



Orienteering and the right of public access

The Swedish Orienteering Federation Policy regarding the right of public access and the access to land and terrain.



Control flags for Trail Orienteering.

Preface

This Policy is an expression of the responsibility for the right of public access which the Swedish Orienteering Federation wants to take to ensure the orienteering society's future access to land. The decision on the first revision of the Policy was taken in June 2012 and the decision for this revised Policy was taken in December 2015.

Orienteering and the right of public access

Orienteering comprises Foot Orienteering, Ski Orienteering, Mountainbike Orienteering and Trail Orienteering. The sport of orienteering has created good conditions to ensure the access to use of land on a long term basis. Training events and competitions have been adjusted to reduce conflicts with landowners, hunters and others pursuing outdoor activities, nearby residents and wildlife, and also to minimise the effect on land and vegetation.

To ensure the continued good reputation, credibility and understanding of orienteering, it is of great importance that the Swedish Orienteering Federation (SOFT) proves that it cares for the terrain that is used. Leaders as well as competitors must have good knowledge of the right of public access and of the regulations concerning orienteering. All orienteers must be considerate and gentle towards the environment, towards the landowners and towards hunters and others pursuing outdoor activities.

Orienteering also allows more people to access nature and is thereby an important factor to public health. People who spend time in the terrain, who see how forestry is practiced and who take part in the process from felling to plantation, clearing and thinning to the next felling, can fully understand the terms of forestry. People who are accustomed to making their way through trackless terrain have an obvious value to the society. Orienteers also become aware of the value of nature in itself, which may be of great importance to continued conservational work.

Now when a new generation of landowners, hunters and government officers take over, it is important that the good relations of orienteering are ensured.

SOFT decided in 2012 to produce a document called "Orienteering and the right of public access" and this Policy has now been revised.

The aim is to strengthen the view on orienteering in the eyes of politicians, authorities, associations

and the community. Both competitors and organisers have the responsibility to make sure that the good reputation of orienteering is preserved.

This Policy consists of three parts. The first concerns the overall approach of the entire orienteering sport towards the right of public access and the right to use land and terrain, the second is advisory to organisers concerning the planning and realizing of training and competition, and the third is advisory to the orienteers on how they should apply the right of public access.

The original document was written by Gunnar Zettersten, and was reviewed by the land committee (marknätverket) within SOFT. It was translated into English by Anette Önerud, with reviews from Gustav Fredriksson, Leif Strömquist and Sarah-Jane Gaffney. In the event of any discrepancy between the two versions, the original Swedish version will preside. The Swedish Outdoor Association (Svenskt Friluftsliv) and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket) contributed financially to the work with the first revision of the policy concerning orienteering and the right of public access.

This revision has been made under the direction of Eje Andersson and Gustav Fredriksson. The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket), the Swedish Outdoor Association (Svenskt Friluftsliv), the Swedish Association for Hunting and Wildlife Management (Svenska Jägareförbundet) and the foundation Håll Sverige Rent have submitted comments on the text. The board of the Swedish Orienteering Federation is responsible for its final form.

The board of SOFT has decided to publish this document as their policy, and to distribute it to the orienteering movement in Sweden and internationally.

1 The approach of the orienteering movement towards admission to land and the right of public access

Orienteering under the terms of nature and society

The basic view of SOFT is that orienteering is an activity under the terms of nature and society. Competitions and trainings should be planned and executed with respect to the environment, landowners, hunters and others pursuing outdoor activities, so that everyone can see orienteering as a positive activity and a sustainable use of the nature.

For a long time SOFT has been working on the adaptation of the sport to match the terms of nature through designing the events (respecting wildlife, key habitats etc.). The SOFT guidance: "Land and wildlife" (Mark och vilt) contains advice and regulations for the relations between orienteers and landowners and hunters.

The orienteering movement takes on responsibility by suiting its activities to avoid negative effect on the environment, or a negative view from landowners, hunters and people in general.

The world around us is changing and the sport of orienteering is adapting

The government established an outdoor policy in the proposition 2009/10:238 "Outdoor life of the future". Among other things it states that nature should be accessible for everyone, that the right of public access must be protected, that the responsibility of the municipalities for the urban nature is great and that physical activity and relaxation strengthens public health.

