

# Group Riding Guidelines

## Pig Trail HOG

This document is intended to be used as reference by all members of the Pig Trail Northwest Arkansas Harley Owners Group, Chapter 2075. While it is not intended as a set of hard and fast rules, each item presented is recommended as good practice and designed to make for chapter group rides where every participant can ride and have fun in a safe environment.

### *Pre-ride Briefing*

- Show up at least 15 minutes before the scheduled "kick stands up" (ksu) time.
- Have a full gas tank and an empty bladder.
- Do your best to locate the group and/or Road Captains and be present for the pre-ride briefing.
- Expect the pre-ride brief to take place 15 minutes prior to kick stands up (ksu).
- Be clear on where the ride is going and who Road Captains are.
- If anything about the ride is unclear (destination, parking, signals, etc.), ask questions.

### *Staging*

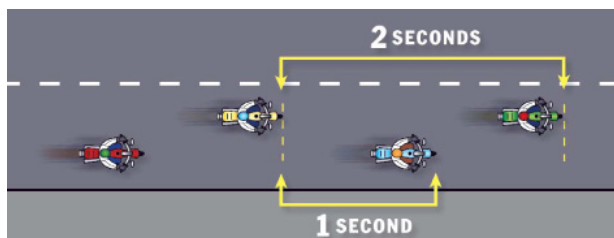
- Line up side by side in two lines (being spread out and not lined up can lead to confusion and possibly unsafe situations as the ride departs; being lined up prior to moving also aids Road Captains to get an accurate head count and, for larger groups, know where each additional Road Captain should be positioned).
- Line up where you are comfortable riding, whether close to front or rear, with family/friends, etc., and in the left/right half of the lane. Trikes are allowed anywhere in the group they want to be.
- If you are the first bike behind a trike during staging, line up in the left position.
- Watch Road Captains and let them into group at intervals; this is typically in groups of 10-12 or more bikes or any time there are 3 or more Road Captains.

### *Riding*

#### **Staggered**

- 1<sup>st</sup> bike in left half of lane, 2<sup>nd</sup> bike in right half, and so on.
- Interval is 1 second behind bike in other half of lane, 2 seconds behind bike in your half of lane; trikes should maintain 3 seconds between themselves and the bike in front of them.
- 1<sup>st</sup> bike behind trike ride in left half of lane.

(These are recommended safe following distances, but if a rider is not comfortable with this spacing, allow another 1-2 seconds distance, but not so much there is a large separation within the group.)



--Help the Road Captains by maintaining distances close to these—a spread-out group makes it more difficult, especially for the Lead Road Captain, to know what is going on with the entire group.

(An easy way to measure the time/distance is pick an object close to the path of riding, then as the bike in front of the rider passes it, begin counting “one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three,” etc., until you pass that same object. Each count equals about one second.)

### **Coming To A Stop (Stop sign, traffic light, etc.)**

--Stop lined up the same way you staged, a line of two bikes side by side. This aids Road Captains greatly in keeping track of bikes, and when leaving that stop allows more bikes to get through quicker.

### **Ride Your Ride**

--Maintain your speed to keep pace and spacing of the group...as long as you are comfortable with it.

--if you are not comfortable with the speed of the group (either too fast or too slow), mention it to any Road Captain at your first opportunity.

--Be considerate of other riders.

--if you are going much slower than riders in front of you, it might frustrate riders behind you.

--don't “tailgate” – doing so could make the rider in front of you uncomfortable or irritated, or could lead to an unsafe situation.

--Be comfortable using the full lane when in curves/turns.

--Be aware that every rider can use the full lane at any time.

### **Signals**

Always use them.

Always pass them back.

Always give them long enough for those directly behind you to see them

--Hazard in roadway

--use left arm or leg, but make it a clear signal, not to be confused with a turn or other signal.

--use right leg (don't take hand from throttle UNLESS you are in a situation where you are using cruise control and can use your right arm without impacting the speed of your bike).



**NOTE:** when using a leg to point out a hazard in the roadway, do so carefully without allowing any part of your foot or leg to touch the object—it could be hazardous for you and/or riders behind you. It's also worth suggesting that you keep your toe pointed up and your heel pointed down.

--Left Turn

--Left arm straight out from body.



--Right Turn

--Left upper arm straight out from body, elbow bent, forearm straight up.



--Slow Down

--Left arm straight out and slightly down, palm of hand down, slow motion up and down.



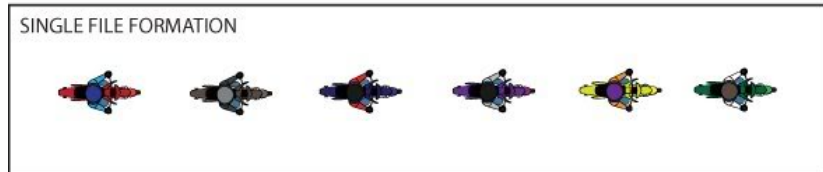
--Speed Up

--Left arm straight out and slightly down, palm of hand up, slow motion up and down.



