

TRAILS

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KNOW THE SIGNS

OHV clubs post signs on many trails. However, some trails have no signs. Follow safe-riding practices whether there are signs or not.

WHERE TO FIND TRAILS IN NOVA SCOTIA



All Terrain Vehicle Association of Nova Scotia
www.atvans.org
1-877-288-4244



Snowmobilers Association of Nova Scotia
www.snowmobilersns.com
902-425-5450 ext.324



Nova Scotia Off Road Riders Association
www.offroadriders.ca

Trails Nova Scotia

Click → www.trails.gov.ns.ca/

Designated Trails

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ohv/designatedtrails.asp

If you don't know, don't go.



Stop

- come to a complete stop
- look in all directions
- go when the trail is clear



Stop Ahead

- begin to slow down
- stop sign 100m to 120m ahead



Slow

- hazard 100m to 120m ahead



Use At Your Own Risk

- marks an entry point to a trail
- use caution at all times



Stay On Trail

- stay on the OHV trail



Direction arrow

- curve ahead



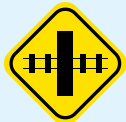
Trail Closed, Do Not Enter, or Private Property – No OHVs Allowed

- stay off this trail



Bridge hazard markers

- sloped lines show you where to drive



Railroad Crossing

- crossing 100m to 120m ahead
- stop, look in both directions, and listen when you get to the tracks
- drive directly across when the tracks are clear



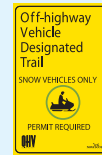
Ice Crossing

- check ice, see page → 26
- drive with care



Corridor or Trail Marker

- drive within the corridor



OHV Designated Trail*

- you need a trail permit, see page → 47
- sign shows which OHVs can drive this trail
- signs are posted along trails
- * expect other users



Route markers

- signs posted along the trails to show they are part of a managed network of trails



Wilderness Area

- no unauthorized vehicles

Nova Scotia has many trail riding opportunities. The rules are the same wherever you ride:

- Stay on the trails.
- Obey all signs.
- Keep an eye on your group.
- Respect landowners' wishes.
- Carry your registration and insurance cards. See page → 42.
- Follow the provincial OHV Code of Conduct. See page → ii.

The **OHV Fund** contributes to developing and maintaining trails throughout the province.

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

Here's where you can ride:

- forest access roads controlled by the Department of Natural Resources
- K-class roads* controlled by the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
- private roads that are designed to be accessible, or are accessible to the public for OHV use where the landowner has given written permission*
- ditches* of highways under these conditions:
 - in daylight, either with or against the flow of traffic
 - at night*, in the same direction as the traffic on the same side of the road as the ditch* where you are driving
- a road or highway* outside a city, town, or village that is impassable because it is covered with snow AND it is not normally cleared

* You must have a valid driver's licence* to do this:

- load or unload your OHV along a road or highway
- cross a non-controlled-access road or highway

How to cross safely:

- have your passenger get off
- yield to all traffic
- wait until you can see clearly for 152 metres or 500 feet—more than the length of a football field in each direction
- go directly across, at right angles to the road

EXCEPTIONS

You may NOT drive

- in no-ride zones or on land that is set aside. See pages → 76–79.
- on or across a controlled-access highway*. Most 100-series highways are controlled access.

DESIGNATED TRAILS

You may drive on designated trails* that go over private or public land.

- You need “written permission” and get it by buying a trail permit from an authorized OHV club.
- You must display the permit on your OHV when you ride. The permit may be a sticker, label, or other tag.

There may be conditions of use.

These trails are marked with designated trail signs.
See page → 45.

There is a fine for using the designated trails without a permit.



EXCEPTIONS

You may NOT drive in no-ride zones or on land that is set aside. See pages → 54–58.

You do not need a trail permit to ride on a designated trail if you have documents that show you are riding for one of these reasons:

- you are using the trail for work-related reasons:
 - as a law enforcement officer
 - as an emergency worker
 - as a municipal, provincial, or federal government employee
 - as a licensed commercial fishery worker
 - as an employee or self-employed person as defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act—this does not include guides
- you are a registered Indian on reserve
- you are on your own land



The Department of Natural Resources has created a number of **designated trails** in partnership with the Snowmobilers Association of Nova Scotia, SANS.

You can buy a trail permit to use these trails during the winter from SANS and its member clubs.



Snowmobilers Association of Nova Scotia

Click → www.snowmobilersns.com

Call → **902-425-5450**

ext. **324**

Designated Trails

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/natr/ohv/designatedtrails.asp

ESTABLISHED TRAILS PRIVATE LAND

This is how permission works. You have “written permission” to use trails on private or public land

- if you were able to ride on that land before April 1, 2006
- unless there is a sign that says you cannot ride there

These established trails have allowed OHV riders to get to their camps, hunting areas, and other natural resources.