Outdoor life thereby reaches over several areas of politics. The public health aspects and the participation of outdoor life in preventive health care are central. That is why the government supports different kinds of organisations, such as the Swedish Orienteering Federation.

In 2014, the government took initiative to work on a national forest program for Sweden. Parallel to this, work is under way to revise the standards for the two forest certification systems FSC and PEFC. Overall, the social values of the forest, where outdoor recreation is becoming more significant, is increasingly in focus.

The woodlands are changing through forestry, which affect the conditions for orienteering. Large areas which are harvested make the terrain less attractive to orienteering for a significant amount of time.

The area of protected nature is increasing. Natura 2000 areas, key biotopes and nature reserves demand special care and consideration. Many nature reserves have set up regulations with restrictions for orienteering – sometimes prohibition. Exemption from the prohibition can often be granted but requires extra consultation.

As of today, over 80% of the population lives in urban areas. For the past few years, an increased amount of forest and agricultural property has been purchased by city living people some of them having limited experience of the nature and the enjoyment of nature. A large share of those pursuing outdoor activities today come from cities and can be unused to spending time in the nature and applying the right of public access.

The experience of nature was previously the most important and now outdoor activities are increasingly central to many. Nature is more of an arena.

A society based on knowledge and information is taking place and values and habits are changing, e.g. the view on ownership, the importance of the environment and the care for flora and fauna.

All of these changes are affecting the possibilities for orienteering in the future. The orienteering movement must therefore adapt to the development of society and increase its commitment and responsibility on environmental issues to be able to conduct its activities in a reliable way. It is important to continuously increase the level of knowledge and commitment within members and leaders, and to strengthen the view on orienteering in the eyes of authorities, politicians, associations and people in general.

SOFT is behind the international recommendations concerning the environment

SOFT supports the International Orienteering Federation's recommendations to:

- maintain an environment-friendly character of orienteering events
- be aware of the importance of preserving a good environment
- respect nature and protect the flora and fauna
- cooperate with landowners, authorities and environmental organisations
- keep nature free of unnatural waste
- take action to avoid pollution
- include environmental knowledge in education and training of orienteers and leaders.

Orienteering is "Organised, non-profit outdoor life"

Orienteering is an organised non-profit and no commercial use of the right of public access. SOFT considers delimitation between commercial and non-commercial use of the right of public access as something that should not be done. A revision in the extent of the right concerning commercial use could lead to bureaucratic trouble and difficult decisions.



Orienteering map with a course and a free zone for wildlife.

The right of public access must continue as a customary law

Orienteering is conducted within the limitation of the right of public access in the same way as most other outdoor activities. The basic rule for the right to public access is to not disturb or destroy.

The questions concerning commercialization of the right to public access have resulted in a few debaters suggesting limitations of the current right. Even if orienteering takes place within the right of public access, landowners and hunters could still perceive the presence of those pursuing outdoor activities as disturbing.

SOFT is keen to make sure that the right of public access maintains a customary law and that it will not be subject to legislation. SOFT, as a member of Svenskt Friluftsliv, supports the publication of "Svenskt Friluftsliv's approach to the right of public access" which was adopted at the 2015 Annual General Meeting of Svenskt Friluftsliv.

The laws and rules that exist today are enough to handle the application of the right of public access. Through applying the right in a way that fulfills the motto: To not disturb or destroy, there will be no reason to legislate.

Lack of knowledge of the right is however a threat to its existence. The orienteering movement cares for the right of public access.

The objective is to make sure that orienteering continues, without further legislation or interference from the authorities, to have free access to nature for its activities.

SOFT educates and informs about the right of public access

The right of public access applies to those who travel by foot, skis, bike or horse. The right is for the individual but can be practiced in group. Regardless of how it is applied, there is still a matter of not to harm or cause inconvenience. The right of public access can be limited by decisions from the authorities, for instance concerning reserves.

A wide campaign is taking place within SOFT to raise the knowledge of the right of public access and to develop the dialogue between stakeholders affected by orienteering.

