

Ride for the River Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is Ride for the River?

A. It is a bike ride organized by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area in partnership with Sly Fox Brewery that takes cyclists along the Schuylkill Trail (with a short on-road section) from Pottstown to Reading and back. The ride begins and ends at the Sly Fox Can Jam Music Festival.

Q. How long is the ride?

A. The round trip ride from Pottstown to Reading is 40 miles. There is a shorter 16-mile option from Pottstown to Union Township and back that is appropriate for novice cyclists.

Q. What is the Can Jam Festival?

A. Can Jam is an annual event hosted by Sly Fox that features great food, beer and eight hours of live music in the fields adjoining Sly Fox Brewery, “accentuated by the largest KanJam tournament in the universe,” according to Sly Fox. All riders will receive a voucher for free food and beer.

Q. How much of the ride is on-road?

A. The ride begins and ends at Sly Fox Brewery. There is a 2.5 mile on-road section from Sly Fox Brewery to the Schuylkill River Trail. Therefore, about 5 miles of both rides are on-road. There is also a four-mile stretch of the Schuylkill River Trail in Birdsboro that is on-road, but it is a back road with little traffic.

Q. Is the trail paved?

A. No. The trail surface in this area is crushed stone.

Q. What kind of bike do I need?

A. This ride is suitable for a hybrid or trail bike and, since the stone is finely crushed, road bikes can also be used.

Q. Can I use a non-traditional bike, such as a trike, recumbent or tandem?

A. Yes, these bikes are welcome on the ride.

Q. What should I do to make sure my bike is in good enough condition for this ride?

A. We recommend that you take your bike to a bike shop for a tune up and safety check prior to the ride. We will also have free bike safety checks available from Tri County Bicycles for small fixes on the morning of the ride.

Q. Are there any hills?

A. The ride is along a rail trail and is flat. There is a hill on the on-road section near the Sly Fox Brewery.

Q. What equipment do I need?

A. Plan to bring your bike, water bottle, sun screen, bug spray and please wear a helmet. You should plan to dress for the weather (rain gear if rain is predicted; light clothing if it is hot). Children under 12 are required by state law to wear a helmet.

Q. What happens if it rains?

A. This is a rain or shine event. It will not be canceled except in the event of extreme weather such as flooding or a hurricane. If that should occur participants will be notified by email the night before the event.

Q. Can I pull my child in a bike trailer?

A. Yes, however keep in mind that a short section of the ride is on-road.

Q. What type of support is available?

A. We will provide snacks, water and Gatorade, as well as port-a-potties at the rest stop in Reading. A rest stop in Union Township will have water and port-a-potties. We will also have a free bike safety check at the start of the ride, as well as a SAG wagon for riders in need of assistance with flat tires, bike repairs or other issues.

Q. Can I participate if I am a beginning rider?

A. Yes, this event is appropriate for all experience levels.

Q. How do I know if I am fit enough for a 40-mile ride?

A. As a general rule, if you can do half the distance (about 20 miles) on two consecutive days, than should be in shape to complete the 40-mile ride.

Q. Where does the registration fee go?

A. This ride benefits the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, which builds, maintains and promotes the Schuylkill River Trail, in partnership with other organizations.

Q. Why is the Schuylkill River Heritage Area offering this ride?

A. Ride for the River serves as a fundraiser for our organization. In addition, as a National and State Heritage Area one of our goals is to connect people to the river and the region through recreation. Thus the ride enables us to promote the trail and encourage outdoor recreation along the river, while also providing riders with an opportunity to enjoy Sly Fox's popular Can Jam Festival.