

Information for the First Timer

John Wayne Pioneers, Wagons, and Riders Club Cross State Ride

The purpose of this booklet is to help you understand what to expect and how to prepare for riding the John Wayne Pioneer Trail. It is a wonderful experience and will probably be remembered as one of the most epic trail rides of your life. Being prepared will help you and your animal enjoy the experience more.

The Palouse to Cascades (formally known as the John Wayne Pioneer Trail) is a Rails-to-Trails Conversion. That means that almost all the trail is an old railroad bed. Railroad beds are flat. But that doesn't mean that the ride is a piece of cake. It sounds deceptively easy but in many ways you and your horse or mule need to be prepared to be tough. Luckily the ride has many participants who join the ride almost every year and they are more than willing to be supportive and encourage you along the way.

The entire ride is eighteen days long and is around 230 miles with only a few days "rest" along the way. About 10% of the saddle riders (versus the wagon riders or mountain bike riders) complete the entire ride. The low percentage of "finishers" is partially due to some riders not having enough vacation days or deciding to bite off only part of the ride their first year. Age does not appear to be a determining factor in who finishes and who doesn't. Probably half of people that complete the entire ride are over the age of 60.

You are in the saddle twelve days. There are five "non-riding" days making the entire trip 18 days long. The first day non-riding day is orientation (Easton), you have three days of rest during the ride (Warden, Reverie, and Malden), and one day to re-pack and get ready to head home (Tekoa). The ride stops a few miles from the Washington State/Idaho State line. The last day (Tekoa) some riders spend that short-day riding to the state line and back to camp before heading home.

Putting things in perspective, the 230 miles ridden is only 10% of what families did a hundred and fifty years ago when they traveled west on the Oregon Trail. The riders who participate on this ride have so much support that with a little preparation and mental hardening almost anyone can complete this wonderful ride.

One more thought: much of the John Wayne Trail passes through very rural communities that are economically challenged. The John Wayne Pioneer Wagon and Rider Association's (JWPWR) cross state ride provides more than \$30,000 spent in the local communities each year; money spent by ride participants. You are encouraged to show your appreciation to the local communities for supporting (and tolerating) the trail by making local purchases.

In the information below you will find some brand-named equipment. Please feel free to use equipment from a different company. Brand names are mentioned only because they have already proved their worth for others on the John Wayne cross-state ride.

1. Who Puts on the Ride? Is it a Formal Ride?

- a. The John Wayne Pioneers Wagon and Riders Association (JWPWR) has been running the ride since the early 1980s. The JWPWR is a not-for-profit group.
- b. It is a “formal” ride in that it is a well-organized ride providing much of the infrastructure a rider needs to undertake such a long ride.
- c. The ride has set campsites each night. Throughout the year members of the association make improvements to the sites as time and funds allow.
- d. Association members help improve or maintain sections of the trail that are in the most need of work.
- e. Some sections of the trail require a permit from one or more entities to ride that section. The JWPWR Association obtains all the necessary permits.
- f. The JWPWR Association owns many pieces of equipment to help facilitate the ride including a school bus (transporting riders from their rigs back to their horse or mule), a shuttle bus, a trailer that holds water and four port-a-potties.

2. How Good of Shape Do My Horse and I Need to Be to Join the Ride?

- a. It helps if both you and your horse or mule are in moderate shape. Just riding the trail, day-after-day, will improve the physical conditioning of both of you.
- b. The first 20-mile (plus) day is not until the fifth day in the saddle which helps you and your horse or mule work up to the longer rides that happen during the second week.

3. Communication, Nightly Ride Meetings, Check-Ins

- a. If you are joining the Ride along the Trail and not from the first camp in Easton, we require check in the night before so you can attend the nightly Ride Meeting.
- b. Every evening around 5pm (give or take an hour – the time is announced the day before) there is a ride meeting. These meetings are important and MANDATORY to attend because the rider will be told about the trail conditions for the next day, be given the time that the bus will leave in the morning (to move the rigs forward), the approximate location of the coyote (the water and port-a-potties) along the next day’s ride, and other key information. Therefore, it’s important for people joining the Ride along the Route to check-in the evening before they intend to be on the Trail.
- c. Cell reception gets weak to non-existent the further east you ride. There may be two to four days in a row that you won’t have any cell reception at all (regardless of your carrier). It is important that you know what to expect each day before you hit the trail. You might not be able to Google the answer to your question.

