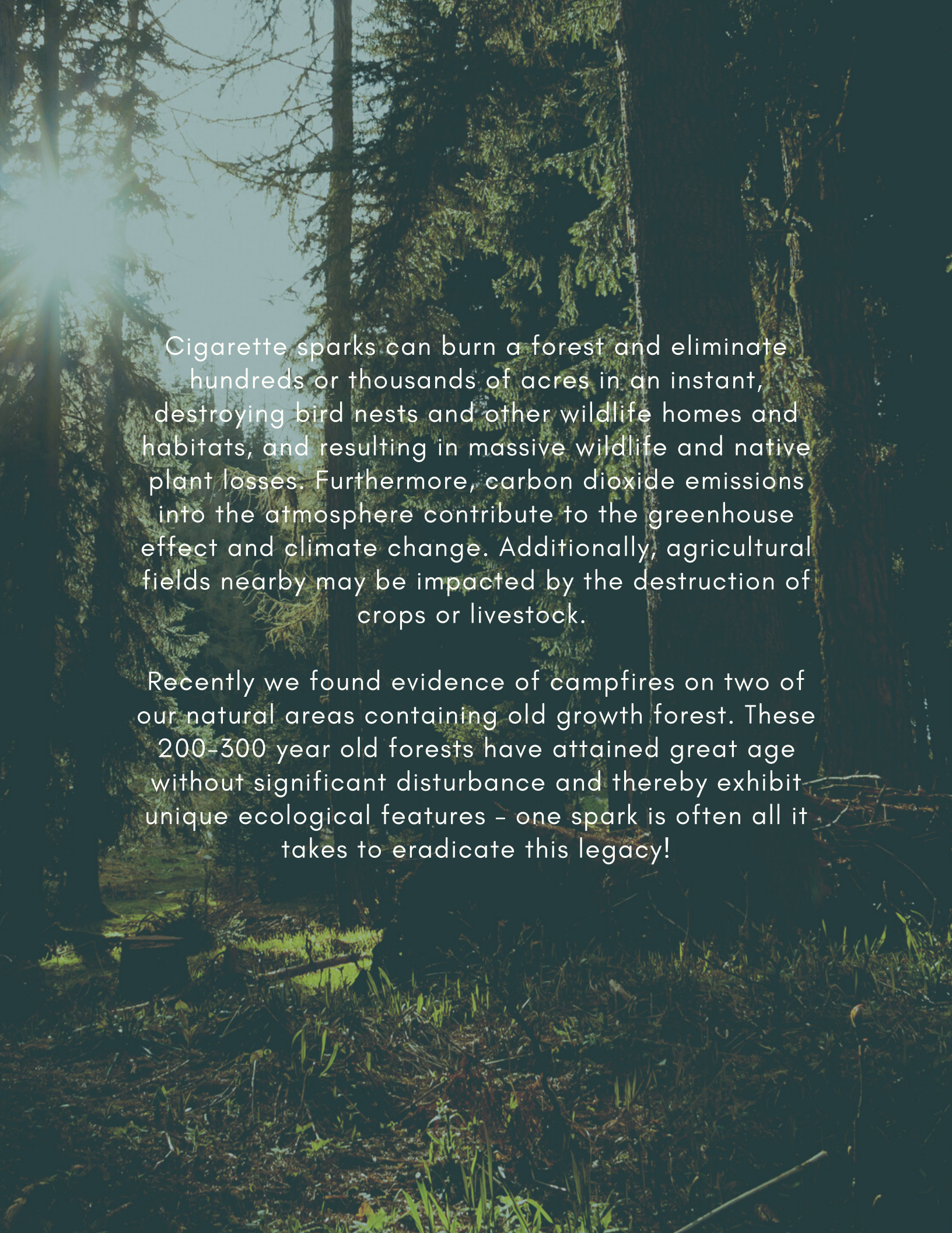




TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# ONE

# BE MINDFUL OF POTENTIAL SPARKS



A photograph of a dense forest of tall evergreen trees. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a bright glow on the left side of the image. The ground is covered in forest floor debris and some green plants are visible in the foreground.

