

Welcome

Thank you for entering the Nebraska Horse Trails Committee's Haunted Trail Challenge scheduled for this coming weekend, October 30 & 31. It is our first fund raising event since the COVID-19 outbreak and we are most anxious to see everyone again. Your entry fee to this event will be used by the Nebraska Horse Committee to help improve and promote horse information carefully. It will include timelines and important information on the event.



Trails
trails in our state. Please read the following

We will begin check-in at 8:00 AM. Please come to the registration area as soon as possible for your rider number and map and to sign up for ride out time. Volunteers will be available to answer any questions you may have prior to the ride. There will be a Ride Briefing for ALL RIDERS at 9:00 AM near the registration area. It is very important to attend this briefing. (See Schedule of Events further in this document).

Ready, Set, Go

To avoid congestion at the challenges, riders will be sent out in small groups. You may ride out with your friends or in another group or solo. You can sign up for your ride time at the registration. Be mounted when the announcer says your ride group is On Deck or In the Hole. Once on the trail, if you come upon a group in front of you who are going slower than your ride, ask permission to pass and do so when it is safe for all horses. It is not necessary that you stay in the group you rode out with. That is only for starting purposes.

Do not run up on another group or run away from another group. Always proceed slowly and with caution. Remember, this ride is not a race. You will not be judged on how slowly or how quickly you complete the trail ride, only the obstacles. The last horse across the finish line could very well be the winner. Please, do not race around the trails. Enjoy a leisurely, safe ride.



Be Safe



If you have trouble on the trail and need help, dismount, and wait for the safety rider to come to you. **If a rider is hurt, Call 911.** Tell the responder you are at Branched Oak Lake Horse Trails between Areas 1 and 2 off Raymond Road. Look for landmarks such as a sign on the trail. A designated person should fetch the nearest safety rider which is most likely behind you. Do not hesitate to send a rider to the nearest parking lot to direct emergency services. This information will be provided with your map. Keep it with you during the ride.

About Your Horse

If you have never ridden in any type of competition or been on a large trail ride, you may find the horse you loaded at home is not the same horse that unloads here at Branched Oak. For whatever reason: the area, other horses, people, tents, boats; your horse may seem a little different, perhaps excited, or scared. Take the time you need to settle your horse. Hand walk, lunge or if you feel comfortable, ride in a quiet area. If you are still concerned about your horse when the trail challenge begins, err on the side of caution and safety. Do not ride if you are not comfortable with the horse underneath you. Listen to your little voice. Put your horse up and come and join the volunteers if you like. You can still make it a fun day and perhaps ride after the challenge is over. If your horse is a known kicker, please tie a red ribbon on its tail. This is a universal symbol to other riders to stay clear of a red-ribboned horse's hind end.

Trail Decorations & Scavenger Hunt

It may be Halloween, but we will not have objects hiding in the corner to jump out and scare you. You will find Halloween decorations along the way. Now is not the time to train your horse to approach these decorations. They are on the trail for everyone to enjoy and not cause any bottle necks. Each day there will be a scavenger hunt of sorts. Be sure and attend the ride briefing for more information.

Trail Challenge Obstacles

We have tried to gear the challenges to reflect the communication and trust between horse and rider. We believe we have kept them challenging enough for competition but easy enough for those in competition to attempt to try the obstacle. If for whatever reason you do not feel comfortable attempting the challenge, simply tell the judge that you will pass. We want it fun and safe for you and your horse; not stressful.

Due to the number of riders, if a horse/rider does not complete the challenge, the judge will simply thank you and ask that you move on so the next rider can begin. However, you should stay in view of the rider behind you, so their horse does not feel it is being left alone and put that rider at a disadvantage. It is good trail manners to always wait for the rider behind you. As always, follow judge's direction. No do-overs.

Trail Safety & Etiquette

1. On a shared trail, it is most generally accepted that hikers yield to horses and bikers yield to hikers and horses. However, always use caution when meeting other riders and do what is best for that situation.
2. Trail riding groups generally have the right-of-way over single riders (or even pairs of mounted equestrians). When meeting another riding group or trail user, move to the right of the trail and pass left shoulder to left shoulder. If passing going the same direction, most often you will pass on the left if conditions allow. Always communicate your intentions. Never run past another horse.
3. When crossing a road, be sure all vehicle traffic has passed or has stopped to allow you to pass. Do not rush across the road to beat traffic or leave another horse standing on the other side of the road between traffic.
4. Don't ever try to squeeze by other horses on a narrow trail. From a safety perspective, it is worth the extra time to turn around and ride back to a spot on the trail that is wide enough to pass each other safely.
5. Don't cut switchbacks. They are there to preserve the soil and prevent erosion.
6. Those trail users coming uphill have the right-of-way over those going downhill, regardless if the trail user is a hiker, biker or equestrian.
7. If you must turn around on a narrow trail, always turn your horse to the downhill side. This allows him to be able to watch where he places each foot. If you turn him to the uphill side, he may invariably misplace a hind foot off the trail, a misstep from which he may not be able to recover.
8. When riding single file, keep a horse length of more between you and the next rider. A safe following distance is when you can see the back hooves of the horse in front of you between your horse's ears.
9. If your horse has been known to kick, tie a red ribbon on its tail. That is the universal symbol of a kicking horse.
10. When you come to a watering area, take turns & do not crowd. Do not leave the area until everyone's horse has been watered or unless dismissed by the riders behind you. A thirsty horse may not drink if it feels it is being left alone.
11. Courteous and cautious equestrian trail riders never leave a fallen rider behind. If a rider dismounts or falls off his or her horse, the entire group may be expected to stop.
12. Use good trail manners. If you don't know, ask. Be a good trail user. Be respectful to other trail users and follow all rules regarding that specific trail. Horse trails are a privilege, not a right.
13. Do not litter. Pack out what you pack onto the trails.
14. Bring a manure fork & clean up any manure left around your trailer before departing the trail head. Put manure in designated compost pit and if none exists, throw back in your trailer.
15. Take only pictures; leave only footprints.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (each day)

