



LEADING TRIPS

**Trips Committee
November 2012**

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for volunteering to lead for the Trails Club. Have fun leading! You are continuing a tradition that stretches back almost 100 years. This handbook is designed to help you plan trips and has suggestions for a safe and successful activity. You are free to lead any variety of trips you choose including family friendly, dog friendly or membership qualifying trips. A membership trip is at least 4 miles long and includes a visit to one or our lodges during a scheduled lodge event. Membership trips encourage new people to become club members and are always welcome on our schedule.

As a trip leader you will be working with members of the Trips Committee to plan your trip. This committee, along with the Trips Trustee, works on recruiting new leaders, scheduling trips, and planning training events. These people are the ones who keep club trips happening!

Contact the Trips Trustee if you are interested in helping on the committee in addition to being a trip leader. This commitment could be as easy as helping with a few phone calls.

TRIP LEADER POLICIES

- Leaders must be members of the club. A guest can co-lead a club trip with an experienced member.
- All trips must be approved by the appropriate Coordinator before the information is submitted for publication.
- Outings are to be approved by the Board through the Outings Chair and the Trips Trustee.
- Leaders are encouraged to have current certification in First Aid and CPR. The club will provide this training.
- Leaders are not required to pay the trip fee.
- For safety, a trip should have a minimum of three persons. This is particularly recommended for winter and wilderness trips.

PLANNING A TRIP

Wednesday Morning or Evening Hike leaders

Sign up with the right coordinator or the Trips Trustee for the day(s) you wish to lead. Come to Wallace Park on your chosen day. Skip to the **TRIP PACKET** section on page 4.

Other trip leaders

1. Choose your trip location and type of trip.

There are many great books and websites books that can help you plan. On our club website, www.trailsclub.org, you will find some basic information on hikes in our area. Your Coordinator along with our Trips Trustee can also help you research your trip, including the right time of year to lead it.

Classification of a trip – A, B, or C

Determining the classification of a trip is based on the distance, the elevation and the condition of the route. Good equipment for the specific activity is required for all events.

Hikes

- Class A is the easiest of the hikes. Shorter, less strenuous activity, typically 4 to 8 miles, no more than 1500 feet elevation gain. The trail is good.
- Class B is moderate to difficult. Hikes are usually 6 to 12 miles and there is no more than 3000 feet of elevation gain. There may be stream crossings but the trail is mostly good. Boots are recommended for B/C hikes.
- Class C hikes are strenuous. Distance is usually over 8 miles and over 3000 feet of elevation gain. There may be much elevation change with possible poor trail conditions.

Backpacks

- Backpack leaders may not be able to physically scout the route but may study maps to get needed information.

-- Class A participants may include beginning or first time backpackers. Trip of short duration, typically 2 days / 1 night or geared for beginners. Moderate elevation gain, less than 1000 feet per day. Daily mileage in single digits. Trails in generally good condition.

-- Class B participants should be strong hikers and have some backpack experience. Multi-night trips. Elevation gain of up to 2000 feet per day. Daily mileage may reach double digits. Trails may range from good to rugged condition.

-- Class C participants should be strong hikers with considerable backpack experience. Multi-night trips. Elevation gain may exceed 2000 feet per day. Daily mileage may reach double digits. Trails may range from good to rugged condition. May include off-trail or cross-country travel.

Bicycle Trips

-- Class A up to 20/25 miles without hills.

-- Class B for 20-40 miles with little hills.

-- Class C for longer and hillier rides.

Winter Sports.

Skiing and Snowshoeing activities will use roughly the same classification as hikes although a shorter trip may actually be in a more difficult class.

Leaders need to consider the conditions and judge accordingly to classify their trip.

Kayak Trips

Leaders need to consider the conditions and judge accordingly to classify their trip.

Outings

Leaders will use the classifications from the list of appropriate trips above.