4. How Are Our Rigs Moved?

- a. The JWPWR owns two buses and a couple trailers. At 7am (most mornings) everyone has their camp cleaned up; horses/mules fed, saddled or harnessed; and situated near someplace that they will remain safely tied until you get back.
- b. At 7am the lead bus honks its horns and all the rigs caravan behind the bus to that evening's camping spot. Once at that night's camping spot everyone parks their rigs and gets on the bus for the trip back to your horse or mule. There is not enough time in the morning to set up camp – only enough time to park your rig.
- c. A few rigs stay behind instead of following the bus. These tend to have a nonriding driver who will drive to that night's campground (again, following the bus for its second trip back to that night's camping area). Typically, the people who have stay-behind trailers remain with the horses until the bus returns. They often allow other riders to tie their horses to their horse trailers.
- d. Each day you ride to your own rig.

5. Who Watches the Horses While We Move the Rigs?

- a. Ideally you have joined the ride with a friend who is sharing a rig with you. One of you would stay behind and watch the horses or mules and the other would move your rig forward.
- b. It is not unusual for the bus bringing the drivers back to that day's starting point to be gone for an hour to an hour and a half. Horses and mules can get into a lot of mischief given the length of time.
- c. Probably about half of the riders are "solo," meaning that they are not sharing a rig with someone and have to leave their horse or mule behind while the rig is moved forward.
- d. The organizers of the ride are NOT responsible for watching your horse or mule while you are driving your rig forward. However, there is usually at least a handful of riders staying behind to tend horses. It seems to work itself out most of the time.
- e. Most of the campsites do not have adequate hitching rails to tie horses and mules. While the club is working on installing hitching rails at the camp locations with the least number of places to tie a horse or mule, they are still a long way from getting enough in place. Consider bringing a good pair of hobbles for your horse or mule to put on them when you tie them to move your rig. If they do get loose it is a lot easier to catch a hobbled animal than an animal that is free to run.
- f. If you plan to use hobbles as a "safety net" please make sure your animal has time to get used to them before you start the trip. Might remove this??

6. Where do I Keep the Horse at Night?

- a. There is only two nights that the camp site has a few poles for high lining (but not enough for all the riders). You will need to figure out a way (other than high lining) to secure your horse or mule at night. (??)

- b. Some people use electric portable corrals. Remember that you might need additional batteries to keep it working during the trip. Also, along the eastern slopes of the foothills (the first five days) the wind can be strong enough to blow down a portable corral.
- c. Some people bring metal round pen panels, usually strapping them to the side of their horse trailer. These take a while to put up and take down, but they do provide a solid structure to contain your horse or mule overnight.
- d. Some people tie their animals to the side of the trailer each night. Most tie the lead line to the horse ties on the side of the trailer. Some use an overhead, swing out tying mechanism such as the HiTie Trailer Tie System. If you tie your horses to the side of the trailer you may want to bring a board to place in to cover up the wheel well of the trailer. Horses can get their legs stuck between the trailer and tires at night and hurt themselves. **Mules seldom get their legs caught under the trailer.
- e. On day five we camp at the I 90 trailhead which is part of the Yakima military base. This base is over 500 square miles (!) in size with very few fences. Horses from the JWPWR ride have previously gotten loose at that camp ground and traveled quite a distance before they were caught.
- f. The military requires every animal to be double restrained while camping at the I 90 trail head. The easiest way to “double” restrain is to place hobbles on your horse or mule and use your normal method of controlling them at night. Other options will be discussed at the evening meeting in Ellensburg as well.

7. Water?

- a. Having enough water is an issue. JWPWR recommends that each participant carries enough water for three days for each animal they bring.
- b. There will be anywhere between 50 and 100 horses on any given night in camp. The trip requires a lot of water each day to water the livestock, even more if the weather is hot and the trip organizers should not be expected to carry camp water for the participants. JWPWR has arranged for a water source at many campsites and the trip itinerary clearly states when water will be available for you to fill your own water tanks.
- c. Most of the campsites have water available for livestock – but not all. The typical water tank in most trailer tack rooms might provide two days’ worth of water for one horse or mule. If you have more than one horse or mule you should consider placing a second large water tank someplace in your rig. If you have only one horse or mule and a tack room water tank go to someplace like Walmart or a hardware store and purchase four ~7-gallon water containers that you will refill each time you fill your tack room water tank.
- d. Plan on carrying enough drinking water for your own use each day that you are riding. The typical large water bottle that most people carry may not provide enough drinking water, especially on the days that are warm. Most camping gear stores do not carry four-quart canteens any more. The one-quart canteens will not

be big enough on hot days. Try Amazon.com: it has a selection of four-quart canteens.

- e. All but the shortest ride days the Coyote will be parked along the trail someplace near the middle of that day's ride. The Coyote will have buckets of water for the horses and drinking water for the riders if they have already gone through their own supply of water. Consider carrying a collapsible bucket to water your horses from if you do not want your horses to share water buckets. The days that the Coyote will not be available for water and port-a-potties will be announced at the camp meeting the night before.