The Environmental Code and the advice from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency lead the way

The Environmental Code is the legislation that regulates how orienteering should relate to nature and environment. The Environmental Code states that each and every one who uses the right of public access or is in any way residing in nature must be considerate and careful in their encounter with it. The general rules of consideration in the Environmental Code make limitations and demand care on those who use nature for organized activities. The requirement applies to any activity or action that could cause harm or inconvenience to human health or environment.

The Environmental Code prescription in chapter 12, §6, refers to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency's general advice for consultation (NFS 2001:15) and to the Swedish Environmental

Protection Agency's general advice 96:4 Orienteering and other outdoor events and to regulation 1998:301 on the practitioners own self monitoring. These are the most important rules for the orienteering movement to follow.

The County Administrative Boards can also order compulsory reporting on activities that may harm sensitive environment. No such area has yet been appointed for orienteering in the country. This has been interpreted as a sign that the regulation authorities are satisfied with the way that the orienteering movement follows the advice from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and that orienteering in general is not something that needs particular reporting.

Within national parks there is a prohibition and within nature reserves there is often a restriction towards orienteering events. However it is possible to apply for exemption with the authority concerned.

Consultation with landowners, tenants, hunters and others

To ensure sufficient consideration the orienteering movement has voluntarily imposed on itself to precede activities with consultation of parties concerned. The agreement made by SOFT has been largely built in to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency's "General advice for orienteering and other outdoor activities" with for instance "spring date-stop" and instructions for the periods adjacent to the "spring date-stop" when special considerations should be taken.

SOFT has noted that a well functional cooperation has been designed over the years and planned event have been executed in consensus with parties concerned. SOFT recommends that organisers continue to follow the praxis developed to achieve good relations with landowners, hunters, outdoor organisations, authorities and people in general.

The National Land Survey has records of property with up to date information on all property in Sweden.

Start and finishing areas require landowner permission

Orienteering training and orienteering competition take place within the limitations of the right of public access and do not require any formal permission from the landowner. The landowner's permission is on the other hand required for areas with more intensive use of land and for facilities such as start, finish, secretariat, toilets, showers, shops, audience, parking, etc. Usually most of these facilities are gathered within the competition arena, while other like start and parking are separate. The size of the event and the conditions are decisive to the details concerning these intensely used areas.

Permanent control flags require permission of the landowner.



Protect nature within urban areas

Today there is only slightly more than one percent of the forest (approximately 300 000 ha) that can be considered located within urban areas. The share decreases every year, mostly because of new roads and houses. The reduction of areas and the fragmentation of urban forests lead to an increased value for the remaining forests being subject for outdoor life.

Since the number of people living in cities and urban areas is growing, this leads to more pressure on the urban forests. Nature within urban areas will in the future be of greater importance than it is today for the possibilities to practice orienteering, especially for "Naturpasset", Trail Orienteering and Mountainbike Orienteering.

That is why SOFT wants the urban forests to be primarily used for recreational purposes. This can be achieved for a significant part of the urban forests since about 60 percent of them are owned by the municipalities.

Competitions within urban areas normally require permission from the police, municipalities and concerned landowners.



Helena Jansson, one of Sweden's best orienteers, running the relay at WOC2015.

Policy and rules – The nature- and environmental program must be followed

SOFT has designed a program to increase the knowledge and commitment on land, wildlife and environmental issues within the orienteering movement.

All competitors and leaders within the orienteering movement should

- follow the right of public access, environmental laws and regulations concerning orienteering
- increase members' and employees' knowledge of environmental issues in orienteering to reach an environmental thinking that runs through all parts of the sport
- household with the natural resources and reuse and recycle material as much as possible
- minimise pollution to land, air and water
- take greatest possible care of nature, flora and fauna when planning all events
- work continuously with improvements of the environmental work to decrease the negative effect on nature.

SOFT encourages the organisers to

- at all events follow the rules and policies of SOFT and thereby take greatest possible care of the flora

and fauna through for instance choice of terrain, course setting to avoid interfering with wildlife, driving animal off the areas and protecting sensitive biotopes

- consult according to instructions assigned by SOFT with county administration, landowners and other people concerned
- assure the quality of each event through good self monitoring to the Environmental Code
- continuously educate their members in conducting the activities according to the right to public access and the Environmental Code.