Cigarette sparks can burn a forest and eliminate hundreds or thousands of acres in an instant, destroying bird nests and other wildlife homes and habitats, and resulting in massive wildlife and native plant losses. Furthermore, carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere contribute to the greenhouse effect and climate change. Additionally, agricultural fields nearby may be impacted by the destruction of crops or livestock.

Recently we found evidence of campfires on two of our natural areas containing old growth forest. These 200-300 year old forests have attained great age without significant disturbance and thereby exhibit unique ecological features – one spark is often all it takes to eradicate this legacy!





Be mindful and use safe practices when going through a natural area – campfires are illegal in our natural areas, and please dispose of cigarette butts properly.





TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# TWO

**KEEP PETS  
ON-LEASH  
&  
CLEAN UP  
AFTER  
THEM**

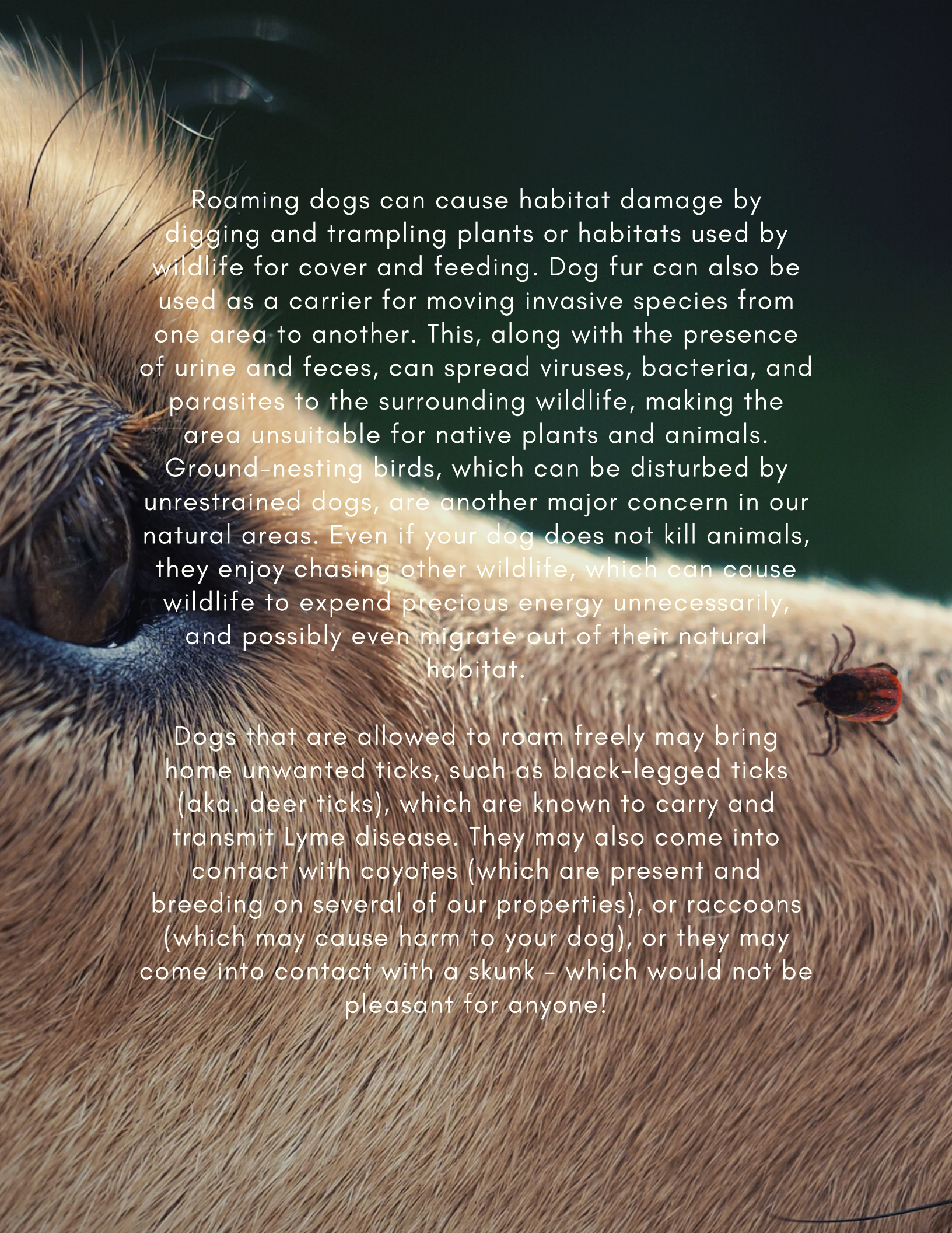




We have many dog lovers here at INT, and we understand that nothing beats seeing your dog happy and excited while roaming free in nature. However, it is critical that you keep your dog on a leash when exploring our natural areas due to the dangers and impacts it may have on both your beloved pet AND the ecological integrity of the area. High prey drive, curiosity, and the impulse to chase things around are all traits that most dogs have, and those behaviors can be very detrimental to them and to all of our stewardship work.





A close-up photograph of a dog's head, showing its brown fur and dark eye. A red and black tick is visible on the dog's fur on the right side of the image. The background is dark and out of focus.