8. Clothing Needed

- a. The ride starts near the crest of the Cascade Mountains. Even in the last part of May you could have snow flurries, rain, or hot sunshine in the mountains. You will need to dress for weather in the low 30s up to the high 90s. Dressing in layers is smart because the air temperature may change as much as 40 degrees during any given day of riding.
- b. It is likely to rain (or snow) a couple days of the ride so you need to have rain gear that will keep your head, torso, and legs dry. Even if your horse is used to a rain poncho that flaps around in the wind it doesn't mean someone else's horse or mule will also accept a flapping poncho. Be considerate of others and bring a rain coat instead of a rain poncho.
- c. Recommend a windbreaker on windy days, two pairs of gloves in case some get damp, hat or helmet that can keep sun out of eyes and off face, bandana for neck and protection from dust.
- d. Average riding day is appx 4.5 hours on a standard horse/mule, but as long as 8 hours on a couple days. Highly recommend a pair of breeches or riding jeans that have no inseam to prevent blisters or soreness from so many hours in the saddle. If extra sensitive a saddle seat or bike shorts can provide extra relief or cushion.
- e. You are in the saddle for many hours a day – maybe as many as eight hours on some days. Do yourself a favor and pick up a couple of pairs of pants to ride in that don't have inside leg seams. Consider breeches or some of the special riding blue jeans such as Smooth Stride Jeans. Don't miss a day riding the trail just because you have blisters from your inside seams. Some people use saddle seat pads or bike shorts to provide a little extra cushion.
- f. Bring at least two pair of comfortable boots and make sure they have been oiled or waterproofed before you start the ride. Your feet will be a lot more comfortable if you can rotate your footwear allowing each pair to air out every other day. Some riders like the Ariat all-terrain boots with short chaps. They are comfortable for when you take a break from the saddle or potentially walking the trail with horse.

9. Shoes for Horses

- a. We suggest that pads are also a "must." Too many riders are not able to make the entire ride due to bruising of the hoof. Even mules should wear shoes and pads.

- b. Consider some kind of man-made material for the pads: leather pads don't last as long and are not likely to last the length of the ride.
- c. Portions of the trail are covered in fist sized rough surfaced ballast rock that was used under and around the old railroad track. At some point in the future the entire length of the trail will be crushed rock but that may take ten years or more. Be kind, not cruel, to your animal and put strong steel shoes on its feet. Ask your farrier if titanium horse shoe nail heads or borium are possible. Most farriers don't travel with titanium nails or borium so this discussion should be undertaken a few weeks prior to shoeing for the trip.
- d. If you want to put on boots over the shoes and pads that is okay. Extra protection is not discouraged. If you use boots exclusively make sure they are properly fitted, you have accounted for sealing the edges with something like bell boots or vet wrap to protect from small gravel getting inside the boot to rub against the hoof wall as you travel down the trail and causing damage to the hoof wall.
- e. It might be a good idea to see if your farrier has an extra front and back shoe fitted to your animal that you can have "just-in-case" on the ride. Bring farrier tools if you have some.

10. Weather Extremes?

- a. Almost guaranteed you will have strong wind along the eastern slopes of the mountains which could be 25-45 mph or more at times.
- b. The wind is so strong as we drop out of the mountains that it will tear the brim of your hellhat or DaBrim right off your helmet. Your cowboy hat may make it to the next county. After reaching the east side of the Columbia River (day 5) your hellhat, DaBrim, or cowboy hat should be safe.
- c. After the first four days you drop down onto the high desert. The high desert has been known to have snow flurries but most of the time you will be dealing with warmer temperatures – maybe up into the low 90F range. You should expect a typical day high to be around 65 degrees F to 95 degrees F and the typical nighttime temperature to be between 45 degrees F to 60 degrees F. Occasionally the nighttime temperatures will drop below freezing.

11. Staying Cool, Staying Warm

- a. Some days, especially wet ones, make it hard to stay warm. Plan on dressing to stay dry and warm.
- b. Most places along the trail the wildfire hazard is too great to allow wood campfires to help you stay warm or cook. If you need heat outside of your camper or tent plan on providing something fueled by propane that is not likely to start a wildfire.
- c. Some days will be hot, and you will be exposed to the sun the entire day without an opportunity for any type of shade. Bring sun screen, a hat with a visor, and light weight long sleeved shirts.
- d. Many campers have awnings that can fold down from the side of the camper. Half of the time the winds are strong enough that you might not want to open up the

awning but on the days you can they are a wonderful way to protect you and your animal from the hot sun overhead. If you don't have an awning and/or you are tent camping, you might want to consider REI Co-op's Alcove Shelter (or something similar). It provides a 10'x10' covered area (no sides) but is light and compact. It weighs only 15 pounds and folds up into a 10"x30" bag. You should be able to find it on the Internet for around \$100.

