



Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	2-3-40
CHAPTER 2	Signing
SECTION 3	Warning
SUBJECT 40	Trail Crossing Signs

A. Purpose

This policy provides guidance on the use of Trail Crossing signs where emphasis is needed to alert motorists of recreational vehicles crossing highways. In order for a trail crossing to be signed under this policy, the trail itself must be federal, state, or locally authorized and open to the public.

Trail Crossing signs covered under this policy include the following signs:

- Snowmobile Crossing Sign (W11-6 sign)
- Bicycle Crossing Sign (W11-1 sign)
- Equestrian Crossing Sign (W11-7 sign)
- Bridle Path Sign (W11-56 sign)
- Trail Crossing, symbol message Sign (W11-15 sign)*
- Trail Crossing, word message Sign (W11-15a sign)**

*The Trail Crossing symbol message sign (W11-15 sign) is normally used to sign trails that have predominantly pedestrian and bicycle usage.

**The Trail Crossing word message sign (W11-15a sign) is normally used to sign trails that have other groups using the trail in addition or besides pedestrian and bicycle usage.

B. Definitions

Freeways are defined as divided arterial highway facilities that have full controlled access, by means of grade separations at interchanges only.

Expressways are defined as divided arterial highway facilities that have partial control of access and generally with grade separations at major intersections.

C. Policy

1. Trail Crossing signs are not permitted on freeways.
2. Trail Crossing signs **shall** be installed for all 65 mph expressway trail crossings, whether there is a sight restriction or not. This only applies to non-intersection crossings on 65 mph expressways (see Item 4 below).
3. Trail Crossing signs *may* be placed on all other highways provided there is deficient sight distance per Section 2C.46 of the Wisconsin Supplement to the 2009 MUTCD. Sections 2C-49 and 50 of the Wisconsin Supplement to the 2009 MUTCD, also gives additional criteria when Trail Crossing Signs *may* be desirable.
4. Trail crossing signs *may* also be used to alert motorists to unexpected entries of recreational vehicles, pedestrians or bicyclists into the roadway.
5. Trail crossing signs *should* only be used for non-intersection crossings. There *may* be extreme cases where there is a demonstrated crash history or site problems at intersections that would warrant Trail Crossing signs in addition to the cross road or side road warning signing.
6. STOP signs (18" x 18") are required on the recreational trail per the Wisconsin DNR Trails handbook and they are required per the [2009 MUTCD](#) for any shared-use path where bicyclists are required to stop. The trail owner **shall** install the STOP signs on the recreational trail prior to the installation of the trail crossing warning signs on the roadway.
7. Because the trail STOP signs are in the STH right-of-way, the Region **shall** issue a permit, in form of a letter, to the trail owner for the placement of the STOP signs on the trail. The permit *should* make it clear that the trail owner is responsible for the initial installation and long-term maintenance of the signs.