Roaming dogs can cause habitat damage by digging and trampling plants or habitats used by wildlife for cover and feeding. Dog fur can also be used as a carrier for moving invasive species from one area to another. This, along with the presence of urine and feces, can spread viruses, bacteria, and parasites to the surrounding wildlife, making the area unsuitable for native plants and animals. Ground-nesting birds, which can be disturbed by unrestrained dogs, are another major concern in our natural areas. Even if your dog does not kill animals, they enjoy chasing other wildlife, which can cause wildlife to expend precious energy unnecessarily, and possibly even migrate out of their natural habitat.

Dogs that are allowed to roam freely may bring home unwanted ticks, such as black-legged ticks (aka. deer ticks), which are known to carry and transmit Lyme disease. They may also come into contact with coyotes (which are present and breeding on several of our properties), or raccoons (which may cause harm to your dog), or they may come into contact with a skunk – which would not be pleasant for anyone!



When you're out exploring a natural area, also keep in mind that you might not be the only one there. There may be people who are not comfortable around dogs, or who could be knocked over by your free-roaming pet. It's also essential that you pick up and pack out your pets' solid waste – don't just leave it on the trail, especially if it's already tied up in a doggie bag!

Despite popular belief, these bags DO NOT biodegrade in regular outdoor conditions. When left on the trail, they just add more unnecessary plastic to the ecosystem. When not bagged and not taken out, dog feces makes the trails smell bad, and other people risk stepping in it.

Please exercise caution and be responsible with your pet when visiting our natural areas, for the sake of your dog, the wildlife, and everyone else enjoying the outdoors.



