



Ride for the River: Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is Ride for the River?

It's a bike ride organized by the Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area in partnership with Sly Fox Brewery that takes cyclists along the Schuylkill Trail from Pottstown to Reading and back. The ride begins and ends at Pottstown Riverfront Park and is held in conjunction with the Sly Fox Can Jam Music Festival.

Q. How long is the ride?

A. There are 3 ride options, all starting and ending at Pottstown Riverfront Park. The 35-mile ride is a round trip from Pottstown to Reading. The 16-mile ride is a round trip from Pottstown to Union Township. The 4-mile family fun/beginner ride is a round trip from Pottstown to Grosstown Road in West Pottsgrove.

Q. What is the Can Jam Festival?

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/beverage.

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

A. There is a four-mile stretch of the Schuylkill River Trail in Birdsboro that is on-road, but it is a back road with little traffic. The 35-mile and 15-mile rides have some road crossings as well, but volunteers will be available to help cyclists safely cross these areas.

Q. Is the trail paved?

The 4-mile ride takes place on a paved section of the trail and the other ride options take place primarily along a flat, crushed stone section of the trail.

Q. What kind of bike do I need?

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?

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?

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 for small fixes on the morning of the ride.

Q. Are there any hills?

The ride route is along a rail trail and is mostly flat. There is a 4-mile **OPTIONAL** hill climb along the Hopewell Big Woods Trail that connects to the Schuylkill River Trail in Union Township. The Big Woods Trail consists of a nearly 2-mile gentle upgrade with stunning views of Monocacy Hill as you near the top. You can rest at the top and enjoy an easy ride down back onto the Schuylkill River Trail. This is a gravel trail which could have some loose areas, so riders should be cautious on the descent.

Q. What equipment do I need?

Plan to bring your bike, water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray and helmets are required. 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?

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 the 35-mile and 16-mile rides are on crushed stone.

Q. What type of support is available?

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

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

Yes, this event is open for all experience levels. The 4-mile fun ride is a great option for novice cyclists.

Q. How do I know if I am fit enough for the 35-mile ride?

As a general rule, if you can do half the distance (about 17.5 miles) on two consecutive days, then you should be in shape to complete the 35-mile ride.

Q. Where does the registration fee go?

This ride benefits the Schuylkill River Greenways National 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?

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. 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.