- e. Small, battery operated fans such as the 10" O2COOL fan (O2COOL, LLC) are great. It can run on batteries or be plugged in. It is narrow enough to fit into those small closets or cupboards found in campers.

12. Food

- a. 2022 is now inclusive of evening meals in most camps. The meals will be varied between local community groups, food trucks, restaurants, and one catered meal at a remote camp. The 3 nights on your own are in locations are within walking distance to a town with restaurant choices.
- b. If cooking on location - Please bring a camp stove or other propane fueled devices to prepare your meals. (no open fires)
- c. Except for the possibility of getting lunch in town on the days we have hold overs in towns (Warden on day 8 and Malden on day 15) you will need to pack your own lunch.
- d. If the evening meal is not included. There will be options to have dinner in town at a restaurant of your choice. If the restaurants are not walking distance JWPWR schedules a time to drive everyone into town for dinner.

13. What do I do About Battery Life? Cell Phone, Camper, Flash Lights, Cameras, etc.

- a. Moving your rig forward each morning might not recharge your camper battery enough. The drive is sometimes an hour long, but you may drive less than 20 miles: it all depends how far apart the country roads are from each other. Some people choose to bring small generators – which tend to not be popular with the other campers (at least while they are running). If you decide to use a generator, please consider using it during daylight hours only. We understand a few participants may require a generator to run all night for medical necessities. Out of courtesy for their fellow campers they try to park away or to the edge of the main camp to avoid their generator creating a disturbance for their fellow campers. If you have a similar concern, please ask any of our Ride Committee or Club officers to introduce you to the Parking Committee so we can get you situated as you enter camp to park in the mornings.
- b. Probably one of the easiest ways to keep your cell phone, camera, radio (including an emergency NOAA weather radio if you use one) charged up is to use something like an Amazonbasics Portable Power Bank. Many trucks allow you to charge your Amazonbasics by leaving it plugged into your cigarette lighter slot in your truck cab during the day while you ride. Once fully charged the

Amazon basics can re-charge up to three pieces of equipment for three days before needing to be charged again.

- c. Many things that need batteries. Go to Costco and splurge on getting twice as many batteries as you think you will need. You will probably need them.

14. How Much \$\$\$: Fees, Spending in Towns, etc.

- a. The registration fee for the trip \$579 for almost three weeks of riding (try to beat that!). There are also fees for riding only part of the trail. The registration fee includes the bus transportation from your rig back to your animal every day and the Coyote most days. (The Coyote is the smaller bus hooked to a trailer with four port-a- potties and potable water that usually meets the riders halfway through each day's ride). Some of the sections of the trail require the acquisition of a group permit. The registration fee also includes all permits to ride the trail.
- b. The ride includes camping in four different (small) towns. All these towns are associated with a day's rest from riding. Eating out at restaurants, doing laundry at the laundry mat, shopping for extra supplies at the small-town stores is an option at each town.
- c. Three of the four towns we lay over are cute back-water towns with very little economic opportunity. One town (Warden: days 7-8) allows us to use the showers at the fire station. Malden holds a used book sale
- d.

15. How Many Miles Ridden?

- a. Overall, if you were to ride the entire trip you would be in the saddle for about 220 miles.
- b. There are two "rest days" that have side rides. One is Revere which is, like much of the ride, in the middle-of-nowhere. However, this middle-of-nowhere location has an old abandoned homestead up in the hills that use to have sheep. Take a couple of hours and ride up to the homestead, enjoy looking at the old farm buildings, and then take a leisurely ride back to camp. You will be able to ride along old roads to the old homestead and it might be a good idea to stay on the road because you will be in rattlesnake territory. The second optional ride is in Tekoa.
- c. The "official" JWPWR cross state ride stops a few miles short of the Washington/Idaho state line. Typically, a part of the group rides to the state line and back from the camp at Tekoa.

16. Most and Least Number of Miles Per Day?

- a. The shortest day's ride is around 10 miles and the longest day's ride is around 25 miles.
- b. Most days you ride between 12 and 15 miles.
- c. There are four days that are twenty miles or longer.

17. What Happens if I Have Trouble on the Trail?

- a. While riders are generally spread out into small groups everyone seems to be friendly and helpful. If you really get into trouble, there are drag riders who can call for a horse trailer to pick up your horse or someone to pick you up.

