

Mud Season (**Dec through March**) Riding Tips - Must Read!

By **CAMBR President John Swinski**

Yeah its mud season and mud season is the time of year when we either take care of our trails or wreck them for next year. We all want to ride but we all have to act like adults and be patient and wait until the conditions are right.

Rule 1 - There is only one rule. If you leave a tire print or hoof print, stay off the singletrack!!!! There are no exceptions to this rule and no one is so special that they can ride whenever they want, no matter the conditions. Doing that is just plain selfish. It doesn't matter if it took you an hour to get to the trails from the city. If the trails are wet stay the hell off. Today's ride is not as important as all the rides next year. Think about it.

Tip #1 - If the weather is going be above 25 degrees F at the time of y our ride, stay home or ride the multitrack.

Tip #2 - If the weather is going down to around 20F the night before your ride, get out early. If you get on the trails by 7AM or so, you should be able to get in a good ride before the sun heats things up. Once the sun hits the trails everything will begin to soften up. Always be off the trail by 10AM at the latest.

Tip #3 - The best winter singletrack riding occurs when the temp is below 25 and it is overcast. Ideally the colder night time temperatures will have frozen the trail solid and the lack of direct sunlight will allow you to ride past 10AM

Tip #4 - Alternative places to ride - Limestone multitrack trails are open year round and for the most part, shed the water better than dirt surface trails. The multitrack at Teason and Cap Sauer and behind the toboggan slides has some good hills that will make things interesting. You can string together a pretty long route with more hill climbing that you find at Mount Forest Island (Bullfrog).

The loop at Waterfall Glen is about 10+ miles. Ride it both ways to mix things up a bit.

And there is always pavement. I don't necessarily like it either but our tax dollars did pay for a couple hundred miles of paved trails in Cook County so why not use them until we can get back on the singletrack.