



## ABOUT SORBA-CSRA

Welcome to SORBA-CSRA! The Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association-Central Savannah River Area (SORBA-CSRA) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) mountain biking organization with over 140 local members. We are one of twenty-one chapters of SORBA, which has a total membership of over 2,100 members spanning Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee and Florida. Although we are extremely fortunate to have many miles of great trails to ride in this area, improper trail use in other areas of the country or sometimes vigilant environmental or hiking groups has led to trail closures (see [www.imba.com](http://www.imba.com) or [www.sorba.org](http://www.sorba.org) for details). Consequently, our goal is to promote mountain biking through trail advocacy, trail maintenance, education, special events, and group rides.

### Trail Advocacy

We promote trail advocacy by -

- Developing a good working relationship with local land managers who control the recreational use of the land: U.S. Forest Service, Army Corps of Engineers, S.C. Parks & Recreation, Augusta Canal Authority, and Columbia County.
- Advocating and then pursuing the development of new trails in our area
- Providing feedback on trail use, conditions and improvements to the land managers
- Conducting trail maintenance to keep the trails in good condition
- Promoting safe biking and proper trail use

### Trail Use

What can you do to ensure proper trail use?

- Try not to ride the trails when they are too wet, it causes erosion and damages the trail (learn which local trails were properly built to shed water – these trails can usually be ridden without damage after a light rain)
- Ride in the middle of the trail and learn to pedal over the obstacles – fallen trees, roots, rocks, etc; riding around the obstacle will widen the trail and contribute to erosion, walk your bike over obstacles you cannot ride
- Do not create additional trails unless we have the express permission of the land manager to do so
- Do not create a bypass trail around a fallen tree (a practice frowned upon by all land managers in the area) step off your bike if the tree is not rideable, navigate the downed tree and report the tree to the trail advocate, trail committee or to the local chapter president as soon as possible.
- Follow the **IMBA – Rules of the Trail**
  - 1) Ride on open trails only. If a trail is posted with a “no bikes” sign, don’t ride it.
  - 2) Control your bicycle. This is particularly important when you meet hikers, horseback riders, or other cyclists on the trail. Good balance and proper braking are essential mountain biking skills

- 3) Always yield the trail. The steps are simple: slow down, establish communication with the people you meet, and pass safely. Yielding doesn't always mean stopping and dismounting, though sometimes that's the best idea, particularly when passing horses.
- 4) Never scare animals. It doesn't matter if it's a horse, fox, cow, deer, elk or mountain lion: give all animals plenty of room and try not to startle them.
- 5) Leave no trace. All trail users affect the trailbed and the natural environment. Your goal should be to minimize your impact. Staying on the trail and not skidding are two easy steps. Staying off muddy trails is another.
- 6) Plan ahead. Carry everything you need for a good ride: a spare tube and a pump, a rain jacket, basic tools. Know where you're riding. Wear a helmet.

## Trail Maintenance

How do we maintain the local trails?

- By conducting regular monthly work parties and smaller emergency work parties as needed (storm damage, etc.)
- By having a trail advocate for each trail who reports conditions every month and pushes for maintenance resources for that trail
- By having a trail committee of three experienced trail builders who make the major decisions regarding trail work
- By having members check with the trail committee before conducting any trail work other than routine work like clipping overhanging branches, moving debris, etc.
- By having our members participate in trail maintenance work days whenever they can (approximately 30% of our members are actively involved in trail maintenance)
- By having ten members who have been U.S. Forest Service chainsaw certified as **required** by U. S. Forest Service to cut on USFS land – this entailed two days of chainsaw training, first aid and CPR training.
- By having equipment to maintain the trails we work on: two DR mowers, a power wagon, two chainsaws with safety equipment, Pulaskis, McCleods, hoes, picks, shovels, BOB trailers, a weed eater, gas power hedger, tool trailer, etc.
- By budgeting money to maintain equipment and occasionally buy replacements
- By working to accumulate extra funds needed to occasionally purchase new equipment
- By educating members about which trees on the trail to remove:
  - On a trail in a heavily urbanized area, (the Augusta Canal MTB Trail for instance) we try to take all trees down across the trail because the trail is frequently by inexperienced riders
  - If a tree is down on a trail located in an outlying area (Hickory Knob, Baker's Creek, etc), and the tree is deemed a "rider" (can be ridden by more experienced riders as evidenced by the chain ring marks on the tree) it is generally left and those of us that can't ride them have something to work towards – or a place for a quick water break
  - Downed trees that are being bypassed by a lot of riders, creating a bypass trail, are normally cut out
  - A tree that is at a bad angle to the trail or creates a hazard will be cut out

## **Education**

How do we promote education?

