjoyable physical activity. By using informal educational techniques at appropriate times during the ride, we aim to instill a personal connection with the area's history and environment so students may better appreciate their role in the community. Through the students, the Cycling Schools experience helps to connect the population as a whole with the recreational and educational assets provided by the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.

## **Overview of the Cycling Schools Program**

A successful field trip to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park begins with planning, communication and coordination between Cycling Schools and the participating School. A Cycling Schools Liaison will be assigned to work with a School Contact to assure that the planning process goes smoothly. A date needs to be set and bus transportation needs to be scheduled. Students should have classroom preparation for what they will see, what they can do and what they may learn. Each Student will read and sign a Safety Pledge. A Parent or Guardian must sign a Cycling Schools waiver. Teachers, Parents or Guardians and other School Volunteers may participate in the event. The School is to provide lunches for the Students. Teachers need to assign Students into riding groups of six to eight, usually by social compatibility and physical ability.

When the Students arrive at the CVNP, Cycling Schools will conduct a Safety Orientation. Then the riding groups will be assembled and the Students will be properly fitted with bicycles and helmets. Before beginning the ride Cycling School provides a snack, so that no one starts out on the Towpath trail hungry.

Cycling Schools Volunteers will lead and model a safe, courteous and enjoyable bicycling experience. Teachers and other School Volunteers will also ride and assist. There will be frequent stops along the Towpath to provide educational enrichment. We will take the time to observe and discuss the ecology, history, geography and the environment that is found in the CVNP. Cycling Schools Volunteers will be sensitive to what the Students see, hear, smell or express an interest. This leads to teachable moments. At about the halfway point of the ride, there will be a break and Cycling Schools will provide a snack to assure that the Students will have the energy to complete the ride.

When the ride is completed, the Student will be responsible to wipe down and clean their bike and helmet before returning them to a Cycling Schools Volunteer. The Students will have their lunches and await the bus return to their school. Following the day's events, Students are encouraged to send us notes with their thoughts and reflections. Teachers and other School Volunteers are encouraged to suggest any improvements and fill-out an evaluation form.

## Introduction to Cycling Schools

### About Cycling Schools Volunteers

Cycling Schools Volunteers come from all walks of life. We have firefighters, airline pilots, flight attendants, engineers, project managers, computer programmers, judges, lawyers, teachers and retired people. We do this because we love sharing our enthusiasm for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. This National Park is very special. It is the only National Park located within a major urban area, and is one of the most beautiful parks in the country. Our volunteers are all about biking, hiking and getting exercise in the great outdoors. But the Students are the real reason we are all here for the Cycling Schools Program. We really enjoy spending time with the Students and sharing our passion for the CVNP.

### Cycling Schools Contacts

Please contact the School Liaison assigned to your school.

#### School Liaisons:

Scott Stuetzer	(330) 321-9623	ScottStuetzer@ZoomInternet.net
Kathy Coady-Sansone	(216) 965-4141	CoadySansone@gmail.com
Pam Williams	(216) 402-7219	Pameliawms@RoadRunner.com

#### Cycling Schools Website:

CyclingSchools.org

#### Cycling Schools E-mail:

CSCVNP@gmail.com

#### Cuyahoga Valley National Park Contacts:

Ranger Pamela Machuga	(440) 343-7035	Pam_Machuga@nps.org
Emergency - CVNP Dispatch	(440) 546-5945	

# Preparation Before the Ride

## Preparation by the School

### Kick-off Meeting with the School and Cycling Schools

When it is decided that a School will have a bicycling field trip to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, a Cycling Schools Liaison will contact the School to schedule a kick-off meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to review the Program, and to begin the planning process for the event. Attending the meeting might be the School Principal or designate, and ideally the Teacher or Teachers who will be planning and attending the ride.

The first order of business in the meeting will be to exchange contact information between the primary School Contact and the Cycling Schools Liaison. Our experience tells us that Physical Education Teachers make an excellent choice for the School Contact as they often have a good idea of their Student's bicycling skills or physical abilities. The meeting's agenda will follow the contents of this Information Packet. Copies of the Information Packet will be left with the School. For those Schools that have previously participated in Cycling Schools, the kick-off meeting may be conducted over the phone between the Cycling Schools Liaison and the School Contact.

### Schedule the Event

Cycling Schools conducts its Towpath bicycle rides in both May and in October. There will be approximately ten rides in the last two weeks of May, and approximately five in the first week of October. It is important to set a date for the School field trip to Cycling Schools soon as possible.

### Arrange Transportation

Cycling Schools will work with the School to provide money for transportation from the School to the CVNP and back the day of your ride. Cycling Schools will only cover the cost of one bus. If two busses are needed, the second bus is the School's responsibility. Because most busses we use hold a maximum of 72 persons, we suggest a maximum of 60 students. This allows for space on the bus for Teachers and Other School Volunteers. We have worked closely with both the Cleveland and Akron school transportation offices and with their private contractors. Cleveland Metropolitan Schools District schools are required to use the CMSD transportation office and Akron Schools are required to use the APS transportation office. Private schools generally have more latitude in transportation choices.

The reservation and coordination of the bus is the responsibility of the School. The School is to contact its field trip transport provider for your Cycling Schools event. The bus reservation should be placed within one week of having set the date for your ride.