18. Trail Etiquette

- a. While there are a lot of horses and mules on the trail, seldom are the riders all grouped together. Riders tend to be in groups of one, two, up to five or six riders who have chosen to ride together.
- b. Riders can leave any time after the lead riders have gone off. The drag riders typically leave camp around 10:00 am. That allows a lot of time, and space, between groups.
- c. Most riders take the trail at a walking pace. If you are approaching another group of riders in front of you, please yell out and let them know that you want to pass. Ask the best way for you to pass to allow their horses or mules to tolerate the passing.
- d. It is never considered appropriate to approach another group of riders at any speed other than a gentle walk. Even on gaited animals slow down the pace as you pass another group.
- e. At times people enjoy trotting or cantering their animals down the trail. That is okay if you are not near any other groups. If you pass a slower group and want to trot or canter, please make sure you are away from the group you just passed before you take off.
- f. Every horse or mule will have at least one situation on the trail that spooks them. Be considerate and don't make fast moves, throw on a coat, or otherwise do anything that might spook horses that you are about to pass.
- g. The only time all the riders are together is the ride through downtown Ellensburg. For some reason Ellensburg did not see a reason to keep the trail access through town. For wagons and riders on the trip to get from the west side of Ellensburg to the Ellensburg Fairground a "parade" permit is required with police escort through town on city streets. Riders leave camp at their normal pace and wait at the western end of town until all the riders reach the "parade" beginning point. Riders and wagons are encouraged to put on festive gear to travel through town. It's pretty cool to see so many horses parading thru town!

19. Wild Animals?

- a. The amount of birds (and for that matter – wildflowers) is amazing!
- b. Coyotes rarely, but have been seen running by camp, usually at night but they don't bother the horses or mules. If you have small dogs keep an eye on them for their safety.
- c. Rattle snakes. Don't worry about them too much. They are usually far from the rail trail after the first few horses. They may rattle their tails at you as they glide away from you and the trail. If you see one or hear one slow down and allow it to slither away. Chances are you won't see many, if any rattlesnakes.

- d. You may also see deer (probably), elk (a limited maybe), and moose (only if you are lucky – and from a distance hopefully).

20. Laundry, Emptying Grey/Black Water?

- a. There are only a few places to empty the grey and black water tanks in your camper. You know your setup the best. We suggest you take the opportunity to fill water and empty holding tanks whenever they are available just in case something happens, and the next stop is not available
- b. Laundromats are usually available in Ellensburg (day 4), Warden (day 7), Malden (day 14), and Rosalia (day 16). Bring quarters – lots of quarters! You may want to bring ten dollars of quarters for each person in your group.
- c. You also have the option (that many riders use) to hand wash your clothing. Before starting the trip figure out how to place lines inside your trailer to hang wet clothing on. You can hang the wet cloths up inside your trailer after your day's ride. Open all the trailer's windows when you park your rig the next morning and let your clothing dry during the day as you ride. On most days your clothing will be dry by the time you reach camp that afternoon. "C" clamps that can clamp on to the inside structure above your trailer windows and stringing laundry line between the C clamps works well.
- d. Tubtrugs. I love tubtrugs. They are light weight and colorful rubber tubs of different sizes and available at most feed stores. Use the medium size to hand wash clothes. There is no reason to have dull colored accessories while camping. Tubtrugs come in so many colors that it is easy to color-coordinate with your rig or tack if it pleases you.

21. Trash

- a. ***Pack it in pack it out!! You are responsible for all garbage!***
- b. The best option is to pack for the trip with an eye toward limiting the packaging used for food. Use stackable and recyclable containers on the trip and look for crushable containers for things that you can't avoid the packing.
- c. There are very few days that you will be at a location that you can leave a bag of trash behind.
- d. Plan on a way/place in your rig to "store" trash. Because of wildfire hazard trash is not burned.

22. Leave No Trace

- a. Most of the land that is used for the ride is a Washington State Park called Palouse to Cascade Trail. Being a good steward of the land (and making sure that locals don't want to have the trail closed due to trash or other unwanted behavior) is an important part of the ride.
- b. It is important to always clean up your campsite to make it as clean and restored as possible. Most days you are asked to spread your manure around. There are a

couple of places that have designed areas to leave manure piles. The guidebook generally contains this information, but the evening meeting is the best place to confirm what to do with manure at each site.

