

WILLAMETTE VALLEY CHAPTER #4409

ROAD CAPTAIN GUIDE

Revised 4-20-18

Signals

One finger raised = single file

Two fingers raised = staggered formation

One finger w/ L signal = single file passing

Point to road (foot or hand) = road hazard

Flashers on = bike made an unplanned stop

Rotate hand = U-turn

Point to tank = need gas

Shoulder tap = pull over

Hand up - down = slow down

Formation

Advise the group we ride in a staggered formation. Exception example: Slow moving vehicle on shoulder, pedestrian on the highway etc. – then call out single file. Keep a 2-second space between you and the bike directly in front of you. Keep a tight formation during the ride. If a bike drops out, just pull forward – do not use lane swapping to reorganize the group.

Departure

Pre-Ride Briefing: Assemble group 10 – 15 minutes prior to “Kickstands Up”.

Announce the destination. Make sure all have gas. Describe the route. Ask if anyone wants help with directions getting back. Get release forms signed.

Demonstrate the hand signals. Get bike count, if needed. Advise anyone going to pull off early to ride in the rear. New or slow riders should be asked if they prefer to ride in the front, (if experienced), or in the back, just in front of the Safety Sweep. Announce that the ride ends when the first alcoholic beverage is opened.

Tell the group when we are planning to stop and which are gas stops. Safety Sweep is to make sure all riders are ready and signal the road captain when all are ready to depart.

Riding Pace

THIS IS NOT A RACE!!! Start the ride at a moderate pace, this will help reduce the “rubber band effect.” Watch the group behavior and adjust speed as needed. Ride with consistency and obey speed limits, or reasonably close to it. Keep pace with traffic – do not become a group hazard.

Planned Stops

Slow gradually, 1/8 to 1/4 mile ahead, to allow the group to tighten and tune in for signals. Signal well in advance - use hand and bike signals. Scout the parking area for sufficient room to park and park them with a plan in mind as how you will exit without causing chaos.

Pullovers

With 3 RCs: Right sweep joins the bike. Left sweep does A or B, depending on conditions and what happened:

(A) Rides ahead to tell lead.

(B) Tells lead situation at the next stop. With 2 RCs: Sweep joins down bike. If rider is ok, ride ahead to advise lead of conditions or call for assistance/ get help

as required. **Never stop a group on the side of the road - find a safe place to pull over!**

Passing

2 Lane: Small groups, only when you have safe opportunity, 2 bikes at a time max.

Large groups, rarely a good idea, if you must, 2 bikes at a time maximum.

4 Lane: Large groups, watch for space needed on 4 lanes, sweep can pull left on 4 lanes to give lead go ahead to pull left on 4 lane roads. Never keep your left signal on or hand signal others to continue passing – let them decide if sufficient room is available. ***NEVER PASS ANOTHER MOTORCYCLE THAT IS IN FRONT OF YOU!!! NO EXCEPTIONS!!!***

Being Passed

Small Groups: RC slows the group to allow passing without the vehicle having to split the group.

Large Groups: RC in center should identify the vehicle needing to pass and slow the rear half of the group to allow a space for him if needed.

Expressways

Adjust speed when entering to synchronize group with available opening. You may have to split.

Ramps

Maintain the speed limit, or less, so a disbanded group can catch up.

Maintain the left lane in city areas so traffic can merge without splitting the group.

Rural areas: Look for oncoming ramp traffic and pull left well in advance.

Exiting: look for traffic opening to move group into right lane well ahead of exit ramp.

Traffic Signals

Pace the group to avoid splitting. If group splits, slow and allow them to catch you. Pulling over at a safe place may be required in unfamiliar areas or where you are traveling through many signals. In small towns, you can regroup outside of town limits. Gauge traffic signals and adjust your speed to get the group through without splitting. Gauge your speed and signal other traffic to move ahead at stop sign intersections to avoid splitting the group.

Ride Planning

Consider: Other events / traffic problems in the area, weather, and the number expected. Is there going to be a return trip? Are maps necessary? Schedule meeting time 1/2 hour before departure. It is a good idea to carry a first aid kit and cell phone - Safety Sweep should carry these. Have enough RCs to safely lead the size of group expected. **All RCs to know the route before the briefing. Save route and directions for future rides.**