The behavior of the orienteers is crucial

For orienteering to continue to enjoy the confidence of the landowners, authorities and people in general, it is crucial that every orienteer behaves in a considerate way in their contact with nature and others pursuing outdoor activities. The competition rules of the sport must be followed and care and consideration should be the foundation of how each and everybody acts in nature. It is of particular importance that there is no littering.

The orienteers represent not only themselves but the entire orienteering movement. Everybody has a responsibility to maintain the good reputation of orienteering.





2 Responsibilities of the organiser

The right to public access and the Environmental Code (EC) leads the way for orienteering

Orienteering in terrain is possible thanks to the right of public access. Anyone who organises a larger activity is considered an activity practitioner according to the Environmental Code (1998:808). That means that the so called general rules of consideration (chapter 2) must be followed, e.g. getting the necessary knowledge, take action to protect and be careful not to damage or cause trouble and choosing a suitable location for the activity to reduce the risk of damage and trouble. The organiser is always responsible and if damage is caused the organiser might have to pay. If damage is incurred the organiser should, in consultation with the landowner, remediate immediately.

A. General advice

Obtain knowledge of the right on public access and the Environmental Code

In the general advice of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (96:4) "Orienteering and other outdoor activities" it is stated that the one who organises an activity on someone else's property is obliged to acquire knowledge of the right of public access.

SOFT has continuously worked with raising the level of knowledge of the right of public access. The different committees that have worked with this over the years – the land committee (markgrupp) and land network (marknätverk) – have guarded the right of public access and made sure that it is included in the rules for competitions. SOFT requires all organisers to be familiar with and practice the laws and rules that circumscribes the opportunities for orienteering, mainly the right of public access and the Environmental Code. The one who organises a ski orienteering event using snowmobiles must also have good knowledge of the Offroading Act, according to SOFT's instructions.

Within the orienteering movement work is done to inform the leaders and participants of the right to public access and the responsibilities that come with it. Consideration and care are key words for the organisers and the sport's practitioners. It is essential at an orienteering event that the landowner is not inflicted harm or damage and that domestic peace is not disturbed.

Consultation with landowners, tenants, hunters and others

To ensure sufficient consideration the orienteering movement has voluntarily committed to precede the activities with consultation with primarily landowners and gamekeepers. SOFT recommends organisers to follow the praxis developed to ensure that landowners and gamekeepers see orienteering as a positive activity and as a sustainable use of nature.

Consultation with landowners, gamekeepers and other

interested parties must precede mapping, including revision of existing map and before events. All events must be preceded with some kind of consultation. The extent of the event is vital to how the consultation should be. The purpose of the consultation is to inform about the planned activity and to find consensus for possible problems. The consultation can encompass a longer time period, e.g. one year, and include several small events, e.g. training courses.

The consultation usually concerns the matter of free zones (forbidden areas for the orienteers), that the course planner should take land and wildlife in to consideration (planning passages and running directions), driving off wildlife in the morning of the event, reporting wildlife and cooperation in case of wildlife accident during the event. Driving off wildlife is not made without the gamekeeper's approval. Accidents involving wildlife should be reported to the police.

Consultation and good communication with landowners in areas used for training and competitions contributes to the reputation and conditions for orienteering. It is important to manage the events allowing the orienteers to be welcomed back!

Consultation with the County Administrative Board

The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has in general advice to Chapter 12 §6 in the Environmental Act stated that competitions, organised outdoor life and camp events concerning nature and events that are either very large, disturbing or concerning sensitive nature must be reported for consultation.

SOFT has for a long time had the agreement with the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency about consultation with and information to the County Administrative Board prior to mapping and organising events. The procedure has resulted in orienteering events being carried through in consensus with the authorities. These consultations are normally made by the County Administrative Board and the Orienteering District in due time before the upcoming event year.

SOFT recommends organisers to continue these consultation agreements with the County Administrative Board and municipalities according to the directions from SOFT in order for the events to be run according to the terms of society.

Active work with SOFT's Nature and Environmental Program

The program is designed to constantly improve the environmental work and to reduce the negative impact on nature. A check list has been compiled to support the clubs in working with nature and environmental issues. The list covers the following areas: policy, the right of public access, education, information, external contacts, logistics, events and facilities.