Criteria that may be helpful in contracting bus transportation is:

Destination: 1538 Boston Mills Road West, Peninsula, Ohio, 44264  
Approximate amount of time at Cycling Schools: 5 Hours

## **Preparation Before the Ride**

### **Inform the Cycling Schools Liaison of your School's Plans**

In order to ensure that we will schedule an adequate number of Cycling Schools Volunteers to assist on the day of your ride, please contact your Cycling Schools Liaison and provide the following information by April 1<sup>st</sup> for the May rides and by August 21<sup>st</sup> for the October rides:

The estimated time of arrival at Cycling Schools.

The estimated number of Students.

The estimated number of Teachers, Parents or Guardians and other School Volunteers.

The estimated time of departure from Cycling Schools.

The date of your pre-visit by a CVNP Ranger.

If your transportation funding source is from the "Every Kid in a Park" (EKIP) grant, please provide the following additional information:

The estimated number of fourth grade Students.

### **Deciding Who Should Attend**

The School is the sole decision maker on which Students will attend the Cycling Schools field trip. Here are some factors the School should consider to make your decisions. The Student must know how to ride a bicycle. The Cycling Schools Permission Slip asks for the Parent or Guardian to indicate if the child knows how to ride. Inevitably, we sometimes end up with a Student who cannot ride well or not at all. Cycling Schools does not teach Students how to ride a bicycle. We simply do not have the volunteer staff to provide the one-on-one necessary. It will be the School's responsibility to provide adult supervision for those Students who cannot ride.

We are a very inclusive group. Occasionally we are asked to accommodate a Special Needs Student. We have had a Student with autism ride with his father on a tandem bicycle that we provided. We had a dad bring a special three-wheeled bicycle using his own trailer and vehicle to get to the park and ride with us. We will attempt to accommodate special requests, but understand that the Parent or School official must be responsible. We can provide a tandem bicycle, but the Parent or Teacher must ride with the Student.

There are cases where the School has to bring Students who cannot ride. If that should happen, the School is responsible for providing adult supervision and activities for the Students who cannot ride. Your Cycling Schools Liaison can give some ideas and put you in touch with one of the Park Rangers to help plan activities for non-riding Students.

### **Assign Teachers and Invite Parents or Guardians or other School Volunteers**

Participation of Teachers, Parents or Guardians and other School Volunteers is necessary and greatly appreciated by Cycling Schools. Ideally there should be at least one Teacher or School Volunteer for every six to eight Students. Teachers and School Volunteers together with the Cycling Schools Volunteers will be assigned to a bike riding group. Cycling Schools has a limited number of bicycles and helmets for Teachers and School Volunteers. Teachers and other School Volunteers should bring their own bicycles and helmets if they can do so.

## **Preparation Before the Ride**

### **Bring Lunches**

Cycling Schools will provide a snack for the Students prior to beginning the ride. Usually this is a banana. Cycling Schools will also provide a healthy snack at the mid-point of the ride. Examples of snacks that we may carry in our back-packs are: carrot sticks, celery sticks, graham crackers, apples, raisins and pre-packaged energy bars.

Students normally will have their lunch at the end of the ride. The lunch is either provided by the School, or brought by the Student. There are picnic tables in the area where Students have their lunch, but the tables are not close to potable water. So, Cycling Schools will provide a large jug filled with drinking water.

The Cycling Schools bicycles do not have water bottle cages. For this reason, the Students will not be allowed to carry their own water bottles. However, Cycling Schools Volunteers always carry plenty of water and there are water fountains at several of the stops during the ride. Students may bring a water bottle or beverage for their lunch, but it will remain at the staging area until lunch time.

## **Preparation of the Students**

### **Classroom Preparation**

To get the most out of Cycling Schools, some classroom time should be devoted to what will be encountered while in the CVNP. One way to do this is to invite a CVNP Ranger to come and visit your School. The Rangers will typically explore the scope of America's National Parks through an interactive session of games and activities. Then the Students will learn about the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the Ohio and Erie Canal and the Towpath Trail. The Ranger's talk is about 30 to 40 minutes.

Some topics which may be presented by the Teacher to Students in the classroom:

- Ecology:            Discuss the animals and their habitats which Students may see, such as:  
                         Birds – Eagles, Herons, Owls, Woodpeckers, Cardinals and Bluebirds  
                         Mammals – Deer, Beavers, Muskrats, Squirrels and Chipmunks  
                         Reptiles – Turtles, Frogs, Garden Snakes and Black Snakes.
- Geography:        Locate Cleveland, Akron, the CVNP, the Cuyahoga River, the Ohio and Erie Canal.
- History:            The Ohio and Erie Canal - Its importance to Ohio's development.  
                         Why is the canal in ruin, and not used today?
- Science:            What is a canal? Why do we have the canal?  
                         Why a Towpath?  
                         Why are there locks, and how do they work?
- Environmental:    The Cuyahoga River, and what was its condition.  
                         How was it recently improved?  
                         What do we see that shows that it improved?