23. Bling and Other Things to Buy?

- a. Great idea to be prepared with cash or a credit card for unexpected shopping 😊
- b. There are several shops in towns we pass through like Ellensburg, Warden, Rosalia, etc. where you can look through specialty shops, antiques, 2nd hand stores, etc. to find special treasures along the Ride.
- c. In Malden (rest day) of the ride we hold a Tack Swap, so bring anything you might want to put out for sale. We all have extra tack and gear we no longer use. This is a great opportunity to put it out to an interested audience or to look for the extra items you might want to add to your own gear.
- d. A leather artist from the Hutterite (religious) community may come with his hand made (and very soft) gloves of all sizes, fly swatters with elk horn handles, and many other amazing and must-have things. The prices are very fair. Everything is made at the Hutterite community farm and made well. Plan on having \$50-\$100 (or more) of cash in your pocket if you are interested in quality, handmade items. (possibly remove for now as this is up in the air)

24. What if I don't have a friend riding with me?

- a. It is not unusual for individuals to show up to make the ride and not have a riding buddy. Most groups on the ride will welcome an individual to ride with them, especially if the horses/mules travel at the same place.
- b. A good time to find others to ride with is to ask at the evening meetings. There will be a time for questions from the group at each meeting. Speak up, let people know you would like to ride with someone, and let them know what type of horse or mule you will be riding.

25. What if I Have a Non-riding Friend with Me?

- a. Some of the non-riding friends enjoy kicking back at camp reading books, talking to others around camp, hiking, or watching movies on their own devices. (Warning – you will not be likely to have Internet connection.) There is always someone in camp when Riders are out and plenty of things to check out along the route of the Ride in addition to the local towns.
- b. The cross-state ride includes saddle riders, wagon riders, and mountain bikers. If your non-riding friend is a mountain biker s/he could probably join the mountain bikers. But be warned; flat tires are a regular hazard so tire repair kits and extra bike supplies are a must. Our number of bicycle riding friends is growing, so it's a great opportunity for our two adjacent sports to enjoy this amazing Trail together and support the efforts to protect our access to this historical route for everyone for future generations.

- c. Occasionally, if pre-arranged, some of the wagons may be able to take an extra passenger for a day or two, but our Teamsters usually have full seats and no obligations to take on any passengers other than their helper.

26. What is the Trail Like?

- a. For the most part the trail is eight to ten feet wide and very flat. Some portions of the trail are covered in 5/8 minus gravel. Much of the trail has larger, rock: from a couple inches across to fist size. This larger rock is what bruises the bottoms of the hooves and why pads are needed. A few portions of the trail can be muddy and every once and while the trail is fully under a couple inches of water. Near the end of the ride you may be riding through two to three feet tall grass growing on the trail.
- b. Old rail roads were built by cutting through a hill and filling the adjoining valleys with the fill from the hill. The canyons that you ride through (canyons created for the rail road) can have steep sides that may be over 20 tall. The dirt cut out of the canyons are used to fill the valleys, thus allowing a trail with a slope no greater than 2.5%.

27. Do I Need Extra Saddle, Bridle, Halter, Blankets?

- a. It is a good idea to have a second set of tack with you, especially tack that would not rub in the same areas as your normal tack might rub.
- b. Bring things to repair your tack in case something breaks or wears out on the trip.
- c. Your horse or mule will be outside at night in all kinds of weather. Having a waterproof blanket may be appreciated on some of the wetter or cooler nights. A few of the locations have mosquitos and other biting bugs. A blanket along with bug spray will help your horse or mule be more comfortable. A fly mask may also be helpful.
- d. It is a good idea to have your contact information on the horse or mule's halter in case they break loose at night and decide to take off.

28. May I Join and Leave the Group as My Schedule or Mood Dictates?

- a. The trip is set up so that people could join the group for the entire ride or join on specific days (of their choice).
- b. Some people will ride for a few days and then decide to haul their horses to that night's camp site instead of riding to the campsite. All of those options are okay but please make sure you let the designated head of the ride know of your plans, so we are able to assure we have everyone who starts on the Trail in the morning is safely in camp in the evening.

29. What if I Decide to Take a Day Off from Riding?

- a. It is okay to take a day or more off from riding. Just let the designed head of the ride know of your plans.

30. Can I/May I Pony a Second Animal?

- a. Yes, you may pony a second animal. Please make sure that your two animals are used to ponying together and that they behave together. Once you start out on the trail you can't turn back if one is misbehaving. The entire camp has already moved forward to that night's camp site. Also, much of the trail goes through very remote areas. If you have an animal that gets loose and decides to run for it, the animal usually has many square miles of unfenced area to roam and hide.

31. May I Bring my Dog?

- a. Dogs are NOT allowed on the trail during the Ride. However, you may bring your dog to travel and camp with you. Plan on a method to keep them secured in camp while you are on the Trail. The weather can reach temps that are too hot to leave your dog in your car during the day, so be prepared to have options for Fido just in case. Many people setup their dogs back in the horse area of their trailer with their bed to keep them comfy.
- b. PLEASE KEEP YOUR DOGS ON A LEASH IN CAMP. If you walk out of camp and want to allow your dog off-leash, please have them under control and on-leash when back in camp to avoid any possible trouble with other dogs or livestock which may not tolerate your dog running up to them. This is a large, diverse mix of people and animals traveling together so your dog may be the friendliest pup on earth, or your horse may let a dog run all through their legs without a flick of an ear, but we need to be considerate of our fellow campers whose animals may not be as experienced as others.

