

## **Bike/Walk Midland: Rail Trail Etiquette**

At nearly every road crossing along the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail there is a list of proper use: Rail Trail Etiquette. The list is as follows:

- Keep right except to pass
- Alert others when passing by using voice or bell
- Yield to slower traffic
- Always travel at safe speeds
- Don't block the trail
- Dogs must be on a leash
- Please help keep the trail clean

Experience shows that if everyone followed these guidelines there would be few user conflicts and trail use would be enjoyable for all. Unfortunately not everyone does and problems result.

Some examples:

- Bicyclists not moving far left when passing walkers or in-line skaters
- Users not moving right when alerted to a passing bicyclist or seeing someone coming in the other direction
- Trail users not staying as far to the right as possible, sometimes even staying left and going against traffic
- People stopping at intersections and on bridges and blocking the narrowest parts of the trail
- Bicyclists not announcing that they are passing
- Headphone users who cannot hear when a passing bicyclist gives warning
- Dogs not on a leash or walking on the opposite side of the trail from their owner (with the leash "clothes-lined" across the path)
- Dog owners not cleaning up after their pets

The fix for most of these problems is simple common sense and maybe even stopping to read that list on the back of the signs at the road crossings. It's easy to get lost in your thoughts on a quiet stretch of the trail but everyone needs to remember that there are other users coming along all the time. While it may seem idyllic and isolated, in some ways the trail is like any other highway, and all users need to be alert, courteous, and cautious.

When everyone follows the rules, everyone can get along.

For more information: <http://www.midland-mi.org/government/departments/planning/Planning/NMTCommittee.htm>