Wilderness Guidelines

U.S. Forest Service regulations limit party size to 12 when a trip enters a designated wilderness area. The old method of dividing the group and staying a mile apart is no longer adequate. There is a very high fine possible for ignoring this regulation. Plan to keep your group size below 12 "beating hearts" in a wilderness area.

2. Get help and approval from the right Coordinator.

It is important to make contact with the appropriate Coordinator or Trips Trustee when planning your trip. Their names are listed in our yearly Trails Club of Oregon Directory. If you do not see a Coordinator listed for an activity you wish to lead, please contact the Trips Trustee for help and approval. Categories of coordinators may change as club interest changes over time.

-- Weekend Hike Coordinator - hikes on weekends and other days

-- Wednesday Morning Hike Coordinator

-- Wednesday Evening Hike Coordinator

-- Backpack Coordinator

-- Snowshoe Coordinator

-- Cross Country Ski Coordinator

-- Bicycle Coordinator

-- Outing Coordinator – for trips (except backpacks) lasting more than one night with any variety activities.

3. Submit notice for the Trail Blazer and web page.

Plan Ahead

-- Always allow enough time when planning a day trip to advertise it in at least one newsletter, two if it is scheduled near the first of the month.

--Outings and backpacks should be advertised at least a few months before the event and sometimes up to a year in advance. Contact the Outing and Backpack Coordinator as soon as possible.

-- For one-day trips, write the announcement of the trip and email it to blazer@trailsclub.org **well before the deadline which is the 15th of the month**. If you do not have access to email, call the Coordinator or the Trips Trustee for help getting your announcement published. Check the web site a few days before the deadline of the 15th to verify that your article has been received and processed.

Follow this format for hike, backpack, bicycle, snowshoe and skiing trip submissions.

Month – Day(s) of week - Name of activity – Class A, B or C

Description. Please limit the descriptive part of your write-up to 100 words. This also includes the round trip distance, elevation gain and your expected pace. Also include round trip driving distance and parking pass requirements such as sno-park, NW trail parking passes and other parking fees or bridge tolls if known.

Any hazards or special equipment needed such as water shoes for creek crossings. Information on pre-registration with the leader. Is there a limit on party size?

Depart: Time. Meeting place including the street address if possible.

Leader: Name. Phone and/or e-mail.

Follow this format for Outing submissions.

Information about announcement requirements for an outing is included in the Outing Policy and Procedures Handbook located on our website. The Outing Coordinator and Trips Trustee can help you with all this.

TRIP PACKETS

Trip Packet for Hikes, Bicycles, Snowshoes, Skiing, and also for Backpacks

A trip packet will be mailed to you about one week before your trip. The packet will contain: a Trip Report, Trip Log (sign in/liability sheet), club information brochures, EMERGENCY CONTACT AND MEDICAL INFORMATION cards, a MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESCUE REQUEST card and a stamped envelope for returning your reports and forms to the club. You can also print these basic forms from our website. If you do not receive a packet, contact the Trips Trustee.

Note: Information about the paperwork needed for backpacks is located on our website. The Backpack Coordinator and Trips Trustee are available to help you.

Trip Packet for Outings

Information about the paperwork needed for outings is included in the Outing Policy and Procedures Handbook. The Outing Coordinator and Trips Trustee are available to help you.

SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE THE TRIP

-- Scout the trip in advance, if possible. Know the access roads and trails. Make note of car parking areas, restrooms, condition of the route, sources of water, appropriate spots for breaks, a good lunch stop, and possible danger spots along the way.

-- Obtain any necessary permits and maps.

-- Be aware if wilderness restrictions apply.

-- Check on the weather conditions expected on the trip. Closer to the actual activity you will need to know current conditions for the roads, trails, weather, etc.

-- Maintain a level of fitness for the anticipated activity.

-- If you are unable to lead the trip, it is your responsibility to find a substitute leader or send someone to the meeting place to inform people. The Trips Trustee will help.

AT THE MEETING PLACE

-- Arrive 15 minutes early in order to assess your group.

