

Benton MacKaye Trail Association

Guidelines for Bringing Your Dog on a “Dog Friendly” BMTA Hike

Note: Dogs are great company and fine hikers, and can contribute to a great hiking experience. However, dogs are allowed only on those BMTA hikes that are specifically designated as “dog friendly.”

If you are considering bringing your dog on a “dog friendly” BMTA hike, you must notify the Hike Leader in advance, and agree to abide by these guidelines:

1. Dogs must have a current rabies vaccination tag attached to their collars.
2. Well-behaved dogs only. Dogs that have ever behaved at all aggressively toward people or other dogs must be left at home.
3. Dogs must be kept on a 6’ or shorter leash at all times. Retractable leashes are not acceptable.
4. You may not bring more than one dog on a hike. You must keep your dog under your control at all times.
5. You must maintain an appropriate distance between your dog and other dogs and people until and unless another person invites you to allow your dog to approach.
6. Do not allow your dog to jump on other people—most people, even dog lovers, do not like that.
7. While hiking, keep an appropriate distance between your dog and the hiker in front of you at all times. No one wants a dog bumping their heels or licking their legs.
8. Maintain distance between your dog and other dogs and people during rest and meal breaks—no one wants your dog in their food.
9. Bring adequate water for you and your dog and have a bowl for your dog.
10. Bring something to pick up any dog poop should your dog leave any in the trail.
11. Drive your dog in your own car unless you have made arrangements with another driver.
12. Each dog owner must ensure that his or her dog is physically fit for the hike. Just as with people, dogs must be experienced hikers if they are going to enjoy a BMTA hike. Hiking in the mountains is more challenging than walking on roads or sidewalks. This must not be your dog’s first hike of this length and difficulty.

Dog owners who do not comply with these guidelines will not be allowed to bring their dogs on future “dog friendly” BMTA hikes.

If you have any questions about these guidelines or your dog’s participation in a “dog friendly” BMTA hike, please contact Ken Cissna, BMTA Hiking Director, in advance of the hike (kcissna@usf.edu or 706-636-1741).