

LINCOLN HILLS HIKE LEADER GUIDELINES

These are guidelines, not rules, for the hike leader to consider in the planning and conducting of hikes.

INTRODUCTION –

Safety of all hikers is paramount!! Hikers are responsible for their own safety. Nevertheless, hikers must cooperate with the following policy:

HIKE LEADERS AS WELL AS HIKING CLUB OFFICERS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY TO MAKE DECISIONS THAT AN INDIVIDUAL HIKER OR THE GROUP IS REQUIRED TO FOLLOW WHEN IT AFFECTS THE SAFETY OF THAT INDIVIDUAL AND/OR THE ENTIRE GROUP. Therefore, it may be necessary for the leader to recommend an easier hike for a new hiker, to turn away a hiker who is inadequately prepared, to send an injured hiker back to the trailhead with the sweep or other strong hiker, or to ask a hiker to reassess their hiking skills.

Personal Attributes of a Hike Leader:

1. Be in good physical condition.
2. Use good judgment and common sense.
3. Have experience hiking in a variety of conditions.
4. Be knowledgeable in map reading and basic first aid (and carry a first aid kit when leading a hike).

HIKE PREPARATIONS –

1. Become very familiar with the hike you plan to lead. You can select a hike from the various hiking books and materials available in the Hiking Group's resource library. You can also review the history of hikes from the hiking website archives, as well as consider suggestions from other hike leaders. Depending on the hike, it is recommended to obtain a topographic map, or copy of such, to refer to while doing both the prehike and group hike. Highlight the trail route on the map with a marking pen. Topo maps are not necessary on most hikes.

2. Always prehike the trail, preferably within a one-to-two-month time period. If a leader has hiked the trail many times and is very familiar with all aspects of the trail, it is not necessary to prehike it. Instead, it is recommended that the leader call a ranger in the hike district to determine if there are any changes in trail conditions. Then the leader should state in the hike description that the trail had not been prehiked that particular year.

Prehike the trail with at least one person who will be the sweep for the hike. In case of the leader's illness or unforeseen circumstances, the sweep could then assume leadership of the hike.

3. Information to obtain on prehike:

Difficulty of hike

Hike distance

Altitude gains

Risks (drop-offs, steep rock step-ups, poison oak, stream crossings, mosquitoes, ticks, rocky or dusty trail conditions, etc.)

Bathroom facilities at the trailhead. If none available, determine a bathroom stop prior to reaching the trailhead.

All trail junctions --- which can be marked on the topographic map

Location of lunch break

Time required for hiking

Time of expected return to Lincoln Hills

Driving time and distance from the meeting area in the Orchard Creek parking lot row "14". If dinner on the drive home is a consideration, determine the location of a restaurant.

Determine the donation for gas for riders. See the hiking website --- Click on "Policy/Procedure/Rules", then "Transportation Cost" for suggestions.

Determine the meeting and leaving time of the hike from OC Lodge.

If possible, take a few pictures with a digital camera to include in the hike description to generate interest in the hike.

4. The pre-hike driver may be reimbursed 2X the mileage rate listed in the Hike Information and Guidelines.

Reimbursement can be obtained from club treasurer; Laura Hamilton (22llp22@gmail.com). In your email request please indicate the name of hike, the date pre-hiked and the \$ amount requested.

5. Type the hike description using the template form which can be found by referring to "Hike Archives" on the hiking website. The write-up should be completed a month prior to the hike (including pictures, if any) and emailed to the webmaster, David Wood (dbwood81@gmail.com).

6. Write up driving directions, including a road map with the route highlighted. Google Maps is a good source for distance, driving time, and route instructions, although it may be best to rely on notes from the pre hike.