-- Complete the top of the Trip Log and sign in on the first line. Ask everyone to sign in on the form that is being passed around.

-- Explain that trip leaders are not professional guides. Everyone on the trip has the responsibility to ensure the safety of others as well as doing what they can to make the trip fun for all.

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-- Review necessary essentials with the group and assess each individual's supply. As a leader you will need to carry these both for the safety of the group and in order to model this for others.

--All participants should carry the appropriate 10 essentials.

- Insulation - extra clothing that can be layered and wicks moisture away. Hat, gloves, sox and appropriate foot wear.
- Hydration - extra water in a non-breakable bottle. Filter or purification tablets
- Nutrition - food for the trip and extra food for emergencies such as energy bars
- Protection – insect repellent, sun block, sun glasses and wide brimmed hat even on overcast days or snowy days
- Illumination - flashlight/head lamp, extra batteries and bulb
- Emergency supplies – First Aid Kit, MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESCUE REQUEST card with a pen in a zip-lock bag, whistle and mirror for signaling
- Navigation - map and compass, know how to use these
- Fire - fire starter, matches in waterproof container or lighter
- Repair kit – knife or multi-tool, duct tape, safety pins. Toilet paper and zip-lock bag to carry our used paper is nice to have.
- Shelter - bivy sack or small Mylar space blanket, large trash bags. Insulating pad

-- Take aside any person you believe does not have the physical stamina or is not equipped for the trip's class level. Offer them a copy of BEFORE GOING WITH THE GROUP and ask them to join us another time.

-- Ask if anyone has a medical condition and discuss this privately with the person before leaving the meeting place. Assess if the individual has the necessary medication or equipment to deal with the condition; i.e. asthma inhaler, insulin and sugar, sting treatment kit, etc.

-- **Difficult situations are much less likely to occur if you do not allow unprepared persons to join the group. Once you have started the trip, you will have to deal with any problems that their lack of preparation creates.**

-- Reiterate the trip plan and the conditions that will be encountered. Let them know when you expect to return to the meeting place.

-- Provide each participant with the EMERGENCY CONTACT AND MEDICAL INFORMATION card if they do not already have one and ask that they keep the form on their person or in their backpacks with their first aid kit.

-- Be certain that every participant has signed the Trip Log. It is our liability waiver/ sign-up sheet. Persons under 18 must have the signature of a parent or guardian to participate in a trip. Remember to carry this form with you on the trip in case someone's emergency contact number is needed.

-- Collect the trip fees. Club members and persons affiliated with Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs pay \$1.00 for each day of an activity. Guests pay \$2.00 for each day. **Note: Outings and Backpacks may handle trip fees differently.**

-- Offer new people additional information about the club including the BEFORE GOING WITH THE GROUP brochure and a membership form.

-- Have everyone count off and introduce themselves.

-- Arrange car pools if needed and announce the policy of 10 to 15 cents per mile donation to drivers with a cap of 30 cents per car.

-- Count the participants and vehicles going on the trip. Be certain the drivers know how to reach the trip's starting point and have them follow you if they are uncertain. Keep track of the cars behind you. Written directions for drivers are recommended.

-- If participants have cell phones, ask that drivers and participants exchange cell phone numbers.

JUST BEFORE THE TRIP BEGINS

-- Instruct participants not to leave their keys, wallets or anything of value in the vehicles.

-- Drivers need to place parking permits in the front window

- Reiterate that nobody gets in front of the leader (without the leader's permission).
- Designate a sweep that will be at the end of the line and identify him/her for the group. The sweep should be capable and strong, not the slowest in the group. Often this is the person who ends up dealing with problems.
- Remind everyone to tell the leader or sweep if the pace is too fast, if someone has developed a hot spot, has equipment problems, needs a break, etc.
- Reiterate the trip plan and the conditions that will be encountered. Let them know when you expect to return to the meeting place.