EXCEPTIONS

You may NOT drive in no-ride zones or on land that is set aside. See pages → 54–58.

You may drive on private land that is designed to be accessible, or is accessible to the public for OHV use as long as the landowner has given written permission.



Written permission can be given to an individual, a club, or an association. This can be in the form of a sign, map, form, letter, or other document signed by the landowner. The landowner may impose conditions of use.

- * You do NOT gain property rights over land by driving on it.

You and your passenger assume all risks that relate to owning and riding the OHV.

A landowner does NOT have the right to deliberately create a danger to you, your passenger, or your property.

EXCEPTIONS

- You have permission to ride on an established trail* UNLESS the landowner puts up a sign that says you can't. See page → 47.
- You get permission to ride on a designated trail* when you buy a designated-trail permit. See → page 47.
- You do NOT need permission when you are doing authorized construction or maintenance work.
- You may NOT drive in no-ride zones or on land that is set aside. See pages → 54-58.



A good way to get and keep permission to ride on private land is to join an OHV club. The club may have permission to ride on many trails.

Here's what to do if the club doesn't have permission:

- Find out who owns the land.
- Meet with the landowner and ask permission.
- Bring a permission form for the landowner to sign. OHV clubs may have sample forms.
- Carry a copy of the signed form when you ride.
- Offer the landowner help to post trail signs.

PUBLIC LAND

Municipal land

Contact your municipality to find out where you can and can't ride. Your municipality may give written permission for you to ride in certain areas.

Crown land

You have permission to ride on Crown land where there is no restriction. See pages → 54–58.

✦ Remember there are other people using the trail—doing things like walking, cycling, horseback riding, skiing.

Contact your local Department of Natural Resources office for more information.

tip! Some Crown land is used for forestry, mining, and harvesting. If you are looking for permission to ride there, check with the Department of Natural Resources and the organization that is using the land.

Federal land

Contact the federal department that manages the land you want to ride on to ask for written permission.

Over time a network of trails will be developed for OHV use. As the network is developed, other areas will become more restricted.

Abandoned rail lines

The trail-head sign tells you if you can ride your OHV there. You can use the trail if there is no sign.

Follow all posted speed limits.

Most of these are shared-use trails that are developed and maintained by authorized trail associations.

For more information contact the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Health Promotion and Protection, or the trail association.



Nova Scotia has 3,500 kilometres of snowmobile trails and hundreds of kilometres of shared-use trails. More are being developed by volunteer trail associations and OHV clubs.

Trails are built and maintained using the money from fundraising, volunteer labour, trail permits, the OHV Infrastructure Fund, and contributions from the province. Trail builders need your support. Contact your OHV association for a list of clubs. See page → 91. Volunteer to help. This keeps costs down and gives you a chance to invest in quality trails.

EXCEPTIONS

- You may NOT drive in no-ride zones or on land that is set aside. See pages → 54–58.
- You may NOT drive on land where there is a sign that says you may not drive there.



Rallies

Most rallies are organized for fun and to raise money for charities.

Organizers

- You need a rally permit from the Department of Natural Resources.
- You need written permission to use the land from
 - the landowner for private land
 - the Department of Natural Resources for Crown land
 - the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal for roads and highways
 - the municipality for municipal land
 - the federal department that manages it for federal land
 - the trail manager for a managed trail
- You must notify local law enforcement.
- You must follow the rules for environmental protection.
- You should mark the route and have someone follow the rally to make sure no one is left behind.

Riders

- Check to make sure it is an authorized rally.
- Find out what proof you need to carry as a participant.
- Always ride sober.



Closed courses

Category A courses are for racing competitors aged 13 and under.

Category B courses are for families riding with children aged 13 and under.

Other people may be able to ride on a closed course. You need written permission from the operator to use it outside of regular hours.



WET SEASON

What's the problem?

The wheels tear up the trail, uproot new plants, and change the natural flow of water.

What to do?

Stay off the trails

- during a period of heavy rain and after
- when the snow melts and the ground thaws



FIRE SEASON

What's the problem?

A spark can start a forest fire.

- Sparks can come from OHVs, cigarettes, campfires.
- You could get trapped in the fire.

What to do?

- Make sure your spark arrester is working.
- Put all cigarettes and campfires out completely.
- Listen to the radio for the fire index.
- Check signs from the Department of Natural Resources for the fire index.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/natr/protection/wildfire/fwi/default.htm

WINTER SEASON MILD SPELLS

What's the problem?

During mild spells, the wheels and drive track tear up groomed trails.

What to do?