32. Are There a Lot of Hills to Climb?

- a. Even though the ride starts in Easton (elevation 2,169) near the crest of the Cascade Mountains, drops down to the Columbia River at Vantage (elevation 663) then slowly climbs again to Tekoa (elevation 2,533) near the Washington/Idaho state border there are very few noticeable hills to ride.
- b. Railroad beds are engineered to have a grade of 2.5% or less. There are a couple of places along the ride that for one reason or another a portion of the trail is not available for riding. This is usually to go around old railroad trestles that are no longer safe to cross. In all cases the route around the unsafe trestle is not too steep for horse drawn wagons so saddle horses and mules should have no trouble.
- c. Two days with notable hills are day 6 (ride through the Yakima military base down to the Columbia River and Ewan camp riding past Rock Lake. In both cases the group leaves the actual rail bed and travels along a local road. The route can be used by the horse drawn wagons.

33. Is alcohol allowed in camp?

- a. Alcohol is allowed in camp and discretion and limiting intake is advised. Please be considerate of your fellow campers.

- b. The first night (Easton) we camp at a church camp. Please be discreet and keep alcohol in closed containers.

34. Are camp fires allowed?

- a. Not usually recommended although if the weather is “right” (no strong wind to carry embers and enough moisture in the ground to not start a wild fire) the JWPWR will have a group campfire.
- b. Propane self-contained fire pits or cook stoves are usually okay.

35. What if I don’t have a camper?

- a. Some people sleep in their horse trailer. Since you are generally riding your horses forward each day there are only a few days they will be hauled forward.
- b. Some people sleep in tents (bring strong tent stakes because of the wind).

36. Are Kids Allowed on the Ride?

- a. Yes, but it is best if they are good riders and over ten years old. It is hard work to ride the trail.

37. What if my Partner or Friend is a Bike Rider and not a Horse Rider?

- a. Usually about a dozen mountain bikers join the JWPWR each year, but this number is growing. Eventually the mountain bike groups will have their own ride but it takes a lot of logistical planning and the mountain bikers are learning about all that needs to be done. We are happy to have them join us for our Annual Ride just as in past years.
- b. The mountain bikers usually leave before the trail riders do. In all cases they are sensitive to having bikes around horses and are probably the politest and horse smart bike riders you will meet.
- c. It is not unusual for small mixed groups (riders, wagons, and mountain bikes) to join for the day-ride out of Revere up to the sheep homestead.

38. Does Everyone Ride in One Big Group?

- a. The only time everyone rides in a big group is when we ride through the town of Ellensburg to the Fairgrounds. Since we must ride through town the JWPWRs are required to get a parade permit and have a police escort through town to the Fairgrounds.
- b. Typically, people ride solo or in groups of two to six. You might be able to see others on the trail in front or back of you but there is often a distance of a quarter mile between small groups.
- c. The first riders out on the trail are the Lead Riders who leave around the time the bus departs to lean the campers forward to the next camp. They mark hazards along the Trail, open gate locks, check the tunnels, etc. ahead of the departure of the main group.

- d. For the first **THREE DAYS**, **ALL** Wagons depart camp before any Riders. Wagons generally travel at a faster pace than a single horse and rider. This allows horses that are not familiar with Wagons and all the noise and commotion they can make to get some miles down the trail before the possibility of a wagon needing to pass them on a Trail that may not have a convenient spot to leave the trail if the horse is nervous. On the fourth day, all Teamsters and Riders may depart as soon as the Lead Riders have headed out or as soon as you can step off the bus and onto the Trail.
- e. The drag riders will be the last riders out of the camp and the last ones on the Trail. If you stop for a break the drag riders will never pass you. This assures our drag riders are the last ones in camp and we never leave anyone out on their own on the Trail.
- f. The Teamsters (Wagons) and mountain bikers typically leave early since they tend to go faster than saddle riders. There are usually under a dozen wagons and around a dozen mountain bike riders although this number is growing.

40. What if I Want to Hitch my Horse(s) to a Wagon Instead of Riding Them?

- a. Every year there are usually between five and a dozen horse or mule drawn wagons that make some or all the trip. Teamsters alone make the decision if they want to pony a horse to their wagon. The horse's experience with wagons, being ponied behind a wagon, etc. is at the discretion of the Teamster and horse or mule owner. Safety is our #1 concern for every person and animal on this Ride.

