



# GMF WINTER RECREATION ETIQUETTE GUIDE

## FOR ALL WHO LOVE THE WOODS

Great Mountain Forest is here for all who love the woods. The winter sees increased mixed use of the forest with cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Please keep in mind the following suggestions to make everyone's time in the woods more enjoyable.

### General guidelines for all winter trail users:

- Familiarize yourself with GMF rules and regulations on the website [www.greatmountainforest.org](http://www.greatmountainforest.org).
- Not all modes of transportation are allowed on all trails, so refer to the GMF website, map, and trail descriptions for which trails are suitable for pedestrian and mixed use. If you're unsure email [info@greatmountainforest.org](mailto:info@greatmountainforest.org).
- Move off the trail whenever you need to stop to take a rest or drink/eat.
- Always leave no trace. Pack out your garbage.
- No biking when snow is on the ground at GMF.
- Keep pets leashed and away from cross-country and snowshoeing trails.
- Be respectful of others. It will go a long way to maintaining harmony with your fellow Forest visitors. Everyone is out there to have a good time, just like you. GMF is here for all who love the woods.

### Guidelines for cross-country skiers:

- **Go in the right direction.** Trails are two-way streets. Go with the flow of traffic to avoid a collision.
- **Know who has the right of way.** People traveling downhill always have the right-of-way in the tracks. They move at speed and can't stop easily. If you are in front of someone faster than you, it's technically correct to move aside and let them pass. Skiers will often signal with a "Hup!" or "Behind!" to alert others to their presence. However, more experienced (and therefore faster) skiers are often glad to move around slower beginner skiers who might be uncomfortable getting out of the tracks and will call out when passing. Overall, however, right-of-way comes down to common sense and courtesy.
- **Fix your divot.** Falls are inevitable, particularly when you're just starting out with cross-country, but they create divots. Try to fix the divot you created in your fall, especially if it's on part of the ski track. Other skiers rely on those tracks and a missing segment may cause others to fall. Use the loose snow from your fall to fill in the hole and smooth the surface as much as possible. If the divot is in the tracks, use your skis to press down the loose snow and reform the track walls.

### Guidelines for snowshoers:

- **Stay out of the ski track.** Avoid snowshoeing on groomed cross-country ski tracks. Skis rely on regular traction and smooth forward motion to get into a mile-eating rhythm. As soon as a snowshoe hits the trail, that even plane is disrupted, ruining the terrain for the users to come. There will often be a snowshoe trail for you to use, but if there's not, forge your own path. It's best practice to stay as far to one side of the groomed track as possible and walk single-file to minimize the impact on the corduroy (the grooves that appear on a groomed trail).
- **Yield the trail.** Uphill travelers have the right-of-way, just like on hiking trails. Make sure to move aside to enjoy a snack or take a break.
- **Don't posthole** (hiking while not wearing snowshoes in deep snow and creating a deep hole) Avoid wandering around in deep snow without your snowshoes on; you could inadvertently disrupt a trail with postholes that can be dangerous for other users.