

'Twelve Principles' for Minimizing Conflicts on Multiple Use Trails...

These 'Twelve Principles' are recommendations from *Conflicts on Multiple Use Trails: Synthesis of the Literature and State of the Practice*, written by Roger Moore (1994). The American Council of Snowmobile Associations supports them as a way to maximize winter recreation opportunities while simultaneously managing public and private lands to minimize real conflicts.

1. **Recognize Conflicts as Goal Interference** – Do not treat conflict as an inherent incompatibility among different trail activities, but rather as goal interference attributed to another's behavior.
2. **Provide Adequate Trail Opportunities** – Offer adequate trail mileage and provide opportunities for a variety of trail experiences. This will help reduce congestion and allow users to choose the conditions that are best suited to the experience they desire.
3. **Minimize Number of Contacts in Problem Areas** – Each contact among trail users has the potential to result in conflict. So, as a general rule, reduce the number of user contacts whenever possible. This is especially true in congested areas and at trailheads.
4. **Involve Users as Early as Possible** – Identify the present and likely future users of each trail and involve them in the process of avoiding and resolving conflicts as early as possible, preferably before conflicts occur.
5. **Understand User Needs** – Determine the motivations, desired experiences, norms, setting preferences, and other needs of the present and likely future users of each trail. The 'customer' information is critical for anticipating and managing conflicts.
6. **Identify the Actual Sources of Conflicts** – Help users to identify the specific tangible causes of any conflicts they are experiencing. In other words, get beyond emotions and stereotypes as quickly as possible, and get to the roots of any problems that exist.
7. **Work with Affected Users** – Work with all parties involved to reach mutually agreeable solutions to these specific issues. Users who are not involved as part of the solution are more likely to be part of the problem now and in the future.
8. **Promote Trail Etiquette** – Minimize the possibility that any particular trail contact will result in conflict by aggressively promoting responsible trail behavior.
9. **Encourage Positive Interaction Among Different Users** – Trail users are usually not as different from one another as they believe. Providing positive interactions both on and off the trail will help break down barriers and stereotypes, and build understanding, goodwill, and cooperation.
10. **Favor 'Light-Handed Management'** – Use the most 'light-handed approaches' that will achieve objectives. This is essential in order to provide the freedom of choice and natural environments that are so important to trail-based recreation. Intrusive design and coercive management are not compatible with high-quality experiences.
11. **Plan and Act Locally** – Whenever possible, address issues regarding multiple use trails at the local level. This allows better flexibility for addressing difficult issues on a case-by-case basis.
12. **Monitor Progress** – Monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the decisions made and programs implemented.