



The Lakeshore Nature Preserve

University of Wisconsin - Madison
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Lakeshore Nature Preserve Bicycle Policy

Approved May 26, 2011

After much discussion throughout the 2010-2011 academic year, a public listening session in March, and prior deliberations on the topic in May 2005, the University's Lakeshore Nature Preserve Committee approved a policy to ban bicycle riding on the path that runs from the entrance to Picnic Point to the eastern tip of the point at its April 27, 2011 meeting. It also recommended final implementation of the new policy to Associate Vice Chancellor of Facilities Planning and Management Alan Fish. The new policy became effective May 28, 2011.

Bicycle riding is still permitted on the Howard Temin Lakeshore Path from the Limnology Building on the east to Oxford Drive on the west in Shorewood Hills, and on the paved path that passes through the woods from the Temin Lakeshore Path to the intersection of Lake Mendota Drive and Eagle Heights Drive (aka "the paved cut-off in Bill's Woods"). Bicycle users in the boundaries of the Eagle Heights and University Houses Gardens and the F.H. King Student Farm are strongly encouraged to dismount and walk their bikes or park them at the available bike racks. No bicycle traffic is permitted elsewhere in the Preserve, whether on paved roads, smaller trails, or in off-road areas.

The change from a shared-use path on Picnic Point to a pedestrians-only path was enacted to protect the safety of all people using the path and to protect the significant cultural and natural resources of the area.

In 2005, what was then the Campus Natural Areas Committee deliberated and collected public input on a recommendation to ban bicycle use on Picnic Point. At that time, the committee voted to continue to allow bicycle use on the main Picnic Point path, but with recommendations for regulating bicycles on Picnic Point including: adding "no biking" signs to all important entry points to identify forbidden areas and announce penalties; increased efforts to influence bicycle behavior on the Picnic Point path so as to discourage friction between bicyclists and other users; implementing a formal speed limit of 5mph or less for bicycles on the Picnic Point path and erecting signs to announce it.

Admittedly the Preserve did not have the resources and staff to strictly enforce the 2005 regulations and continually educate new Preserve users of those regulations. However, it was the opinion of the committee at the time, that the general goal of encouraging respectful interaction between bicyclists and pedestrians on the Picnic Point path and of reminding bicyclists that they are not permitted on the majority of Preserve trails was met.



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However, those efforts did not resolve the bicyclist-pedestrian conflict issues as was evidenced by continued appeals to the Preserve Committee to consider a bike ban on the Picnic Point path. A widely publicized March 2011 public listening session, and emails from people unable to attend the meeting, garnered more support for prohibiting bike riding on Picnic Point than in support of the status quo.

The Preserve Committee vote to prohibit bicycle riding on the Picnic Point path was unanimous.

The 2010-2011 Preserve Committee discussions focused on the fact that Madison and the surrounding area has seen an increase in bike paths available outside of the Preserve even since 2005, the desired Preserve visitor experience, and the best long-term stewardship of the natural and cultural resources meant to be protected by the Preserve.



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