## **Preparation Before the Ride**

### **Parent or Guardian Permissions and Ride Safety**

The Teacher will distribute two Cycling Schools documents to the Students: The Student Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement (Permission Slip) and the Student Safety Pledge. The Teacher should point out to the Students that the Permission Slip is a two-sided form. The form has two spaces for Parent or Guardian permission signatures. It has a space for the Parent/Guardian to acknowledge that the Student knows how to ride a bicycle. And lastly, the permission slip has instructions on what should be done to prepare for a safe ride.

The Teacher should also take the time to review each point in the Student Safety Pledge in class and reinforce why it is necessary for safety on the ride. The Students should be instructed to take both the Permission Slip and the Safety Pledge home. At home the Parent or Guardian should sign the permission slip, and the Student should sign the Safety Pledge.

When the Student returns the forms, the Teacher must check that the Parent/Guardian signatures were obtained, that the Student was judged to know how to ride a bicycle by the Parent/Guardian, and that the Student understands and has signed the Safety Pledge.

Cycling Schools understands that the School may have its own permission slip to participate in field trip activities. The Parent or Guardian's sign-off on the School's form is in addition to and cannot replace the Cycling Schools Permission Slip.

### **Waivers for Teachers, Parents or Guardians and Other School Volunteers**

Teachers, Parents or Guardians and Other School Volunteers participating in the Cycling Schools event, must sign the Cycling Schools Participant Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement. If a participant is under 18 years old, that participant's Parent or Guardian must sign the Volunteer (Under 18) Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement.

### **Assign Students to Riding Groups**

Cycling Schools can accept a maximum of 60 Students for their day in the CVNP. Ideally, Students should be assigned to riding groups of six to eight Students per group. The final number of groups and the group size ultimately is determined by the actual number of Students and Adults in attendance. Our planning includes two Cycling Schools Volunteers and one Teacher or other School Volunteer per group. If we have the maximum of 60 Students, split into 10 groups of 6 Students, then we would need 20 Cycling Schools Volunteers and 10 Teachers or other School Volunteers. On a day when we do not have enough Adult supervision, the number of groups will be reduced in order that there are at least three Adults per group. It is best to plan which Students will be in which group a few days before the ride. Then if necessary, it will be easier to make minor adjustments to the number of groups or group size on the day of the ride.

There are two things to consider in assigning Students to groups. First and most importantly, consider how the Student will ride. Some prefer the challenge to ride fast and far. Others prefer a ride in short segments, with time allowed to take-in the sights, sounds and smells of the CVNP. Second, consider how the Students will get along in the group. Our experience shows that fast riders placed in a slow-moving group get bored and begin passing slower riders and then fail to exercise proper trail etiquette. The best grouping is when friends of similar interests and ability ride together and have fun.

## **Preparation Before the Ride**

An observed best practice (this is not a requirement): One of our Schools not only had the Students broken into groups, and each group was assigned a color. Each student was wearing a name tag of his/her group color so our Cycling Schools Volunteers not only knew what group the student belonged in, but we could refer to them by name. This Teacher also gave the Students a biking test prior to the ride to better assess their skill level and place them in like groups.

## **Address the Special Needs of Students**

There may be Students who have allergies, asthma, diabetes or other issues that may need attention during the ride. Please assure that any necessary medical supplies are available for these Students. A Teacher or Parent Volunteer, who is able to recognize and address an issue that may occur to any of these special needs Students, must be assigned to their riding group and carry any necessary medical supplies. The Cycling Schools Volunteers have first aid kits in their back-packs and will attend to minor cuts and scratches.

## **Advise Students How to Dress and to Comb Hair Down for Riding a Bicycle**

The ride will take place rain or shine, hot or cold. So, the Students need to dress for the weather. Students should be told not to wear baggy pants or flowing skirts as these present safety issues when riding. Students also need to be advised that they must wear a helmet to ride. For the helmet to fit properly, hair should be combed down. Big, highly styled hair will not fit within a bicycle helmet. Pony tails also pose a problem for the helmet to fit. The pony tail must be gathered low at the neck and not high on the head where the helmet goes. Students should be told that they will not be allowed to ride with back packs or any audio devices or cell phones.

# The Day of the Ride

## **Before Boarding the Bus and the Bus Ride**

### **Review the Day of Ride Checklist**

On the day of the ride, the time just before loading lunches and getting on the bus can be the most hectic. For this reason, Cycling Schools has prepared a check list of items that either need to be on the bus before leaving, or what needs to be done on the bus before arriving at Cycling Schools.

The Day of Ride Checklist is found in the Appendix.

### **Cell Phone Call from the Bus**

The Cycling Schools Liaison needs to receive a cell phone call from the School Contact while on the bus. This is to advise how many Students are actually coming, in how many riding groups, how many Teachers or other School Volunteers are coming, and the estimated time of arrival and scheduled time to depart. This call is of great importance to Cycling Schools in order to be ready with its Volunteer assignments and to stage the right bicycles before the School arrives.

Again, refer to the Day of Ride Checklist in the Appendix, which shows the information that is needed.

### **Directions and Map to Cycling Schools**

Detailed maps to Cycling Schools are found in the Appendix. Please inform the Bus Driver that when arriving at Cycling Schools, there will be one of our Volunteers stationed in the parking lot to direct the bus to the area where it should stop and park. We call the place where all activities begin "The Hub".