41. Are There Places to Buy Food and Gas?

- a. Yes, plenty of places along the route.
- b. Generally, everyone will be following the JWPWR bus in the caravan to the next camp in the morning, but if you are joining the Ride in progress the directions to the camp you are joining us to check in are online
- c.

42. Are There Bathrooms on the Trail?

- a. Except for two days (day three between Thorp and Ellensburg and day four between Ellensburg and I 90 Trailhead) there are no public restrooms on the trail. However, the JWPWR Association has the "Coyote" (shuttle bus with a trailer attached) which has both portable bathrooms and water. The Coyote meets riders at about the halfway point for any day that is at least 12 miles long.
- b. If you need to use the side of the trail as a bathroom, please carry a zip lock bag to carry your used toilet paper back to camp.

43. What does a typical day look like?

- a. Wake up around 5 am and feed your horse or mule.
- b. Get dressed, eat breakfast, and pack your lunch.
- c. Saddle your horse or mule, make sure that your bridle is tied to your saddle (you won't believe how often people forget to leave their bridle with their horse or

mule!), and find a place to tie your horse or mule so you can drive your rig to that night's camp.

- d. Follow the bus from camp to the next campsite. Park your rig and get on the bus to be driven back to your animal.
- e. Once back with your animal enjoy your ride back to your rig. It is amazing what wonderful things you can see traveling across the state at four miles an hour.
- f. Usually someplace about half way to your rig you will see the Coyote. Take time to stop, water your horse, and use the restrooms.
- g. Once you are back at your rig take care of your horse or mule and finish setting up that night's camp. Depending on what time you get into camp the nightly meeting may be prior to or after you are able to cook your dinner.
- h. Most riders are quietly tucked into their beds before 9 pm.

44. Do We Have any Non-riding Days?

- a. Yes, there are five non-riding days although two of those days have side trip options.
- b. The first day in Easton you do not ride. The first evening meeting is held around 5 pm so you will want to try to get to Easton well before 5 pm to set up camp, feed your animal, and get to know others who will be on the trip with you.
- c. Warden (day 7) and Malden (day 14) are towns that have non-riding days.
- d. Day 12 at Revere there is the option to ride up to the abandoned sheep farm homestead. Revere is not a town: it is a grain silo train stop in the middle of nowhere.
- e. The last day of the trip is in Tekoa near the Idaho border. Some riders opt to ride the last few miles to the state line: others take off and start driving home after breakfast.

45. How Many People Join the Ride?

- a. It varies from year to year and even day to day since some people only join for a few days, but we generally average 125 parading through Ellensburg

46. How Much Animal Feed do I Need?

- a. Plan on bringing about one and a half times the amount of food your horse or mule would typically eat. There are a couple places along the way that you will be able to purchase additional animal feed if you need more.
- b. Don't forget to provide salt each day. One of the easiest ways to provide salt is to purchase one of those red salt rocks that most feed stores offer and place it in an indestructible feed tray next to their food each meal.
- c. You might want to consider getting a medium sized Tubtrug (search for it on Google – many feed stores and hardware stores carry them). They don't tip over as easily as buckets and the small to medium sized ones can hold water overnight for your horse or mule. A larger Tubtrug can be used for flakes of hay in each feeding. That way less hay ends up on the ground and it is easy to pick up the

Tubtrug and put it in the tack room or the back of the rig when moving in the morning.

- d. Many people use slow feeder nets and fill them full each evening so your animals can eat any time they are in camp and all night long rather than getting up hours before it's time to pull out of camp to feed. Your animals will be working hard and will likely need access to as many calories as you can provide when they aren't on the Trail.
- e. Especially if you are planning to ride the entire trip you may wonder where you can store that much hay. One option (if you have an extra horse slot in your trailer) is to stack the hay in the front horse slot and use a partial sheet of plywood to keep the hay in place as you move your rig. Wedge the plywood between the bales of hay and the stall divider.

47. Medicines for You

- a. Personal prescriptions. Consider carrying a few extra days of any prescriptions you must have in case you are delayed getting home for any reason.
- b. Tylenol or Advil
- c. Allergy medicine (for stuffy nose)
- d. chap stick and hand lotion
- e. Sun screen – Visor and bandana to protect face and neck from sunburn
- f. Band-Aids
- g. Bug Spray (lots!)
- h. Eye drops

48. Medicines for Your Horse or Mule

- a. Electrolytes either powder or paste
- b. Vet wrap
- c. Ointments
- d. Bug spray (bring at least twice as much as you think you need!)
- e. Bute
- f. Banamine
- g. Eye drops