



Virginia Capital Trail Foundation Horse Use Policy

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, horse use on state roads is allowed on non-limited access highways. Horse use on the Shared Use Paths (SUP) is discouraged and the VCT is designated a SUP. However, there is currently no policy nor law that prevents horses from being used on a SUP based on the Code of Virginia or the City of Richmond ordinances.

However, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation discourages horse use on the VCT for the following reasons:

1. Horseshoes, especially steel or titanium ones, damage asphalt. The VCT is not built to withstand the wear and tear of horses and their horseshoes.
2. The VCT is a slippery surface for a horse and excessive riding could result in accidents, concerning the rider and others. In order to mitigate this concern, we discourage usage.
3. Maintenance and upkeep are not done with horses in mind; thus, it may not always be the best environment for horses and their riders.
4. In rural sections with lower pedestrian activity, cyclists are often riding at higher speeds. This could lead to surprise encounters between cyclists and horses, leading to dangerous conditions.

If one decides to ride or walk their horse on the Trail, despite our previous recommendations, we ask the following expectations be followed:

1. Clean up after your horse. Just as other pet owners on the VCT have a responsibility to clean up after their pet, horse owners have this responsibility as well. If you do not have the means to clean up after your horse, then we discourage you from using the VCT.
2. Horses have the right of way ahead of cyclists and runners/walkers, but please still stay aware of others on the VCT.
3. Please dismount your horse and walk across bridges. When you do, please stay to the right side of the VCT.