DURING THE TRIP

- The leader is responsible for keeping the group together. Ask if the pace is comfortable and adjust it accordingly.
- Stop during the first half-hour for clothing changes, equipment adjustments, water break, rest, etc.
- Communicate periodically with your sweep and monitor each individual's condition. Watch for physical problems such as hypothermia or heat illness and be prepared to deal with them.
- Each participant should be able to see and communicate with the participant in front and behind him/her. Be certain that all pertinent information is passed along to every trip participant.
- If appropriate, divide into faster and slower groups, but be certain both group leaders and assistant leaders know the route and the entire group comes together at the lunch break and at the starting point. No one leaves the starting point until the entire group is back together.
- Trip members are expected to contribute to the quality of the trip by maintaining a good attitude, being helpful and showing concern for other party members. As the leader you can help maintain a positive atmosphere. Be careful not to make negative remarks about hikers. Be aware of communication that can be considered as sexually harassing to others. If a participant engages in this, you need to talk to them privately. Heated political debates are not uniformly enjoyed by all hikers and may ruin the trip for some.
- New participants often are not aware of low impact travel or customary etiquette for trips. Teaching, if it is done in a nonjudgmental way, can be very helpful.
 - Don't litter and pick up other's litter whenever possible.
 - Do not pick flowers or plants (berries are ok).
 - Do not cut switchbacks as they cause soil erosion and unsightly multiple paths.
 - Carry out used toilet paper.
 - Get off the trail when stock approaches on the downhill side. Speak softly.
 - No loud noises, no radios.
 - Do not smoke.
 - Move off trail, track, road, etc. when adjusting clothes or pack.
 - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
- A fatigued participant may be left with a club member at a well-marked location if adequately supplied with water, food and clothing. The participant must remain at that location so as not to be bypassed when the group returns. A participant, accompanied by an experienced club member, may return to a vehicle with the key to wait for the group. If there is any doubt about a person's health or condition, good sense requires that the trip be aborted and that the entire group return to the cars.
- Supervise the group as it passes through dangerous areas (creek crossings, slides, snow, etc.)
- Stop at all junctions and regroup before continuing.
- Use this opportunity to orient the group as to its location.
- Keep an eye on the weather and get down from exposed places or off the water in lightning and severe wind. If the weather or other conditions turn dangerous, turn around and head back to the cars. The emphasis is on safety. **If you must turn the group back for safety, make the decision firmly and positively.**

-- Use good judgment. Good judgment is mostly learned and it usually gets better with experience. Do not expect that you will have all the answers. Each of us has our own style and usually there is more than one way to handle any situation.

AT THE END OF THE TRIP

-- Count to be sure everyone has returned.

-- Be certain all cars are operating properly and that the drivers know the way home. **The leader does not leave until everyone is accounted for and all vehicles are functioning.**

-- When appropriate suggest that participants check for ticks, poison oak, etc. when they return home.

WHEN YOU GET HOME

-- Complete the Trip Report. The essential information for all trips is the date, location of activity, the miles traveled and the number of hikers. The other information on the Trip Report form can be omitted when the trip is in a location often used and there are no incidents worth reporting.

-- Write a check to the Trails Club of Oregon for the amount collected and note on check the date of the activity.

-- Check to see that the top line on the Trip Log (sign-up sheet) has been completed. This sheet will be used for several different functions and this information is needed even though the Trip Report also has this information

-- Send the Trip Report, the check, and the Trip Log (sign-up sheet) in the self-addressed stamped envelope to the club post office box.

-- Submit a brief electronic trip report to www.blazer@trailsclub.org along with a photo if possible, for the "Trails Traveled" section of the newsletter.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Backpacks

-- Leaders please read and follow directions in the **Backpack Leader Packet** on our club website.

-- A written prospectus is very helpful to ensure that each hiker has the necessary food and equipment. At minimum, outline how to get to the trailhead, the anticipated mileage and elevation to be hiked each day, and how many meals will be needed.

-- Consider having all the participants attend a planning meeting a couple of weeks before the trip. This gives you the chance to make sure that everyone is able to complete the trip and also to get carpools, tent and stove sharing set up.