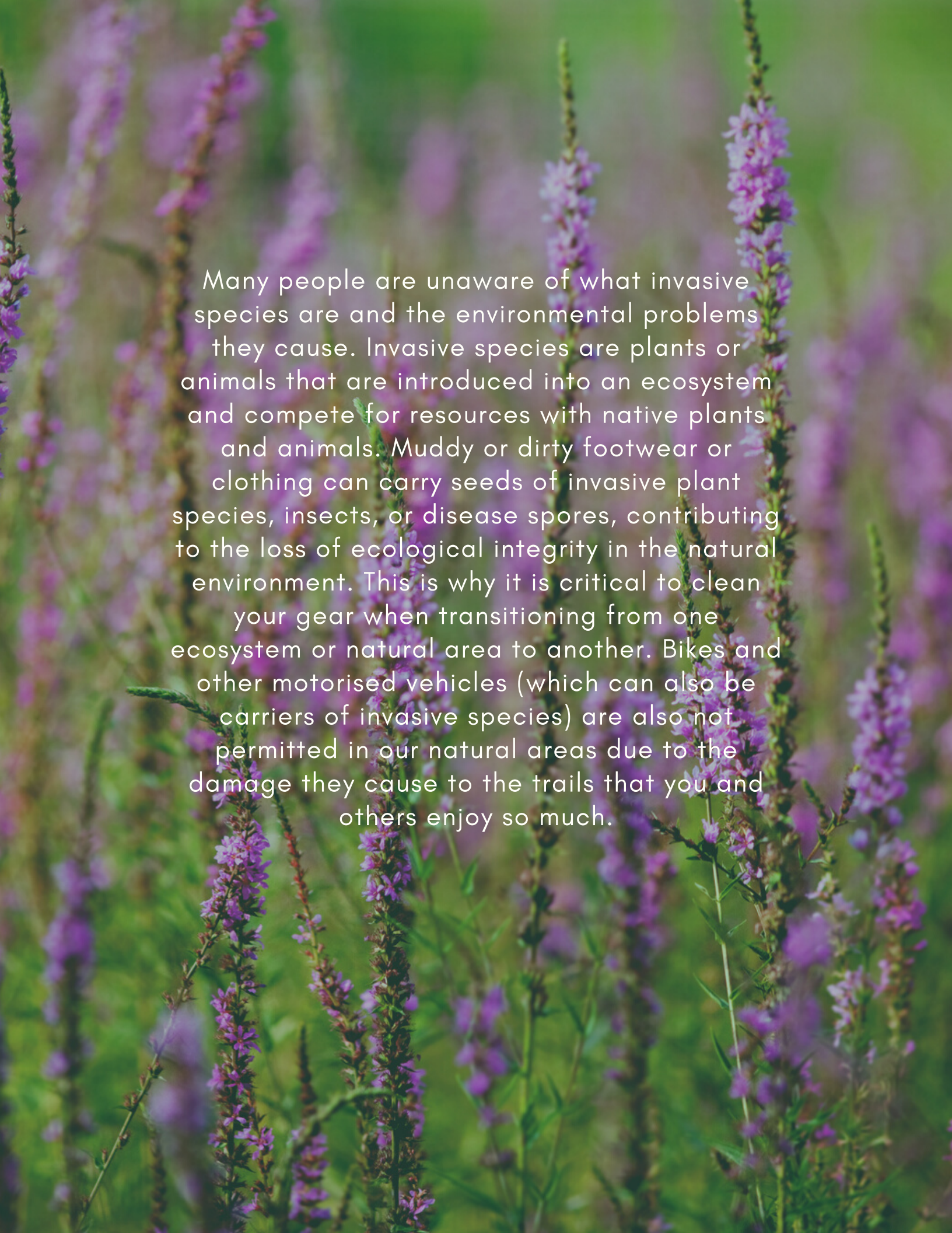




TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# THREE

**USE  
CLEAN  
GEAR**



The background of the image is a soft-focus field of tall, purple flowering plants, likely Salvia (Sage), with green foliage visible at the base and between the stems. The text is centered over this background.

Many people are unaware of what invasive species are and the environmental problems they cause. Invasive species are plants or animals that are introduced into an ecosystem and compete for resources with native plants and animals. Muddy or dirty footwear or clothing can carry seeds of invasive plant species, insects, or disease spores, contributing to the loss of ecological integrity in the natural environment. This is why it is critical to clean your gear when transitioning from one ecosystem or natural area to another. Bikes and other motorised vehicles (which can also be carriers of invasive species) are also not permitted in our natural areas due to the damage they cause to the trails that you and others enjoy so much.




A woman with grey hair, wearing a red shirt and a grey bucket hat, is looking through black binoculars. She is standing in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the background, there are green bushes with small red berries. The text "TRAIL CODE OF CARE" is written in white, uppercase letters, and "# FOUR" is written in white, uppercase letters with a horizontal line underneath it.

TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# FOUR

**GIVE  
WILDLIFE  
SPACE**



A red fox is shown in profile, standing on a large, weathered log. The fox has orange-brown fur with white underparts and a white muzzle. Its eyes are a light brown color. The background is a dense forest with green foliage, slightly out of focus. The lighting is soft, suggesting a shaded forest environment.

