

Cottonwood Ranch Rules and Regulations

Feb. 16. 2025

Welcome to Cottonwood Ranch! We love our Ranch (parcels 9041 and 9042 Highway 101), especially its privacy, its undeveloped areas, its views and wildlife. Most horses love it here and we hope you will too. The following rules are designed to help keep things safe and enjoyable for all our boarders, guests and the people and animals that live here.

In the rules that follow, if special authorization is required, such authorization can be given by Chris Wrather, Charlotte Wrather or Wendy Wergeles.

1. **Noise:** Absent an emergency, please don't create noise such as honking horns, loud talking or shouting, playing music without headphones, etc.
2. **Vehicles**
 - a. Speed limit 20 mph (less on unpaved roads)
 - b. No texting or other distractions while driving
 - c. The paved road has areas of single lane size, which can make it hard, especially for horse trailers and large vehicles, to pass by each other when moving in opposite directions. When one vehicle has to pull off an edge, progressive damage to the road edge is a concern. Please avoid crossing a downslope edge of the road (where the paved edge is above ground and might crumble or break off); crossing over a level or upslope edge of the road is better. If there appears no way to pull over an edge that looks reasonably safe for the pavement, and if safe to do, please have one vehicle back up to a wider or more level area.
 - d. Keep gate codes private! If you need to give the gate code to a third party guest or service, use the daytime-only code whenever possible. The 24/7 code may be given to those providing emergency services.
 - e. Avoid frequent driving around the 9041 "metal barn", especially with trailers, due to the long term effects on the road-base surfacing around and under the barn.
 - f. Vehicle and trailer parking locations may be restricted. Limit parking in front of the barns to 5 minutes. Consult Wendy regarding acceptable trailer parking locations.
3. **Hunting and firearms:** Hunting is prohibited. No firearms on the Ranch unless specifically authorized.
4. **Smoking:** Prohibited on the Ranch.

5. **Alcohol and drug use:** All use of alcohol or drugs that creates any inebriation or increases any risks to you, to others, to the facilities or to animals is prohibited.
6. **Ranch personal items:** Several barns contain stored personal items such as furniture and boxes of paperwork or books. In addition, there are freezers that contain food belonging to Chris and Charlotte, often stockpiled for our dogs. Please do not use or move such items and do not open the freezers.
7. **Toilets:** Flush nothing other than toilet paper and your body's excretions down the toilets. The Ranch has a number of private septic systems that can't tolerate other things.
8. **Trail riding:**
 - a. Trail riding is not permitted between 8:30 and 10:30AM because this is the time Chris and Charlotte might have their dogs out on the trails.
 - b. No riding on the paved road. No riding on the property east of the paved road ("9041 property") except around the barn and the dressage arena.
 - c. Some trails and locations away from the barn and training areas may be unsafe for riding. To comply with these Rules and Regulations, you must read the "Other important Information" that follows the Rules and Regulations.
9. **Access to horses in the irrigated pastures:** Due to safety concerns for both horses and people, if you would like to visit or remove your horse from an irrigated pasture that is shared with other horses, please contact Wendy with one day's notice. She will arrange to have your horse available to you in the pasture's "catch pen."
10. **Arenas after significant rain:**
 - a. Main jumping arena: You may use the arena after rain, but please avoid standing water puddles.
 - b. Dressage arena: The dressage arena has a clay base. During and for two or three days after a rain, please stay off the dressage arena to allow it to dry and not cause damage to it. Please check with Wendy or one of the men before using it.
11. **Guests:** Bringing more than 2 guests to the Ranch at the same time requires prior authorization. ALL guests must sign the Release, Waiver and Indemnification form prior to entering the Ranch. Any minor guest requires a parent or guardian to sign the Release. It is your responsibility to make sure your guests sign the Release, or that the parent or guardian signs it for a minor. Authorization is also required before a guest can ride a horse on the Ranch. The Release form can be found on the Ranch website at the bottom of this page:
<https://www.cottonwoodhorse.com/rates>
12. **After Dark Riding:** Authorization is required before riding after dark.
13. **Dogs:** The following applies to dogs brought onto the Ranch by boarders or guests