DAY OF THE HIKE --

A. HIKE ORGANIZATION AT LINCOLN HILLS --

1. Arrive at OC Lodge Orchard Creek parking lot row "14" meeting place prior to the noted meeting time. Have sign up sheets - Release Form #2 available for hikers to sign. These forms can be copied from the hiking website --- click on " Policy/Procedure/Rules ", followed by "Sign-in Sheet". As new hikers arrive the leader should diplomatically check that they are properly equipped, especially with sturdy hiking boots.

2. Obtain the first aid kit and walkie talkies from the Hiking Group President, or arrange to do so prior to the day of the hike.

3. Introduce self (leader) and sweep. Welcome new hikers. Allow others to introduce themselves. Count off --- so leader knows total number of hikers. Be sure everyone has signed the release form. Give a very brief statement about what to expect on the hike and the risks as stated in the hike description.

4. In event of a large group: If more than 30 people show up for a hike, the leader can make the decision to break into two smaller groups. The leader can select two experienced hikers to act as sweeps for both groups, and the original sweep can step in as leader of the second group since that person would know the trail well.

5. Transportation -- Ask all drivers to line up horizontally and raise their fingers to show the number of riders they can take in their vehicles. Riders line up behind drivers ---- and leader should determine that there is an equal distribution of riders among drivers. Leader then hands out driving directions and maps and explains the route, reminding riders of the suggested gas donation. Everyone can then be dismissed to meet at the trailhead.

B. LEADING THE HIKE --

1. At the trailhead mention a few points of interest for hikers to anticipate ---- and remind them again of any risks, especially pointing out poison oak as needed. Point out the location of the bathrooms and where the lunch stop will be. Announce that all hikers follow behind the leader --- and sweep will be at the end of the hiking group.

2. While hiking be aware of the group pace and stop occasionally and ask how the pace is for everyone. Use this time for a rest and water break. Remind hikers to drink water, especially if weather is warm. Be sure to give slow hikers (who have caught up with the group) a time to rest also!!
3. Point out interesting sights that were discovered on the prehike. Stop ---- not only for rest and water breaks, but just to **smell the roses!!** Remember --- the hike is not a race, but an experience in the outdoors. Goal ---- for everyone to enjoy themselves!
4. Keep the group together as much as possible, although this can vary considerably if there is a large number of hikers and there are differing abilities. Do not allow hikers to split off from the main group to go on a side trail, or to go ahead of the leader.
5. Always wait for the entire group to join together at all trail junctions and then turn on the proper trail together as a group.
6. If the trail becomes a cross country situation, or if the trail is lost, it is very important to stop, turn around, and return to the location of the main trail.
7. Sweep needs to be observant of any hikers who are having difficulties or are extremely slow and notify the leader of the issues. Sweep can encourage and support hikers who need that assistance.
8. If one or more hikers cannot continue or finish the hike, or becomes injured, the hiker or hikers are REQUIRED to follow the decision and directions of the leader (see above policy) and possibly return to the trailhead with the sweep, depending on the situation. The leader can choose an experienced hiker to replace the sweep.
9. At the end of the hike, turn in the sign-in sheet, first aid kit, and walkie talkies to the Group President, or deliver to his house at a later time.

HIKE CANCELLATION –

1. If a hike needs to be cancelled due to poor weather conditions (rain, fog, extreme heat), the leader must notify the webmaster the night before or the morning of the hike, so that a notice can be posted on the website.
2. On the morning of the cancelled hike the leader should go to the OC Lodge Orchard Creek parking lot row "14" meeting place to notify hikers who might have missed the notice and planned on hiking.
3. **If a hike has to be cancelled, a hike leader may choose an alternative hike. The name of the hike, time, and location would be announced on the home page of the website the same morning as the original hike is cancelled. No description would be required at such a short notice, but it would be best if the hike is one the group has done in the past.**
4. Regarding any cancellations or hike changes, please send an email to David Wood, webmaster (dbwood81@gmail.com) and cc: Tom Denzler, President (tdenzler@sbcglobal.net). If it is a last-minute change, it might be advisable to also phone David at 916-756-6495.

Revised 10/01/2023