## **A Typical Day at Cycling Schools**

### **The Safety Orientation**

When off-boarding the bus, the Cycling Schools Volunteer stationed in the parking lot will show the place where a Safety Orientation will occur. Please assist us in directing all Students, Teachers and other School Volunteers to attend the Safety Orientation.

A list of topics covered in the Safety Orientation is found in the Appendix.

### **Assemble into Riding Groups and The Leadership Briefing**

Following the Safety Orientation, Students and Adults will assemble together into their riding groups. After introductions, the Cycling Schools Group Leader will brief the Adult Supervision in his/her group, focusing on the leadership and guidance needed to assure a safe ride. Then the Students and Adults will proceed to get their bicycles and helmets.

A list of topics covered in the Leadership Briefing is found in the Appendix.

## **The Day of the Ride**

### **Select a Bicycle and Adjust the Seat Height for the Student**

Bicycles will be lined up in rows and there will be an orange cone placed at the end of each row. The number on the cone corresponds with the number that was assigned to the riding group. Cycling Schools provides bicycles in three-wheel sizes: 20-inch, 24-inch and 26-inch. The Student, with help from an Adult, will select a bicycle appropriate for the size of the Student. Then the seat height is to be adjusted. To properly adjust the seat height, the Student should sit and have both hands on the handle bars. The seat is then raised or lowered so that the Student is able to balance the bike, touching the ground with both feet on tip-toes. If there is not a bike available that can be adjusted to fit a Student, the Cycling Schools Volunteer is responsible to find a bike that will fit properly.

### **Select and Adjust the Bicycle Helmet for the Student**

Helmets are color coded by size and are found in bins near the bicycles. The Student, with help from an Adult, will select and fit a helmet. The helmet should be chosen to fit snugly on the top of the Student's head. Then the chin strap will need to be adjusted. The strap is to be adjusted so that two fingers fit between the strap and the Students chin.

### **Teachers and other School Volunteers Select their Bicycles**

Once the Students in the group are fitted with their helmets and bikes, they will have their pre-ride snack. While Students are eating their snack, the Teachers and other School Volunteers may then proceed to get their helmets and bicycles.

### **Pre-ride Check-out**

When ready, the group will proceed to the Towpath Trail. The Cycling Schools Group Leader will begin the ride going only a short segment. The purpose of this initial segment is to determine if Students know how to ride, and are able to stop a bicycle with coaster breaks. If there are any problems, they can be resolved before getting too far into the ride. It may take several short segments for the Students to get familiar with riding their bicycles. If the Cycling School Leader determines that a Student does not have the skills to safely ride on the Towpath, the Student will be reassigned to the non-riding group.

The Cycling Schools Group Leader will ride at the front of the group, setting the pace and making stops at points of interest. A second Cycling Schools Volunteer will be the Sweeper for the group. The Sweeper rides at the end of the group to assure that all Students are riding safely and that no one falls too far behind. Teachers and other School Volunteers will normally ride within the group. If a second Cycling Schools Volunteer is not available, the Teacher or other School Volunteer may be asked to assume the responsibilities of the Sweeper.

### **Riding Northbound on the Towpath Trail**

Here are some of the points of interest:

Red Lock No. 34 – There is a placard that has an excellent description of locks and how they work. The lock may also contain frogs and snakes.

The Cuyahoga River – The “Crooked River” parallels the Towpath. Herons are often seen wading and waiting for a fish.

## **The Day of the Ride**

The Canal – Frogs and turtles can be seen sitting on logs, usually on sunny days. North of Station Road is a shallow portion of the canal where catfish can be spotted.

Station Road Pond – Beavers and muskrats have been seen in this recently created pond.

Route 82 Bridge – The bridge itself is a magnificent site, but just beyond it is where the bald eagles nest. Also, nesting in this vicinity are herons and a barn owl has been seen.

Pinery Dam – The dam was used to control water flow into the canal. The dam will soon be removed to give spawning fish the opportunity to go further upstream.

Brecksville Station – The Cuyahoga Valley Train Station is a good place to take a break for restrooms, water and a snack.

## **Riding Southbound on the Towpath Trail**

Here are some of the points of interest:

The I-271 and Turnpike Bridges – Ride under these towering bridges and look for herons in the river.

The Canal – Just past the bridges is a segment of the canal where beavers have been spotted, as well as many turtles and frogs.

Stumpy Basin Swamp – Ride on a near mile-long wooden deck and look for swamp critters.

Cuyahoga River Rapids – Ride the Towpath along the rapids and look for the man-made tree dam that was created to change the course of the river.

The Tunnels – There are two tunnels under railroad tracks. When passing through it is fun to scream.

Peninsula – This is a good place to stop for water and restrooms. There is a tall lock that can be entered from below. Read the placards describing how the lock was built. Look for the stone cutter signatures.

Beaver Marsh – There is a boardwalk to stop and see fish, frogs, turtles, lily pads and a lot more.

Hunt Farm – This is a good spot to stop for a snack, water and restrooms.