-- Before you leave home, send a written description of your intended destination to the Trips Trustee. This description should include the wilderness or national forest where the hike will take place, the trail name and number, road access information and the county name. Include the estimated time you will return home. If you or your group fails to show up within a reasonable time frame, your contact can call 911 to report your delay and give emergency personnel details about your trip to help them in a search.

Bike Trips

-- All participants are required to wear a bike helmet.

-- All participants should carry a bike repair kit including an extra tube and pump and be able to change a flat tire.

-- Bikes will be equipped with rear reflectors and participants will have a head lamp or other device for night travel.

-- All participants will obey traffic laws when on public roads. If on trails, cyclist will stay on the trail.

-- The leader will appoint a sweep, regroup at confusing intersections, and follow many of the same practices as the hike leaders.

Winter Sports

- Do not snowshoe over a cross-country ski track.
- Downhill skiers have right of way over uphill.
- Offer our COLD WEATHER GUIDELINE FOR TRIPS brochure to participants. This comes in the leader's packet.
- Bring a couple extra layers of clothes including gloves and hats.
- Carry emergency heat packs (hands & feet) and an emergency space blanket. Some leaders carry a backpack stove for making of hot drinks on the trail.
- Have an emergency repair kit with duct tape.
- Check on snow and road conditions prior to leading your event. Have a backup plan in mind.
- Check that drivers are prepared for winter conditions (e.g. carrying chains/traction devices and a snow shovel).
- Consider providing extra time to allow for gear rentals and dealing with adverse road conditions
- If up on Mt. Hood, consider swinging by Tyee Lodge as part of your activity. This is a great way to introduce newcomers to the lodge.

Family Friendly Hikes

- Children must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult.

Dog Friendly Hikes

- Any event on which dogs are welcome (hike, etc.) must be listed specifically in the Trail Blazer and on our website as dog friendly. Dogs are otherwise not permitted.
- The leader should supervise and be comfortable with thoroughly screening owners about their pets and be able to deny participation to any if so warranted.
- All trail rules and regulations regarding pets must be followed at all times. No dogs will be permitted to go off-leash in areas where leashes are required by law. It is the leader's responsibility to verify these rules and regulations before leading the trip.
- The exact regulations may vary between different wilderness areas, but in most the group size is limited to twelve – meaning the total number of humans, stock, and dogs present (e.g. the number of heartbeats). Thus eight humans and four dogs should be okay, but seven humans and six dogs might not be. Again in wilderness areas it is the leader's responsibility to check the regulations before leading the trip. To avoid the problem of possibly turning away people and pets due to group size at the trailhead, the leader should require participants to sign up in advance.
- It is recommended that the leader avoid narrow, constricted or potentially dangerous trails in leading dog-friendly events. Trails with good sources of water and shade are most suitable. Very rocky trails may present a problem for dogs.
- All dogs participating in dog-friendly events should have had a reasonable level of training / obedience and must be kept under control at all times – whether on leash or by voice command.
- You should supervise and be comfortable with requesting owners to leash their dog if any problem arises. Similarly any dog getting underfoot or in the way should be kept on leash and under control.
- All dog owners must be aware and respectful of others in the group and others sharing the trail with them. Some people may not be comfortable around dogs or may be intimidated by them. Give other trail users plenty of space to get by and owners should maintain control of enthusiastic or barking dogs.
- Owners must clean up after their pets.

Kayak Trips

- Please refer to the website and contact the Kayak chairman for information regarding leading a Kayak trip.

Outings

Leaders please read and follow the **Outing Policy and Procedures Handbook** on our website and contact the Outings chairman for information regarding leading an Outing.