--Single File (Designed to get group to ride single file behind Lead Road Captain or whoever gives it, to avoid a hazard in the roadway or to avoid a possible hazard along side the roadway: any rider in the group can give this signal)

--Left arm straight up, with index finger straight up in air. (Our strong recommendation is that the arm be straight above the head so this signal is not confused with a turn signal.)



--Double File (Same comment as Single File)

--Left arm straight up, with 2 fingers up in air. (Our strong recommendation is that the arm be straight above the head so this signal is not confused with a turn signal.)



### **Separation Of Group (resulting from stops, different speeds, etc.)**

--If group ahead is still visible, it is up to the rider at the front of a trailing group to decide if they are comfortable with leading riders behind them to rejoin the other group.

--If the rider at the head of a trailing group is not comfortable leading the group on, they should take the first safe opportunity (pull into a parking lot or use a traffic stop situation) to wave a trailing Road Captain up to lead the group.

--No rider should feel compelled to exceed any speed limit to catch up with or keep up with a group that has gotten ahead of them.

### **4-Way Stop**

--No one should feel to compelled to follow other riders through any stop sign without stopping first!

--If other vehicles are stopped and they motion the group through the stop sign, all riders should proceed through if possible.

--If other vehicles come to one of the other directions of stop and do not wave the group through, riders should allow that vehicle to have their turn, then proceed.

--Once the group begins moving through the stop, don't hesitate – have your mind made up whether you are going through or stopping and do so decisively.

## **Lane Shifts**

(If a rider leaves the formation, if other vehicles enter the group, etc.)

--If a rider, for whatever reason, becomes the 1<sup>st</sup> rider in a section of the group, and they are in the right half of the lane, they should either:

--move to the left half of the lane and give a left turn signal before and while doing so, or

--if not comfortable being in the left part of the lane, wave the bike behind them up to

become the 1<sup>st</sup> bike and in the left half of the lane; all other bikes should adjust their positions to maintain the proper staggered riding formation in ways that are comfortable for them.

--if a rider decides, for whatever reason, they want to pass another rider in the group, they should only do so in the safest way possible and at the safest time possible.

--if moving, a rider should slowly move straight ahead in their current half of the lane till alongside the rider ahead, signal that rider their intent to move forward past that rider (making sure that rider acknowledges or at least looks at them), then do so safely, readjusting lane position if necessary once safely ahead of that rider; all other riders behind should then adjust lane positions to maintain the appropriate staggered riding formation.

## **Issues While Riding**

--If a rider has a bike or physical problem while riding in a group, they should move to a safe area off the roadway (parking area, turnout, wide shoulder, etc.); a trailing Road Captain will stop to determine the issue and offer assistance as necessary and appropriate.

--If there is an accident, all riders in the group, EXCEPT Road Captains, spouse, family, significant other and medically trained personnel, should continue on to a safe area to get off the road and park; at least one Road Captain will remain with the main group; DO NOT stop in the roadway at any time!!

--If a rider is uncomfortable with another rider's actions, or believes another rider has put them and/or any rider in an unsafe situation, the rider should present that information to the Lead Road Captain, in a private and courteous manner, at the earliest opportunity; barring such an opportunity, the rider should present the facts around the situation to the Lead Road Captain, Head Road Captain, Director or Assistant Director at the earliest opportunity.

## **Leaving The Group**

--If during a ride at a stop, you need to leave the group, whether planned or spontaneous, let at least one Road Captain know of your departure; not doing so can cause a Road Captain to unnecessarily follow you thinking you have an issue.

## **Interstate And Controlled Access Roads**

--Be aware of other vehicles wanting to merge on/off – LET THEM – do not put yourself, other riders or other vehicles in a potentially unsafe situation.

--Don't worry about separation of the group – regrouping should be relatively easy under those circumstances.

--During the pre-brief, if the speed of the group is not mentioned when on such a road, ask about it and ensure you are comfortable with it; if not, mention that to the Lead Road Captain and discuss how the ride can be made more comfortable for you and all other riders.

--Try to maintain the group by riding with reasonable distances, but be comfortable with your ride; if you are not comfortable with speed or any other aspect of the ride, let a Road Captain know, privately and courteously, at the first opportunity.

## *Post Ride*

Once a ride is over, every rider should feel comfortable providing feedback, good or bad, to any or all of the Road Captains, to the Head Road Captain or to the Director or Assistant Director. Please provide feedback as soon as possible after any ride, while events and comments are fresh.

Any feedback can be related to the route, destination, Road Captains, other riders, etc. We ask that feedback be as objective as possible, and relate as many specifics as possible.

Such feedback is appreciated and helpful as the Chapter continues to improve any and all aspects of group rides so Chapter members can ride and have as much fun as possible, while doing so as safely as possible.