Wildlife is at risk if a particular species becomes accustomed to humans, particularly when it begins to associate humans with easily accessible food. Most species do not have the energy to deal with people in their territory when they're raising children or preparing for a long and arduous migration. Furthermore, getting too close can cause them to panic and stampede, injuring themselves or others in the process. Some can become aggressive if you block their escape route or get too close to their young. Even if they appear to be cute, they can move very quickly and may have a very nasty bite.

Please keep your distance and refrain from feeding our native wildlife when visiting a natural area.






TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# FIVE

# RESPECT DESIGNATED QUIET AREAS



A woman wearing a straw hat and glasses is smiling while looking at her smartphone. She is outdoors in a wooded area with trees in the background. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

People go to trails to enjoy nature, and wildlife use natural areas to carry out their lives away from human disturbance. Please be mindful of your volume when you use the trails, especially in designated quiet areas. Hiking is a great way for many people to get some alone time. While it is useful to have a phone with you in case of an emergency, playing loud music while hiking can be distracting and disruptive to wildlife and to other hikers. We recommend carrying a fully-charged phone with you at all times, but please keep it on silent mode and use it to take some great photos that you can look back on later.



A photograph of a person wearing a bright yellow jacket and a red and blue backpack, standing in a forest. The ground is covered with dry leaves, twigs, and some green ivy. A large, dark, fallen log lies across the middle of the frame. In the background, there are many thin tree trunks and some sunlight filtering through the canopy. The overall tone is natural and somewhat somber due to the presence of trash.

TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# SIX

**TAKE ONLY  
PHOTOS  
LEAVE ONLY  
FOOTPRINTS**



The background image shows a close-up of a forest floor. In the foreground, there is a thick carpet of vibrant green moss. Scattered across the moss are several dry, brown leaves, some of which are partially covered by a crumpled, clear plastic bag. The lighting is soft and natural, highlighting the textures of the moss and leaves. The overall scene suggests a natural environment where human waste (the plastic bag) is out of place.

Natural material in the natural area contributes to the ecosystem; everything in the natural area serves as habitat or food for something. Reducing our impact is extremely important, especially as more people choose to hike in our natural areas. Some of our natural areas are becoming increasingly crowded, resulting in large groups, garbage, and environmental damage.

We believe that everyone has the right to enjoy nature, but in order for future generations to enjoy the same pleasures, we must all do our part to protect what we have now. The only souvenirs you should take from the trail are the stories you tell your friends and the photos you can enjoy later. Only your footprints should be left on the trail - no garbage, pet waste, or cut wood should be left as a reminder of your visit.

