

## **Bicycle Issues on North Carolina Roads**

Some of the issues that I have observed on North Carolina roads are listed below. I'm sure others will have additional issues that can be discussed. This list is a starting point to get the conversation started.

Use of our state roads by anyone is a privilege granted by law, not a right granted by the Constitution. Bicycle riders are the only users of our roads that are allowed to use them for recreational use.

I have divided these issues under two main subjects: safety and nuisance.

### **Safety:**

- Require full reflective front & rear shirts or vests. Already required on military bases.
- Require constant shining front & rear lights with visibility similar to those required by motorcycles. No riding during low light or night time unless with the above lights. Reflectors or blinking lights are inadequate. These are difficult to see during low light conditions and impossible to see when on-coming traffic has their lights on.
- Ban "recumbent" or reclining bicycles. These have no lights or reflectors and are only about three feet high including the rider.
- Require bicycles to be in "Bicycle lanes" if provided. This is mostly an urban issue. Require more of these lanes in urban areas.
- No bicycles on state roads with a speed limit at any point over 45 MPH. Maryland law prohibits bicycles in travel lanes with road speeds over 50 MPH.
- Require identification to include medical information. This is vital if there is an accident and the rider is unconscious.

### **Nuisance:**

- Limit numbers of riders in groups to ease passing by motorists. On most two-lane roads bicycles back up traffic, especially on hilly or curvy roads. Motorists have the expectation of driving close to the speed limit. This cannot be done behind bicycles.
- Require bicycles to pull over at a safe location (driveway, wide shoulder, etc.) to allow traffic to pass when more than "\_\_\_\_" vehicles stack up.
- Ban bicycle road races on rural two-lane roads. Races close the roads to those that live or work along the route for several hours. You are required to either stay at home or leave early and stay late. Where I live in southern Wake County, there have already been three road races that have closed the same roads in 2015. Even on Sunday mornings, this disrupts going to church, prevented my wife from getting to the church where she was the pianist and any other legal use of the roads [reference GS 20-171.2 (b)]. If races are allowed, no more than one race on any road per year and confine them to routes along four-lane roads with the bicyclists using the right lane and the shoulder. Have someone (NCDOT) precede the bicyclists and place orange cones between right and left lanes and have someone pick up the cones immediately after the last bicycle has passed (the race group can pay for this). Traffic can still move in the left lane.