SOFT recommends that the club activities are

adapted to the environment according to the program from SOFT and in agreement with the members.

Assure the quality of the environmental impact through good self-monitoring

Those who run a business or activity covered by the Environmental Code should monitor their own activities. The purpose with self-monitoring is to prevent damage to people's health and to the environment. Those who run a business or activity must be familiar with the health and environmental risks with the activity.

The organiser should, without any authority requesting so, find out what legal demands, other judicial requirements, decisions or decrees are in force and to keep this knowledge up to date and accessible.

Self-monitoring is thus a preventive work where the organiser should plan and be in control of the activity to reduce impact on health and environment. Self-monitoring contains four parts: to plan, execute, follow up and to continuously improve the self-monitoring.

SOFT recommends that the organiser, through careful self-monitoring, follows the environmental effect of the activity to comply with the law, reduce environmental effect and to ensure that the regulations of orienteering are followed.

B. Specific advice

Planning with concern for the nature

SOFT takes part in adapting the sport of orienteering to the terms of nature through choice of area, spring date limits, course planning in passages, free zones for wildlife, driving off animal, control flag placements and protection of sensitive biotopes.

The amount of protected nature is increasing. Natura 2000 areas, key biotopes and nature reserves demand special consideration. The right of public access applies in reserves but can be limited through regulations in Chapter 7, §30 in the Environmental Code.

Thanks to the organisers following the advice from SOFT, most of the events have been held without damage to nature or disturbance to landowner interests.

SOFT recommends that all organisers carefully follow the competition regulations and the check lists in the Nature and Environmental Program. Information on key biotopes can be obtained from the Swedish Forest Agency website. How the rules for nature reserves affects orienteering is made clear by the mapping tool "Skyddad natur" on the website of the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency.

Choosing a suitable area for the activities

Restrictions could be necessary for the nature not to be damaged. The extent of the restrictions are depending on for instance when the event is held, how many participants are expected, for how long it will continue and what kind of terrain it is.



Ski orienteering where the orienteer decides the best route choice among the tracks marked on the map.

Acquiring permission for start and finishing areas

Orienteering training and competitions normally take place within the limitations of the right of public access and do not require permission from landowners. Permission is however required for areas with more extensive use of land and for facilities such as start, finish, enquiries, toilets, showers, shops, audience, parking, etc. Usually all of these arrangements are placed within the arena, while others, like start or parking, are arranged in separate areas. The size of the event and other conditions determines the extent of these arrangements. For permanent placement of control flags, for instance at Naturpasset”, a special permit from the landowner is required. The landowner can be invited to an inspection after the event with the wish of the organiser of a declaration of acceptance.

Permanent control flags require permission of the landowner.

Competitions in urban areas normally require permission from the police, the municipality and relevant landowners.

Roads

To reach the arena and the parking the usage of private roads may be needed. Permission is applied with the road owner, which may be a local association or individual landowners. Government grants can determine whether compensation should be paid by the organiser.

Arrange parking in concert with the landowner and the County Administrative Board

The amount of cars at an orienteering event can be rather large. SOFT advises the organisers to always acquire permission for parking from the landowners, possible tenant farmer and from the

County Administrative Board. Exemption from the Offroading Act (1975:1313) and (1978:594) may be required.

Follow the division of regions and the date limits

As a protection for wildlife during the most sensitive part of the growth cycle, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has, after an agreement with SOFT, determined a spring date period, for when orienteering activities should not be organised, in their “General advice for orienteering and other outdoor events”.

SOFT encourages the organisers to continuously follow the regulations. By experience from completed events and by local consultations exemption from the date limits can be acceptable.

Creating free zones for wildlife

The main purpose of free zones is to create a collection area during the competition for the wildlife, mainly for deer and wild boar. The gamekeepers and the organisers should agree to the extent of the free zones to minimize the negative effect on wildlife

Removal of moose

A way to minimize the risk of accidents involving moose within the competition area is to chase the moose out of the area in the morning of the competition day. The knowledge of the gamekeeper should be used and the removal of wildlife should be done by consulting the gamekeeper. Removal of wildlife cannot be made without the gamekeeper’s permission.