## **What Happens if Students are not Riding Safely**

The Cycling Schools Volunteers, Teachers and other School Volunteers need to monitor behavior and gently remind students to obey the safety rules. Normally a gentle, firm reminder is effective. When it is not effective and safety is compromised, the Cycling Schools Leader will stop the group and call a time-out. The Leader will explain why the time-out was called, and the group will walk with their bikes for a few minutes. Then the ride will resume. If unsafe behavior continues, another time-out may be called. Then the ride will resume again. If the unsafe behavior is flagrant, a Teacher will be asked to take responsibility for the offending Student or Students, and return them to the Hub.

## **The Day of the Ride**

### **Activity for Non-riders**

No matter how well you attempt to screen those students who do not possess good bike riding skills, there may be students who come to Cycling Schools and are unable to ride a bike. For these students, a hike on the Towpath can be a fulfilling experience. Some of the points of interest are within walking distance on the Towpath going south. Also, the Towpath Museum in the Boston Store is a good place to spend some time to learn about the Ohio and Erie Canal. Cycling Schools requires that a Teacher takes responsibility for and must accompany the non-riding Students.

### **The End of the Ride**

The ride ends at the Hub. As groups arrive at the Hub, Students will be told to walk their bikes to the garage where they will be given a towel to wipe the bike clean and turn it over to a Cycling Schools Volunteer. Then the Student will return their helmet to the bin with the color code that matches the helmet.

Once riders have returned their equipment, it is the responsibility of the School personnel to organize the lunch period and supervise students until departure. While riding groups are returning to the Hub, Students will have their lunch.

If there is time available after lunch, the Students may be escorted in small groups to visit the Towpath Museum at the Boston Store. This is a short walk from the Hub. There is also a drinking fountain and restrooms in a building just outside of the Boston Store.

When it is time to go, the Teachers should assemble the Students, make sure everyone boards the bus to return back to School.

# Follow-up after the Ride

## **Student Reflections**

Students often send notes with their thoughts and reflections following their day at Cycling Schools. Our Volunteers eagerly await their notes and read them all. It makes the Volunteer experience so worthwhile. We learn a lot from the Students.

## **Teacher and other School Volunteer Evaluation and Suggestions**

The Cycling Schools Program is the result of more than 20 years of experience and constant evaluation with the goal to continuously improve the program. A significant amount of our improvement over the years has come about from Teacher's suggestions. Our Volunteers debrief after every ride. Some Teachers drive separately from the bus in order to join us in our post-ride debriefing. If any Teacher or other School Volunteer has an idea or constructive criticism, we want to hear it either in person or by filling out our Evaluation Form. Your comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

The Evaluation Form is found in the Appendix.

# Appendix

- Student Safety Pledge
- Student Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement (Two-sided form)
- Participant Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement
- Day of Ride Checklist
- Map to Cycling Schools from Cleveland
- Map to Cycling Schools from Akron
- Safety Orientation
- Leadership Briefing
- Teacher and other School Volunteer Suggestion Form

If it is necessary to copy the two-sided form, make copies on both sides of one sheet of paper.



## Student Safety Pledge

As a participating cyclist:

- I will wear my helmet properly fastened at all times while on my bike.
- I will obey all Towpath signs and signals.
- I will keep both hands and both feet on my bicycle at all times while riding.
- I will use common sense and courtesy toward everyone on the Towpath.
- When I stop for any reason, I will move with my bike completely off of the Towpath.
- I will ride single file on the Towpath.
- I will leave a safe space between myself and other riders on the towpath.
- I will report any problems with equipment to a Volunteer Leader so that repairs can be made.
- I will follow instructions from Cycling Schools Volunteers at all times.
- I will clean off my bike at the end of the ride.
- I understand that I will be removed from the ride if I repeatedly violate the Safety Pledge.

I understand and agree to obey this Safety Pledge.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## STUDENT RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT

In acknowledgement of [PRINT NAME OF STUDENT] \_\_\_\_\_'s ("Student") participation in bicycling, hiking, and any related activities with Cycling Schools, Inc. ("Cycling Schools"), a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Ohio, I understand and agree that:

**Statement of Authority.** I have full legal authority, as parent/legal guardian, to complete this Student Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement ("Release") on behalf of the Student, who is under 18 years.

**Assumption of the Risk Agreement.** I, the Student's parent/legal guardian, fully recognize and accept that the Student's participation in this activity has unforeseen risks and dangers. I understand that bicycling activities involve risks and dangers of serious bodily injury, including permanent disability, paralysis, and death. I further understand that there may be other risks of injury and economic loss, either known to me or not readily foreseeable at this time. I understand and acknowledge that by signing this Release the Student and I knowingly assume the risk and responsibility for injury, harm, losses, costs, and damages that may occur as a result of the Student's participation in this activity.

**Release and Waiver of Liability.** I, the Student's parent/legal guardian, agree to release and forever waive, discharge, covenant not to sue, and hold harmless Cycling Schools, and its successors, assigns, directors, officers, employees, volunteers, and agents from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise from the Student's participation in this activity.

By signing this Release, I, the Student's parent/legal guardian, declare that I have read and fully understand the terms of this agreement. I further understand we are giving up substantial rights. I intend this Release to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law.