- By sponsoring a free mountain biking clinic providing instruction in riding techniques, maintenance and proper trail etiquette for members and non-members alike.
- By periodically offering beginner and ladies rides
- By promoting members active involvement in the National Mountain Bike Patrol (NMBP) – currently we have seven members who have been trained as NMBP members in first aid, CPR, trailside bike repair and local trail information. They have made a commitment to patrol the local trails and provide aid to trail users
- SORBA offers a yearly comprehensive trail education series through IMBA (International Mountain Biking Association).

## **Membership**

We try to build and maintain membership in SORBA-CSRA because -

- letting land managers know there are a lot of mountain bikers in our area using the trails helps keep the trails open and ensures consideration for other trails
- experienced members are vital to the success of the organization since they are experienced in many areas that are crucial to area mountain biking – how and when to ride trails without damaging them, how to build and/or maintain trails, what works best with area land managers, etc.
- having a collective body of mountain bikers in the area ensures fellow mountain bikers to ride with, work with, socialize with, etc.

## **Special Events**

- We provide support for the Georgia Championship Games Mountain Bike Races when they are held in Augusta.
- We have an annual 13 hour endurance event called Baker's Dozen
- We have a Time Trail series on local trails
- We have a ride and picnic for National Trails Day (1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in June)
- We plan to continue the Fourth of July ride and fireworks observance
- We sponsor an annual mountain bike skills clinic
- We have a Spring & Fall Bike Fest
- We have monthly (except during the summer) the Explore The Trail Series rides

## **Group Rides**

- We conduct and encourage participation in several group rides during the year.
- We encourage members to organize group rides (weather conditions permitting) and they can do so by announcing the ride at the monthly meeting or contact one of the officers about getting your group ride set up.
- We conduct a group ride prior to the monthly meetings during the summer months.

## SORBA-CSRA SUPPORTED TRAILS

STATE	COUNTY	LAND MANAGER	TRAIL	LENGTH
GA	Columbia	Columbia County Parks	Wildwood (In the process of being redesigned)	5 miles
GA	Columbia	Army Corps of Engineers	Keg Creek	8 miles
GA	Columbia	GA Dept of Natural Resources	Mistletoe (Rock Dam)	7 miles
GA	Columbia	Army Corps of Engineers	Bartram	9 miles
GA	Richmond	Augusta Canal Authority	Augusta Canal Tow Path	5 miles
GA	Richmond	Augusta Canal Authority	Augusta Canal MTB Trail	3 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	Stevens Creek/Modoc	5.5 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	Turkey Creek	7 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	Wine Creek	5 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	Lick Fork/Horn Creek	5.9 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	FATS – Brown Wave	7 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	FATS – Skinny	6 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	FATS – Great Wall	8 miles
SC	Edgefield	US Forest Service	FATS – Deep Step	7 miles
SC	McCormick	SC State Parks	Baker Creek	9.5 miles
SC	McCormick	SC State Parks	Hickory Knob – Lake Loop	7 miles
SC	McCormick	SC State Parks	Hickory Knob – Turkey Ridge	2 miles
SC	McCormick	SC State Parks	Hickory Knob – Beaver Run	2.5 miles
SC	Greenwood	US Forest Service	Long Cane	23+ miles
SC	Aiken	ORA	ORA Mtb	5 miles

Thank you for joining SORBA-CSRA. Your membership is important in many ways; particularly by adding to our collective voice with the land managers. The dues paid by our members support the publication of the Fat Tire Times (issued six times per year) a regional newsletter, equipment, equipment maintenance, a local monthly newsletter, etc. Every member is vital to our organization and crucial to the success of our goals. We hope this has answered many of your questions about SORBA-CSRA. Please feel free to contact any of the officers with additional inquiries.

### **SORBA-CSRA Chapter Contacts:**

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