MANAGING EMERGENCIES

Injured or Ill Person

- Stop and think. In an emergency situation you will need to battle panic. Do not proceed blindly.
- Survey the scene. Do not put yourself or other members of your party at risk in order to reach the victim.
- Determine if any member of the party has special medical training, locate extra clothes, blankets and first aid supplies.
- If a spinal injury is suspected, do not move the individual unless the safety of the victim requires it.
- One person should be at the ill/injured person's side until rescue workers arrive.
- Reassure the victim and make him/her as comfortable as possible. Obtain consent to examine.
- Administer whatever first aid is necessary and assess the individual's physical and mental condition continuously.
- Try to locate the person's EMERGENCY CONTACT AND MEDICAL INFORMATION card. Determine if the person's medications, medical conditions or problems, allergies to foods, insects or medicines are noted on their card. If not, ask and record their answers if possible. Include their name, age, birth date and sex.
- Use the MEDICAL EMERGENCY RESCUE REQUEST card or a sheet of paper to record any information that will help the medical personnel. Note the time of the injury/illness. Note when the person last ate.
- Have your best map person locate your position, check it yourself and with your sweep. Mark this site on the map. If there is a GPS available, note your coordinates.
- Attempt to call 911 with a cell phone and communicate your position and the condition of the victim. Remember that you may get 911 personnel from another jurisdiction and may need to be connected to the correct agency.
- Determine if the group can get the person out safely. If not, send your two most capable people to get help. You might also want to include the person who is most comfortable explaining the location to the rescue personnel. Make sure they have a cell phone, know the nearest place they can find help or a phone, car keys, and the card with the information regarding the injured/ill person. Tell them to pace themselves so that they don't end up adding to the emergency.
- If there are only three in your party, one person goes out and one remains with the ill/injured person. This is why the recommended minimum number for a trip is three.
- Remember that it often takes much longer for the rescue workers to mount an evacuation than would seem possible.

Lost Person

- Try to make voice contact with the individual using a group yell.
- Determine how much time the party can spend looking for the lost person before they must return to the trailhead before dark.
- Begin a search. Keep part of the group (with leader or assistant leader) at or near the location where the person was last seen. The other part of the group (with leader or assistant leader) should hike up and down the trail and around the area attempting to make voice contact, always keeping in contact with each other. This group will then return to the original location to join the rest of the party.
- In most cases, the lost person will be at the trailhead when you return to the cars.
- If your search is unsuccessful, leave two people at the location where the person was last seen and have the rest of the party seek assistance. Be sure that these two people have enough equipment to stay warm and dry overnight.

Unplanned Overnight Stay

- Maintain a calm, positive attitude.
- Take steps to keep everyone as warm and dry as possible.
- Find a safe, protected place to camp.
- Gather any dry wood before dark and don't waste it.
- Pool your resources: food, water, clothing, shelter, etc.
- Continuously monitor each individual's physical and mental condition.

Communication after an Emergency

- Contact the Trails Club president and the Trips Trustee immediately after the incident.
- Call, or have the President or Trips Trustee call, the ill/injured person's family/emergency contact person and keep them up to date on what is happening.
- Refer all media questions to President or Trips Trustee.

PEOPLE PROBLEMS

- **Participants.** Any behavior endangering the group's safety or cohesiveness must be addressed. Advise the person(s) that if the behavior is not corrected they will be signed off the trip. Report any such misbehavior to the Trips Trustee.
- **Tagalongs.** Everyone must sign the club liability waiver. If someone does not sign in with the group but follows along, tell him/her, in front of the others, that he/she must sign the waiver sheet or you won't be responsible for them.
- **Leaving the Group.** Inform the individual, in front of the group, that he/she must stay with the group. Otherwise, you will no longer be responsible for them.
- **Drugs/Alcohol/Firearms.** Are not allowed and are grounds for being signed off the trip and reported to the Club President and/or Trips Trustee.
- **Problem Leaders.** If a participant feels that a leader acted inappropriately, the leader should be reported to the Club President and/or Trips Trustee.

THANK YOU LEADERS!

Your own knowledge and input would be very helpful in updating this booklet. Please contact the Trips Trustee if you have comments about any part of this booklet.