### THIS AGREEMENT MUST BE COMPLETED BY A PARENT | LEGAL GUARDIAN

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Signature of Parent | Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Print Full Name of Parent | Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Street Address, City, State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Print Name of Student (Under 18)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Date of Birth

### MEDIA RELEASE

I understand that photographs and video and sound recordings are made during Cycling Schools' events and are used for educational, promotional and fundraising purposes. By signing below, I give my permission and consent to Cycling Schools to make, reproduce, edit, broadcast or rebroadcast any photographs, video and sound recordings of the Student for any business or commercial purpose. I understand that I shall not have any right of review or approval of the use of any photographs, video and sound recordings of the Student and that neither I nor the Student will be compensated for their use.

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Signature of Parent | Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
^ Date

**SEE REVERSE SIDE**

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS - PLEASE RESPOND AND PREPARE YOUR CHILD ACCORDINGLY:**

**My Student has ridden a two-wheel bicycle, without training wheels, within the past 12 months:**

**YES:** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO:** \_\_\_\_\_

Students participating in Cycling Schools, Inc. bicycle rides are expected to have experience riding two-wheeled bicycles. If in the judgment of the Cycling Schools' Group Leaders a Student does not have sufficient bicycling skills, such Student will not be permitted to ride and will be assigned to the non-riding group.

We will ride rain or shine, so please provide your Student with clothes appropriate for the weather.

Students should not wear baggy pants, flowing skirts or open toe shoes.

For safety, Students will be asked to leave purses, backpacks, etc. at the staging area while riding. So please discuss this with them before the day of the ride.

Students may bring non-glass water bottles. However, bottles must remain at the ride staging area while children are riding. Cycling Schools Leaders will provide water during the ride.

All Students are required to wear a helmet, which will be provided. Students who normally wear braids styled on top of the head, pony tails, topknots etc. are asked to wear their hair down to achieve a proper and safe fit of the helmet.

Please encourage your Student to eat a good breakfast before they come out to ride.

Teachers should be made aware of any health-related issues (allergies, asthma, diabetes etc.) and these should be presented to a Cycling Schools group leader.

**SEE REVERSE SIDE**

**PARTICIPANT RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AGREEMENT**  
**To be executed by participating parents, school employees, and school volunteers.**

In acknowledgement of my participation in bicycling, hiking, and any related activities with Cycling Schools, Inc. (“**Cycling Schools**”), a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Ohio, I understand and agree that:

- 1. Statement of Authority.** I have full legal authority, as a person who is over 18 years of age, to complete this Release and Waiver of Liability Agreement (“**Release**”).
- 2. Assumption of the Risk Agreement.** I fully recognize and accept that participation in this activity has unforeseen risks and dangers. I understand that bicycling activities involve risks and dangers of serious bodily injury, including permanent disability, paralysis, and death. I further understand that there may be other risks of injury and economic loss, either known to me or not readily foreseeable at this time. I understand and acknowledge that by signing this Release I knowingly assume the risk and responsibility for injury, harm, losses, costs, and damages that may occur as a result of participation in this activity.
- 3. Release and Waiver of Liability.** I agree to release and forever waive, discharge, covenant not to sue, and hold harmless Cycling Schools, and its successors, assigns, directors, officers, employees, volunteers, and agents from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise from the participation in this activity.

By signing this Release, I declare I have read and fully understand the terms of this agreement. I further understand that I am giving up substantial rights. I have signed this Release voluntarily and without any inducement or assurance of any nature. I intend this Release to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law.

---

^ Signature ^ Date

---

^ Print Full Name

---

^ Street Address, City, State, Zip

**MEDIA RELEASE**

I understand that photographs and video and sound recordings are made during Cycling Schools’ events and are used for educational, promotional and fundraising purposes. By signing below, I give my permission and consent to Cycling Schools to make, reproduce, edit, broadcast or rebroadcast any photographs, video and sound recordings of me for any business or commercial purpose. I understand that I shall not have any right of review or approval of the use of any photographs, video and sound recordings of me and that I will not be compensated for their use.

---

^ Signature of Participant ^ Date

## Day of Ride Checklist

### Before leaving the school:

- Bring signed Student Release and Waiver of Liability Agreements
- Bring signed Participant Release and Waiver of Liability Agreements
- Bring lunches for the Students
- Address special needs, such as allergies, asthma, diabetes etc.
- Assign Students to riding groups
- Assure drivers have directions to: 1538 Boston Mills Road West, Peninsula, OH, 44264

**The destination is the Boston Trailhead Overflow parking lot located a quarter mile east of the intersection of Riverview and Boston Mills Road, on the south side of Boston Mills Road.**

### Before arriving at Cycling Schools:

Phone or text the following information to your Cycling Schools point of contact:

Estimated time of arrival \_\_\_\_\_, and scheduled time to depart \_\_\_\_\_.

