

MINNESOTA IRON RANGE RETRIEVER CLUB GROUNDS USE GUIDELINES

One of the main benefits enjoyed by members of the MIRRC is that they have access to properties owned and/or leased by the club. Since several training groups may be using the grounds simultaneously, we need to respect the activities of other club members. The following information is intended as a guide to responsible use of club grounds.

RULES FOR RESPONSIBLE GROUND USE

- 1. KEEP THE GATES TO MIRRC PROPERTIES LOCKED.** Lock the gate when you depart the property, even if you intend to come back after a while. The gates should be kept open when training, especially if you are expecting someone who does not have a key. This could include the garbage collector, someone dropping off birds, a judge that is arriving early, etc. In these instances, it is important for the person responsible for this activity to leave a note on the gate with instructions to keep it unlocked. It also signals to others that training is in progress and proceed slowly and with caution.
- 2. STAY ON ESTABLISHED ROADWAYS.** During the spring or following a hard rain, the grounds can become very soft. Do not drive off established roadways since this will leave ruts and may result in your vehicle becoming stuck. When you park, stay as close to a roadway as possible and avoid wet areas. If you leave any ruts, you should repair them. For this reason, it is a good idea to carry along a small shovel. Once these ruts dry out they can become a problem for the equipment used to mow the properties, not to mention dangerous for running dogs. Later in the summer, when the grounds firm up, you should be able to drive across fields.
- 3. PICK UP AFTER YOURSELF AND OTHERS.** This includes all trash, food, and empty shotgun shells. If you use surveyor's tape to mark blinds and/or marks, pick it up when you are done training. Don't leave tape tied to bushes or overhanging branches even if you intend to come back the next day. If you see tape left by someone else, put it in your pocket. Never leave dead birds in the field. Pay careful attention to the number of birds that you take into the field and be sure that you take the same number out. Training birds should NOT be disposed of on any part of the club grounds (including garbage dumpsters).
- 4. HAVE RESPECT FOR OTHER TRAINERS AND THEIR DOGS.** If you arrive at a particular training site and see that it is occupied, you have three options: 1) ask if it would be alright to join them or if you would be interfering with them if you worked on another part of the field, 2) wait for them to finish, 3) find another place to train. Option 1 may or may not make sense, depending on who the people are and what they are doing. You should not

expect them to change what they are doing to accommodate you. You may find, however, that they are doing something that interests you. In this case, you should feel free to walk up and to talk to them, as long as you don't interfere with the working dog. If you're not interested in what they are doing, you can ask how long they think that they will be training. Often fifteen minutes of patience will get you access to the site that you want. **Communication** is key here!

5. TRAINING WITH LIVE BIRDS REQUIRES SPECIAL CONSIDERATION. Gun safety is of paramount importance. In addition, it is important to consider where the shotgun shell pellets may land. Live flyers should never be flighted in the direction of any nearby paved roads or dwellings. Planted birds (for flushing or pointing dogs) should be located well away from roadways, both for gun safety as well as the safety of the dogs. The use of live birds also requires consideration of the animals. Treat training birds with respect. Dispatch any cripples as soon as possible by humane methods. The MIRRC prohibits, on its grounds, shooting of firearms by anyone under the influence of alcohol. Anyone working at a field trial or hunting test needs to refrain from using alcohol until the last dog has run.

6. ALL TRAINING MUST CEASE 24 HOURS PRIOR TO ANY FIELD TRIAL OR HUNTING TEST. This applies to all club members even if they have no connection to the event (as a worker, participants, etc.). There are at least three reasons for this. First, this is required by the AKC rules and procedures. Whenever we host one of these events, we act as an extension of the AKC and must abide by their rules. Second, judges generally spend the day before each trial or test touring the grounds and setting up tests. They need to be able to do this free of distractions. Third, training the day before the test may leave scented areas that will confuse dogs running the event.

7. PRESERVE AND PROTECT CLUB PROPERTY. People who are not club members do not belong on club property. Report all questionable activities to the Board of Directors or a club officer. Provide descriptions (license plate, type of ATV or dog, etc.) if you can. Confrontations are not encouraged. If appropriate, however, you may suggest that trespassers join the club if they want to continue to use the property (provided that it is a condoned use).

8. WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED TRAINING, LEAVE THE FIELD. When you are done with your training session, leave the field so others may train there. We have a great lounge at the club house for socializing and discussion.

9. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING POLICY. Members may only train professionally on Tuesdays and all such training must be completed by 4 p.m. A member using a field on Tuesday to professionally train has priority as long as they arrive on the field before 9 a.m. After 9 a.m. all club grounds become first-come, first served. The complete pro policy can be read in the club's bylaws.