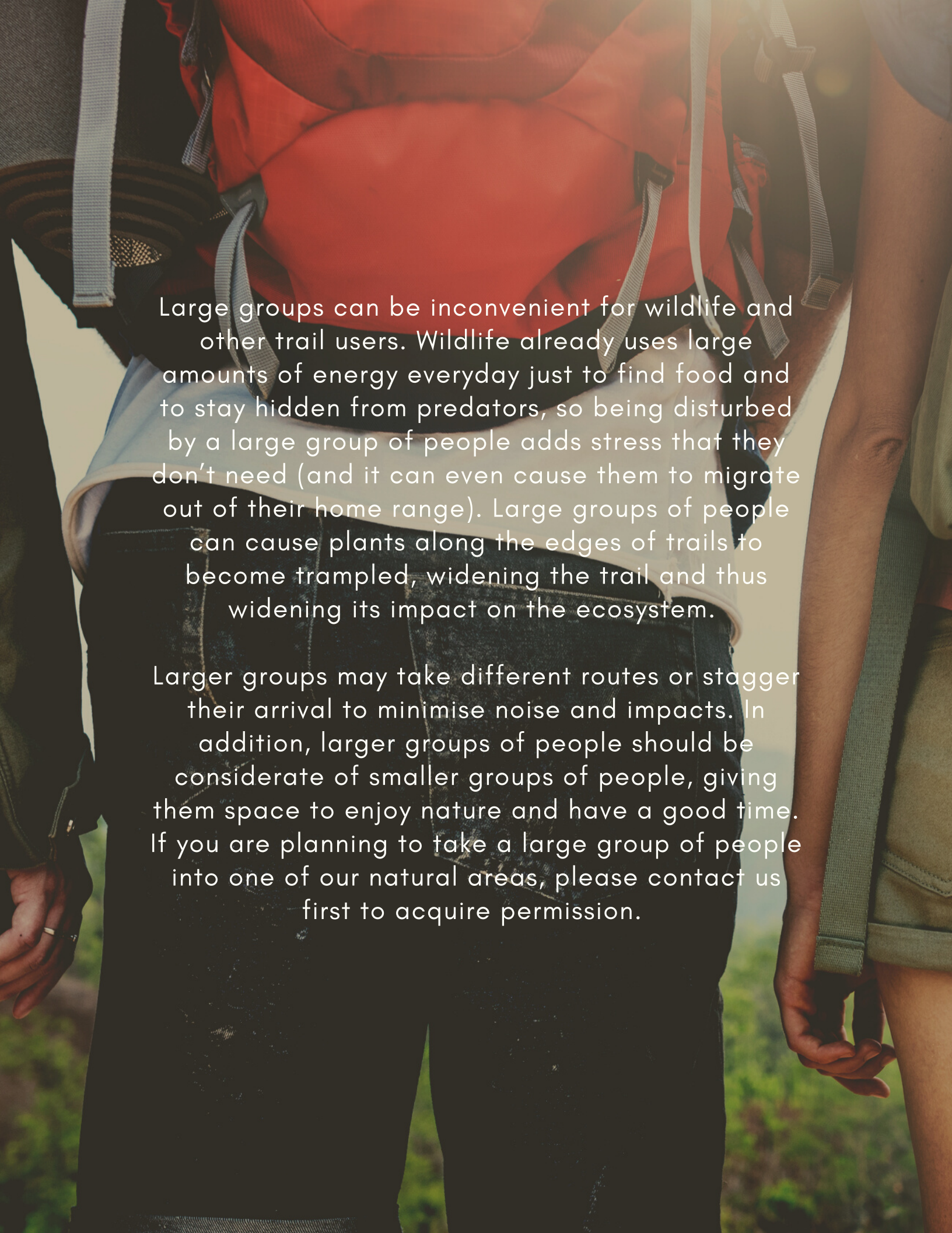


A photograph of three hikers on a trail. In the foreground, a young woman with long blonde hair, wearing a red and blue plaid shirt and denim shorts, is seen from the side, looking towards the left. She has a black backpack on. In the background, two other hikers are visible: a man in a plaid shirt and a woman with blonde hair, both also wearing backpacks. The background is a sun-dappled forest with green foliage.

TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# SEVEN

**LIMIT GROUP  
SIZE TO  
12**





Large groups can be inconvenient for wildlife and other trail users. Wildlife already uses large amounts of energy everyday just to find food and to stay hidden from predators, so being disturbed by a large group of people adds stress that they don't need (and it can even cause them to migrate out of their home range). Large groups of people can cause plants along the edges of trails to become trampled, widening the trail and thus widening its impact on the ecosystem.

Larger groups may take different routes or stagger their arrival to minimise noise and impacts. In addition, larger groups of people should be considerate of smaller groups of people, giving them space to enjoy nature and have a good time. If you are planning to take a large group of people into one of our natural areas, please contact us first to acquire permission.