- a. Dogs must be inside a vehicle or leashed under the direct control of an adult at all times.
 - b. Tying up or tethering a dog outside a vehicle is prohibited.
 - c. Dogs must remain in a vehicle between 8:30 and 10:30AM if temperatures permit.
14. **Paddock 1:** If your horse lives in “Paddock 1” on 9041 (closest to the Sutter Home property just north of the Ranch), it will often be necessary to go through the gate across the paved driveway in order to get to the main gate to the paddock. This gate must be closed each time you go through and never left open, even just for getting a horse and coming back through within a few minutes. Access to Sutter Home could be fatal for any of our dogs, for several reasons.
15. **Trainers:** The Stable will NOT provide horse training services to the Owner. The Owner shall not permit their horse to be trained or worked at the Ranch by any trainer without prior authorization. All trainers must provide the Ranch with a certificate of liability insurance naming Cottonwood Ranch and Christopher and Charlotte Wrather as additional insureds. Boarders shall not engage any employee or contractor of the Ranch in a training capacity without the prior authorization.
16. **Additional Important Information:** Read the Other Important Information which follows the Rules and Regulations.
17. **Questions:** Contact us if you have any questions or concerns:

Wendy Wergeles 805-714-7181, wergeles@earthlink.net

Chris chris.wrather@cottonwoodhorse.com

Charlotte cgmwrather@gmail.com

Other Important Information

1. **Trail Riding:** Some trails and locations away from the barn and training areas may be unsafe for riding. They include ditches that may be hard to see, the mowed paths next to fence lines, steep inclines and cliffs. Wild animals may suddenly appear that could spook horses. They also dig holes (usually small) to hide in, good to notice the holes and decide whether the horse needs to avoid stepping near them.
2. **Dogs that Live on the Ranch:** Chris, Charlotte, Wendy and resident/employee Jose all have dogs whose lifestyle includes access at times to open areas of the Ranch, especially 9042 (the portion of the Ranch west of the paved road) which has all the accessible riding trails. This lifestyle helps keep them happy and content. Dogs do pose inherent risks to riders and horses, therefore we want to explain how they can be expected to act. Please read the following and ask questions if needed.

The dogs include sighthounds (salukis and greyhounds) genetically programmed to chase prey that run away. Like most dogs, most of them are territorial and won't accept strangers right away. We only let them out of their fenced areas when we go with them, and often the dogs wear tracking/training collars since they're often out of our sight. If the dogs chase a squirrel or other wild animal the dogs can surprise or spook a horse. Horses are not their classic prey, but the dogs may approach a horse out of curiosity, and will chase a horse running away from them. This is why we require riders to avoid the trail riding areas where the sighthounds have their group outings during certain hours.

If you see a loose dog, the best advice is to stop and turn your horse toward the dog so the horse sees the dog. It's best to stand still (riding or not) until you see that the hounds are focused elsewhere or are ignoring you and your horse. With the hounds in those positions, it's still best not to ride away very quickly (could entice the dogs).

Most of the salukis don't want strangers to try to befriend them (especially to try to touch or pat them), so if they're around it's best not to approach them, and not to turn your back on them if they are focused on you. We never let any dog loose unless we are out with them (or looking for them if they disappeared into the wild hills). And they'll probably ignore you – but please do call us or Jose if you see a loose dog. After taking them out, we never stop looking for them until they're back in our 9041 fences. If any dog escapes through our 9041 fences or even the fences around 9042, we may not know, so please contact us if you notice a dog where you think it shouldn't be.

As stated above, morning hours of 8:30 to 10:30 are when the Wrather's dogs from 9041 cross over to 9042 for their outing. If driving on the road, go extra slowly and watch for them, especially between the first sand road (which turns off left between dry and irrigated pastures, towards the employee housing and hay/equipment barn) and the gated driveway up 9041. Every now and then they see a squirrel and barrel down or up the road. Although we make every effort to have the dogs back from their outing on 9042 by 10:30AM, occasionally a dog will remain on 9042 after 10:30AM, so please beware of this possibility when riding.

Wendy's dog ("Ange") is a cross-bred cattle herding type. Initially, Ange thought she should try to herd horses, and Wendy has taught her not to do that. Wendy confirms that Ange is loose only when Wendy is there to supervise her, the one exception is that Ange occasionally gets to trail ride with one of our boarders (who knows her well). Wendy has accepted all responsibility for keeping Ange from herding or creating risks greater than the inherent risks of a dog, and is cheerfully willing to introduce Ange if desired, and advise riders on how to command her. Wendy will respond to calls or email if there's a need to confine Ange at a particular time (a day's notice is needed).