Roads close by the competition area may involve moose accidents.



Cecilia Thomasson, mountainbike orienteer, on her way towards new medals.

Choosing control placements with great care for nature

The basis of orienteering is that the orienteer visits a number of places, marked on the map; controls. A control is marked in the terrain by a control flag placed on a temporary stand.

SOFT's opinion is that control flags can be placed without permission from the landowners, since they cannot cause any significant inconvenience of damage. The condition is however that it is removed directly after the event. Otherwise it is considered as littering and is punishable by law.

Please observe that permanent placement of control flags, for instance at "Naturpasset", requires permission from the landowner. Take care to remove any trestles used and to clean up the area around the control after the event to ensure that there is no littering left.

SOFT and the Swedish Forest Agency have together produced the document Key Biotopes and Orienteering (Nyckelbiotoper och Orientering), in which there is knowledge of where the sensitive areas are located. Examples of areas sensitive to tramping, where the risk for damage is great are: historical sites, steep terrain, rock face areas, deciduous forest groves, areas with many fallen trees and close to game feed locations.

Care in forest plantations

SOFT recommends that controls are not placed within recently planted areas and that courses are planned to reduce the amount of runners passing through new plantations. It is often appropriate to

mark a recently planted area as forbidden (an out-of-bounds area). Always consult with the landowner.

Agricultural land and pasture are marked on the map

Orienteers cannot always determine what is cultivated land with growing crops. It is therefore important to mark all such areas, including areas with clover and hay, on the maps as forbidden area.

The border zone between cultivated land and for instance a ditch or a fence is normally also a forbidden area. The reason for this is the risk of "financial damage". Always consult with the landowner.

Do not cut or saw living trees

It is forbidden to cut or saw living trees without the landowner's permission. Please observe that this also applies to shrubbery. Nails must never be used in living trees. The reason for this is the risk of "financial damage".

Avoid plastic tape and take care to clean up after the event

Plastic tape or stripes should be avoided since they can interfere with the pulp and paper production if accidentally left behind. A continuously drawn stripe is a good way to make sure that no runner accidentally passes through a free zone for wildlife. The marks are setup against the running direction. The organiser should make sure that all tape, signs and other tags are removed after the event.

Special regulations for Ski Orienteering, Trail Orienteering and Mountainbike Orienteering

Several of the rules and approaches concerning FootO are suitable for said forms of orienteering. However there are some special considerations and permits that are required in addition to the general regulations.

The right to bike or ski goes almost as far as the right to walk. One is naturally not entitled to bike or ski over private property or where you risk damage to forest plantation or other sensitive land. The risk for damage is of course greater when several people take the same route. Permission for competition on a road is applied with the County Administrative Board, if public roads are used for the competition

Ski Orienteering (SkiO)

The right of public access gives right to travel by ski on somebody else's land without asking for permission. The tracks for SkiO are often made by snowmobile, and organisers must therefore have good knowledge of the Offroading Act.

Trail Orienteering (TrailO)

Organisers of TrailO events are obliged to follow the same rules as FootO. The organiser must therefore have the landowner's permission for the event centre, start and other areas where people will gather. Permission is required even if the event is held in parks or urban areas owned by the council.

If clearing in the control areas is necessary, permission is also required. TrailO that takes place in urban areas is required to inform the public in general in order to avoid conflicts.

Mountainbike Orienteering (MTBO)

Terrain areas with jogging tracks, illuminated tracks and walking trails in urban areas are well suited for MTBO, but since these are designed for pedestrians or runners, the bikers must give way for those who run or walk. Local municipalities may also establish regulations for different activities on the tracks.

Similar to FootO consultation with landowners and authorities also applies for MTBO in order to ensure that the event causes least possible damage to flora and fauna. Note that the risk for damage on the ground is larger for MTBO than FootO event. The organiser must mark forbidden or dangerous areas, forbidden roads as well as compulsory routes and passages on the map.