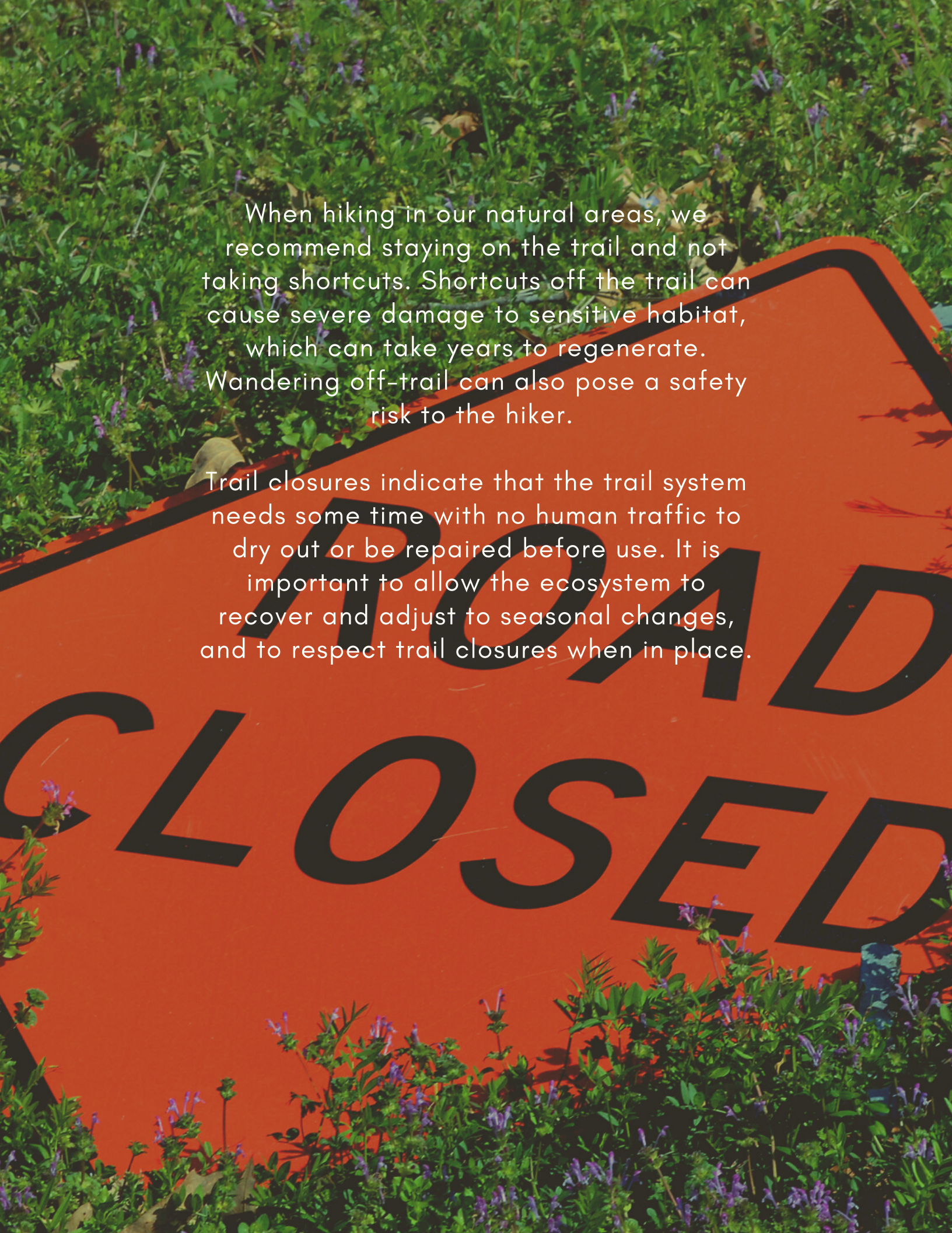


A photograph of two hikers from behind, walking on a dirt trail through a forest. The hiker on the left is wearing a grey knit beanie with a pom-pom and a large brown backpack. The hiker on the right is wearing a red knit beanie and a white patterned sweater. The background is a dense forest of evergreen trees.

TRAIL CODE OF CARE  
# EIGHT

**STAY ON  
THE TRAIL  
&  
RESPECT  
CLOSURES**



A red, diamond-shaped sign with the words "ROAD" and "CLOSED" in large, black, sans-serif capital letters. The sign is positioned diagonally across the frame, with the top-left corner pointing towards the upper left. The background is a lush field of green plants with small purple flowers. The sign is partially obscured by the vegetation at the top and bottom edges.

When hiking in our natural areas, we recommend staying on the trail and not taking shortcuts. Shortcuts off the trail can cause severe damage to sensitive habitat, which can take years to regenerate. Wandering off-trail can also pose a safety risk to the hiker.

Trail closures indicate that the trail system needs some time with no human traffic to dry out or be repaired before use. It is important to allow the ecosystem to recover and adjust to seasonal changes, and to respect trail closures when in place.