Total number of student riders: \_\_\_\_\_

How many Groups: \_\_\_\_\_

How many Teachers: \_\_\_\_\_

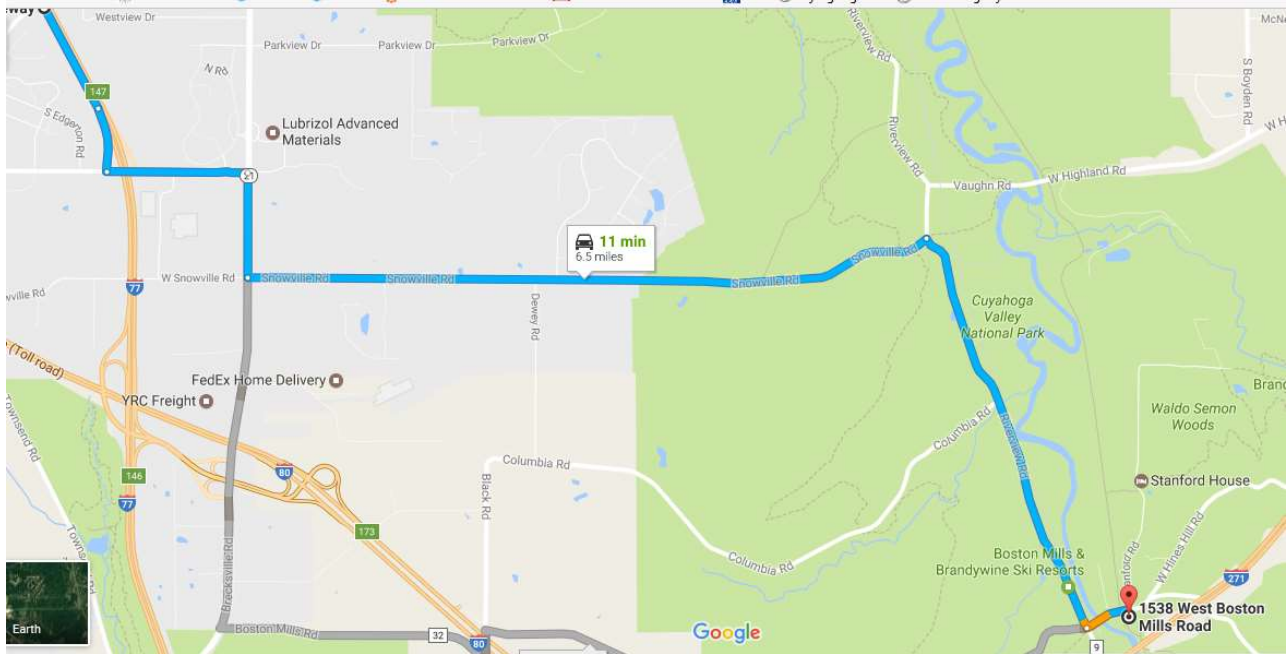
How many Parent Volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_

How many Non-riders \_\_\_\_\_

### When arriving at Cycling Schools:

1. Look for the Cycling Schools Volunteer in the parking lot who will help direct the bus.
2. Immediately upon unloading the bus, direct the Students, Teachers and other School Volunteers to assemble for a Safety Orientation.

## Map to Cycling Schools from Cleveland



Head South on I-77

Take exit 147 for Miller Rd toward OH-21

Use any lane to turn left onto Miller Rd 0.6 mi

Use the right 2 lanes to turn right onto Brecksville Rd 0.4 mi

Turn left onto Snowville Rd 2.8 mi

Turn right onto Riverview Rd 1.7 mi

Turn left onto W Boston Mills Rd 0.2 mi

Destination will be on the right

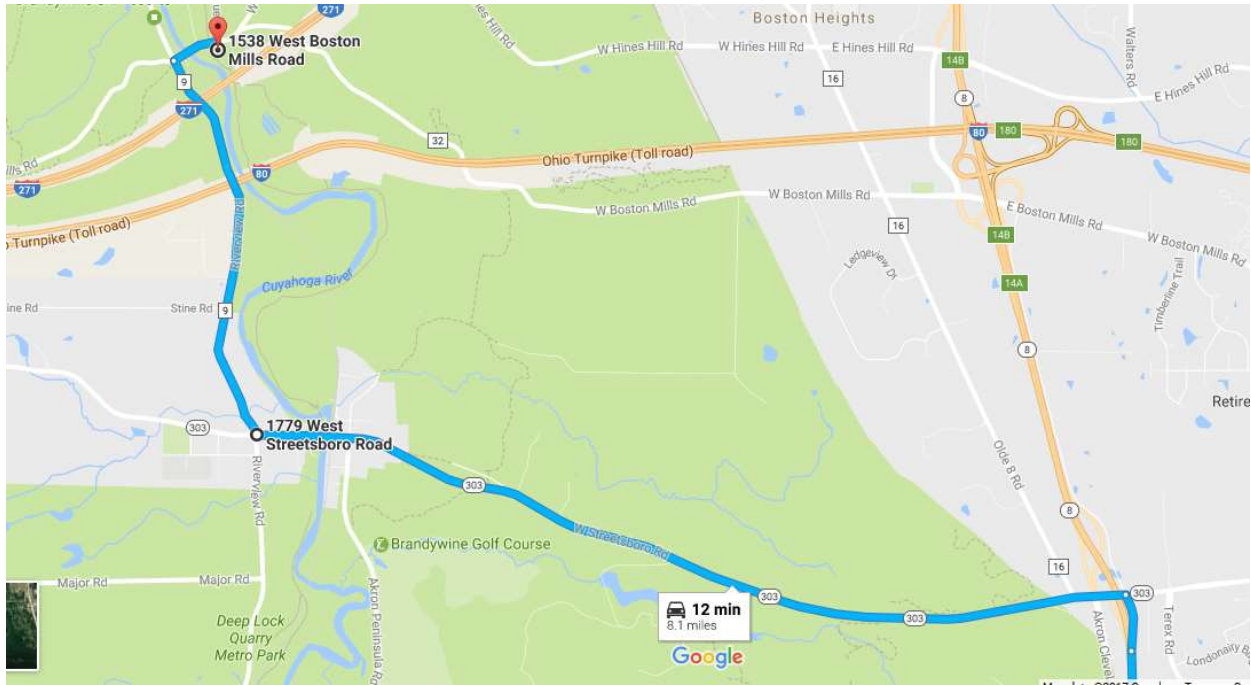
Arrive at:

Boston Trailhead Overflow Parking lot

1538 W Boston Mills Rd

Peninsula, OH 44264

## Map to Cycling Schools from Akron



Head north on OH-8 N

Take the OH-303 exit toward Peninsula/Hudson 0.2 mi

Turn left onto OH-303 W/W Streetsboro St 3.5 mi

Turn right onto Riverview Rd 1.6 mi

Turn right onto W Boston Mills Rd 0.2 mi

Destination will be on the right

Arrive at:

Boston Trailhead Overflow Parking lot

1538 W Boston Mills Rd

Peninsula, OH 44264

## Safety Orientation

1. Helmets must be worn with the chin strap buckled while riding. Make sure the helmet fits you. Your Group Leader will help you make adjustments.
2. Make sure the bike fits you. Your Leader can adjust your seat. Ask questions if unsure of how to use the breaks.
3. Walk your bike to the Towpath. No riding is allowed in the staging area.
4. Walk your bike when crossing all roads.
5. Ride single file, with enough room between you and the rider ahead.
6. If your wheels are not turning... be off the path.
7. Be courteous, call out "passing left" when passing.
8. Ride safely, no horseplay. These bikes are donated. Treat them with respect so others can ride them after you are done. No skidding the tires. Keep both hands on the handle bars and both feet on the pedals while riding.
9. Watch for animals, if your Leader points out an animal, pass it back so everyone gets a chance to see it.
10. Tuck your shoe laces into your shoes so they don't get caught in the chain.
11. If you have long pants on, tuck your right pant leg into your sock, use a rubber band or roll up your pant leg so it doesn't get caught in the chain. No backpacks, no water bottles. Give essential items to an adult in your group.
12. You see things that you do not normally see, such as the wildlife, the Cuyahoga River, historical buildings and more.
13. The Cuyahoga Valley National Park is a special place open to all of us. We share the park with plants and animals. If it was here when you came, leave it here. If you brought it with you take it home.
14. Ask lots of questions.
15. Have lots of fun.



## Leadership Briefing

Cycling Schools appreciates the help of its Volunteers, the Teachers and Parent Volunteers who make this day a safe and memorable experience for the Students.

Here are some of the things that we as the Adult Leaders should be doing:

- Following the Safety Briefing, assemble Students, Teachers and Parent Volunteers into their Riding Groups.
- Introduce ourselves, shake hands with the Cycling Schools Volunteers, Students, Teachers and Parent Volunteers. Your group will be spending the rest of the day together.
- Keep the group together as we go to the assigned row of bicycles and helmets.
- Assist Students with helmet selection and adjust the straps for them.
- We believe in leadership by example, therefore all Adults must wear a helmet on the ride.
- Assist Students with selection of the right size bicycle and adjust the seat height for them.
- Encourage each Student to eat their pre-ride snack, so that they have the energy necessary for the ride.
- There will be a pre-ride check-out. Look for and address any problems the Student may have riding or stopping the bike using its coaster brake. It usually takes time to get used to the bike.
- Remind Students to ride the Towpath Trail in single file, and to the right.
- Look-out for Towpath joggers, walkers and other bike riders. When you see them, call out loud that there are joggers or others coming so that the Students are aware of them.
- Stop at all road crossings and dismount the bike. Guide the Students when walking across the road.
- If there is horse-play, gently remind the Student of the safety rules before it gets out-of-hand. We depend on the Adults to correct unsafe or improper behavior. If uncomfortable communicating with the Student in question, advise the Cycling Schools Leader and let them handle the situation.
- When taking breaks, the Students will scatter when going to water fountains and restrooms. Always know the whereabouts of the Students in your group.
- At the end of the ride, assist each Student in getting their bike cleaned and returned to Cycling Schools.
- Assist each Student in returning their helmet into the correct color-coded bin.
- Following the ride, there may be time available to go to the Canal Museum in the Boston Store. Accompany a small group of Students while going to and from, and while in the store.

## Teacher and other School Volunteer Suggestion Form

Thank you for joining us in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park today. Please take a moment to complete this brief evaluation from so that we can continue to improve our program.

1. What went well during this day?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. If you could recommend one thing that could be improved on your next Towpath Trail ride with Cycling Schools, what would that be?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What was of most interest or value to the Students?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Respond: 1- Agree, 2- Neutral, 3- Disagree
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Cycling Schools provides a learning experience for the Students.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Cycling Schools Volunteers were kind, courteous and attentive to the Students.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ I would recommend the Cycling Schools Program to others schools.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Cycling Schools is a good Student introduction to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ The Students had a safe, physically challenging yet enjoyable experience.

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_