Stay off groomed trails while the temperature is above -5°C.

DRINKING WATER SUPPLY AREAS

Driving on this land may be regulated or prohibited to keep the water clean.

Look for signs that let you know

- that you are entering a drinking water supply area or protected water area
- what regulations and restrictions apply
- where to call for more information

Not all areas have signs.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/rxaa-1.htm#env

Look under “Protected Water Areas” for the watershed near where you want to ride.

VULNERABLE NATURAL AREAS

Five kinds of vulnerable areas are

- wetlands
- watercourses
- barrens
- sand dunes
- beaches, see page → 56

Wetlands

These include marshes, swamps, fens, and bogs.

Wetlands are saturated with water or have shallow water for enough of the year to grow water plants and breed water insects, birds, and animals that nourish the earth.

Can you ever ride over wetlands?
Yes

- when the land is covered by 30 cm or about a foot of snow
- on a crossing approved under the Environment Act



Watercourses

These are the beds and shores of all rivers, streams, lakes, creeks, ponds, springs, lagoons, and other natural bodies of water in Nova Scotia. They may provide a home for fish and aquatic creatures.

Can you ever ride on a watercourse?
Yes

- when it is frozen, see page → 26
- on a crossing approved under the Environment Act



Coastal and highland barrens

These are exposed places with fierce weather.

Barrens are areas of bedrock or shallow soil. Plants include lichens, low shrubs, and either no trees or short trees.

Most highland barrens are in northwestern Cape Breton.

Most coastal barrens are found in exposed areas along the Atlantic coast.

Can you ever ride over barrens?

Yes

- when the land is covered by 30 cm or about a foot of snow
- when you own the property
- when they are inland, rock only, or burned out areas



Sand dunes

These are places next to beaches where the wind and water have piled up the sand. They are often held together by fragile grasses.

Can you ever ride over sand dunes?
No.



EXCEPTIONS

You may get a licence to ride in barrens, sand dunes, or sensitive areas.

Apply to Nova Scotia Environment or the Department of Natural Resources for a licence

- when there is no reasonable alternative
- when driving there is NOT for recreation
- to get to private land
- as part of a trail or route that connects to a larger trail network

* Some vulnerable, natural areas may be designated or defined as sensitive areas under the OHV regulations.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/ohvvulna.htm

LAND THAT'S SET ASIDE

Certain lands are set aside to protect the natural environment and allow areas to be used for walking or other non-motorized recreation. OHVs are generally not allowed unless they are authorized by the department that regulates the area.

Beaches

Beaches include

- coastal lands that lie below the mean highwater mark
- any other coastal or lakeshore area that is designated as a beach

Beaches are protected through the Beaches Act Regulations.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/beaches.htm

Core habitat

Some areas in Nova Scotia are home to species that are endangered or threatened. These areas may be designated as core habitat if they are important to help the species recover and survive. Core habitats are protected through the Endangered Species Act.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/endspec.htm



Provincial Parks

Provincial parks include provincial parks and park reserves. Most parks are clearly marked in the Nova Scotia Atlas.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/maps/default.asp

Parks are protected in the Provincial Parks Act Regulations.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/natr/parks/legc/statutes/provpark.htm

Parks directory

Click → <http://parks.gov.ns.ca>

Wilderness Areas

These areas protect particular natural environments:

- ecosystems
- special natural features
- areas of biological diversity

Many wilderness areas offer opportunities for research, education, and non-motorized wilderness recreation, including hiking, canoeing, camping, hunting, and fishing.

Wilderness areas are protected through the Wilderness Areas Protection Act Regulations.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/wildarea.htm



Special Places

Some special places are designated as protected sites because they are important in at least one of these areas:

- nature conservation
- history
- archaeology
- paleontology

Other special places are designated as ecological sites (nature reserves) because they are rare, unique, or outstanding natural ecosystems. Some of these are also habitats for rare or endangered species.

Protected and ecological sites are protected through the Special Places Act Regulations.

✦ Check these for periodic updates.

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/specplac.htm

MORE INFORMATION

No Ride Zones	Department	Web Site
beaches, sand dunes, barrens, provincial parks, core habitats	Natural Resources	www.gov.ns.ca/natr/staffdir/offices.asp
wilderness areas, nature reserves	Environment, Protected Areas Branch	www.gov.ns.ca/nse/protected_areas
drinking water supply areas, watercourses, and wetlands	Environment	www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/surfacewater
protected sites	Nova Scotia Museum	http://museum.gov.ns.ca/places/special/palintro.htm

For contact information see pages → 85–91.

To get the Nova Scotia Atlas

Click → www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/maps/default.asp

Visit your local bookstore.

Visit the Nova Scotia Land Registry Office.