Driving snowmobile

Driving a snowmobile is not included in the right

of public access according to the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. Permission from the landowner is always required for snowmobiling. Those who intend to drive in the terrain are responsible for making sure no damage is done while driving on forest or agricultural land. It is forbidden to drive across agricultural land, if it is obvious that it cannot be done without risking damage to the land. It could also be forbidden to drive snowmobile in other areas, with regard to other outdoor life, reindeer herding, wildlife or nature care. The County Administrative Board or the municipality can issue such prohibitions.

Snowmobiling on bare ground is forbidden. Driving is forbidden in plantations and young forests. Plantations and young forests must not be damaged. It is, with some reservations, allowed to drive on snow covered ground with motor vehicles. If the snow layer is loose or thin enough for the vehicle to come in to contact with the ground, it is regarded as driving on bare ground. The trees must be at least two metres above the snow surface to allow snowmobiling according the Offroading Act.

The age limit for driving snowmobile is 16 years in Sweden. Please observe that the driver is required to have either driver's license, tractor license or other permission for driving depending on which age group the driver belongs to.

Do not drive snowmobile on unplowed forest roads!

The forest roads are primarily built for transport of wood and are usually private roads. Driving snowmobile on unplowed forest roads causes problems to forestry.

The roads must be plowed in order for the trucks to be able to drive on them, and the hard frozen tracks from the snowmobiles provide obstacles for plowing. That is why permission is required from the owners if such roads are to be used. It is the responsibility of the driver to find out the regulations for the private road.

Nature reserves and urban areas require special consultation

Within some nature reserves and within most urban areas, snowmobile traffic is banned or regulated to special tracks. Contact the municipality to obtain local regulations. Concerned County Administrative Board or municipality can inform about nature reserves where traffic is regulated.



3 Responsibilities of the orienteer

SOFT has always expressed the importance of every orienteer behaving in a judiciously good way in the contact with nature, that the orienteer is a guest of nature and must always carefully follow the right of public access.

Special information brochures have been developed and distributed, and courses on interpreting the right of public access have been held. SOFT has particularly stressed that the orienteer should behave in a responsible manner and show care and consideration towards the environment with plants and wildlife and towards the landowner.

A good relationship with the society creates opportunities for future access to land for training and events.

The individual orienteer represents the orienteering movement

The orienteers represent not only themselves but the entire sport. A responsible behavior leads to positive effects for the orienteering movement. Being able to practice orienteering requires a well-functioning cooperation with primarily landowners and hunters. Everyone has a responsibility to main-

tain a good reputation for orienteering.

When orienteering takes place according to the rules and regulations that applies, it contributes to a future where the sport can continue to have free access to the nature without further regulations or other interference from the authorities.

The right of public access must be followed

The right of public access gives everyone the possibility to move freely in the nature if they show care and consideration towards nature and wildlife, landowners and other human beings.

Thanks to the right of public access orienteering can be conducted when it is possible without risking damage or disturbance. Not to disturb or destroy are the key words for behavior of the orienteers in the nature.

Training requires great discretion

Individual training without help from an organiser must be practiced avoiding sensitive land and not disturbing the privacy of the home. Such areas are considered as forbidden.

Some rules for the orienteer

Follow the regulations on the competition map

Forbidden areas are marked on the map. Always follow the route directed by the organiser with plastic tape, e.g. between parking and arena or to the start.

Private property is an area of privacy

Residents have the right to feel undisturbed in their own homes. During orienteering the runner must not walk or run across private property.

Agricultural land and border zones

Agricultural land recently sowed, with growing crops that are not yet harvested, must not be entered. The border zones between agricultural land and ditch/fence/stone wall etc can normally not be used.

Grazing domestic animals

Be careful when passing pastures with grazing domestic animals. Grazing domestic animals are easily frightened and can in some situations be dangerous. Of course fences must not be damaged.

Free zones for wildlife

The main purpose of free zones is to create areas where wildlife can stay during the time of the event. Respect the free zones and also try to avoid disturbing wildlife that may occur in other parts of the competition area.

Fences and stone walls

Be careful when passing fences, stone walls and ditches to avoid damage. In the competition rules it is stated that it is forbidden to climb on fences and stone walls.

Gates

Gates can be opened for passage but must always be closed directly afterwards so that no cattle can escape or other inconvenience can be caused.

Littering

Orienteers never leave any waste behind!





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