West Sound Cycle Club is adopting the "Ride SMART" safety tips used by Cascade Bike Club.

- **We recommend all new riders review the beginner riding tips.**
- **We will review relevant Ride SMART principles before each ride.**

Five Beginner Riding Tips

1. Keep your body loose. Your weight should be mostly back on your seat and your arms should be relaxed. If you find yourself with a lot of tension in your arms, adjust so that your core is holding you up instead.
2. Give a big starting push. To start your bike, position one pedal in the 2 o'clock position- just over the height of its rotation toward the front wheel. Give this pedal a full push with all your bodyweight to get moving before placing your other foot on the opposite pedal.
3. Stop with both brakes. The front brake accounts for about 70% of your braking power. When you're stopping, gently pull on both your front and back brakes until you stop.
4. Scan behind you. This takes a little practice, but before you ever turn or change lanes you should be scanning behind you. This means to glance behind you to make sure there are no upcoming vehicles or bicyclists before you turn, just like you would if you were operating a vehicle.
5. Signal your intentions. Hand signals are a vital communication tool, and you should use them as much as possible to show those around you where you are going. Remember though, as you are beginning it is more important to feel safe with your hands on your brakes than it is to signal. Signaling is great, but never mandatory. If you are uncertain about what hand signals to use, please ask your ride leader.

Ride SMART

Stay Alert

- Momentary inattention is the number one cause of incidents.
- Watch for vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians and hazards (e.g. curbs, potholes, railroad tracks, glass, debris)
- Do not wear earbuds or use phones while riding.

Maintain Space

- Move off the road or trail when stopped.
- Leave enough room in front of you to avoid other riders, vehicles and hazards.
- Ride at least four feet from parked cars, outside the door zone.

Act Safely and Predictably

- Wear a properly fitted helmet.
- Ride in a straight line.
- Stay right, pass left.
- See and be seen.
- Be courteous and a good bike ambassador.

Respect the Rules of the Road

- Obey all traffic laws.
- Bicycles are allowed to treat stop signs as yields if no other vehicles or pedestrians are present.
- Use hand signals when turning or stopping -- if it is safe to do so. Show everyone around you what you are going to do before you do it.
- Single file is safer. Bicyclists have the legal right to ride two abreast and to take the full lane when necessary to give adequate space to ride safely. In most cases, riding single file is safer.
- Yield to pedestrians. They have the right of way.

Think Ahead and Talk

- Scan ahead and anticipate what others will do.
- Tell others what you are going to do by saying: "Stopping", "Slowing", "Passing on your left". Announce "Broken" when the group becomes separated.
- Call out hazards such as: "Glass", "Sand", "Post". Use your outside voice.
- Do not yell "Clear" at intersections. Everyone should check for themselves.
- Cross railroad tracks at a right angle whenever possible. Warn other riders and plan your approach to ensure safe crossing.