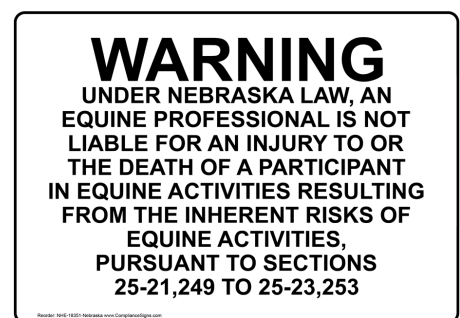
Time	Activity
8:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Contactless Check-In. Your online entry must be completed in full and will include the rider release forms. Please complete them carefully. Stop by the entry area to pick up your rider packet & entry number and sign up for your ride out time.
9:00 AM – 9:30 AM	Rider Briefing. Come over the commons area near registration. This briefing is important and will provide you with the intel on the upcoming ride. Please attend. Social distancing observed, please.*
Following Briefing	Trail Challenge begins. A volunteer will call your group and the group following. Be mounted and ready to go when your group is “on deck” or “in the hole”.
THE FOLLOWING TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE AND WILL BEGIN WHEN THE CHALLENGE CONCLUDES.	
2:00 PM	We will begin providing meals when riders return. Meals are individually wrapped and bagged separately. Visit with friends, enjoy the auction or poker game while scores are tallied.
3:00 PM	Auction Closes on Saturday & Poker Game closes on Sunday. Begin AWARDS PRESENTATION

*In consideration of COVID-19

Masks are not required, and each participant/volunteer must take precautions they deem appropriate. Lunches will be prepared and individually packed by a vendor. Hand sanitizer will be available.

An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in all public places where people are present. COVID-19 is a contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. By entering this event, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19. The Nebraska Horse Trails Committee and Nebraska Game & Parks does not assume any liability or risk associated with the actual or potential exposure to COVID-19, and the participants hereby assume any and all such risk.

Within the past 14 days if you, or anyone you have been in close contact with, have experienced any symptoms of illness such as fever, cough, chills, loss of sense of smell or taste, sore throat, shortness of breath, or muscle aches & pains, please do not enter this event.



From Raymond Road on the south side of the lake, turn right into Area 2, Homestead Camp (look for sign on the right).
 Google Location: <https://goo.gl/maps/EB9qgQX8frSefz8i9>

ENTRY INFORMATION - PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

1. Trails are closed to participants at noon on Friday so our volunteers can construct the obstacles. Participants are welcome to ride the Wildlife Management areas to the south and west of the horse camp or Areas 3 & 7 of Branched Oak Lake.
2. Camping reservations are needed in the electrical hookup site. Contact Nebraska Game & Parks for availability. For primitive camping, register and pay at kiosk at campsite entrance.
3. Only registered campers are allowed in the primitive and electrical campground. There is day parking to the north of the electrical campground and to the south of the primitive campground. Corrals are intended for those who have paid for the electrical sites.
4. All vehicles (day use & camping) are required to have a Nebraska State Park Permit on their vehicle. This is your responsibility.
5. Event entry fees are non-refundable and considered a donation to our organization. If NHTC cancels event, we will provide a refund for your entry fee. If you ordered a tee shirt and the order has been processed, we will mail to your address.
6. Please follow the map to ensure you reach all obstacles.
7. No riding double or ponying another horse.
8. ALL Riders, including Juniors and Ride-Alongs, must be able to independently ride a horse & follow judge's instructions.
9. All riders participating with the Trail Challenge must be paid entrants and in one of the CLASSES or as a RIDE ALONG.
10. No dogs on the trail and dogs must be leashed in camp.
11. Clean up manure in your corral, campsite, or beside your trailer.
12. Our volunteers and judges are out of the saddle to make this a fun day for you! HAVE FUN! This is not an Olympic event! It's for spending time with your friends, your horse and getting to know the NHTC and our events!

BY ENTERING ONLINE, YOU HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED AND

"SIGNED ELECTRONICALLY" the [WAIVER OF LIABILITY](#)