

## NPSO HIKE LEADER CHECKLIST (Board approved 10/20/12)

### Well in advance of the hike:

- Determine hike date
- Determine length, elevation gain of hike and identify it as easy/medium/difficult or some similar description.
  - Tend to rate your hike a bit more difficult than it actually is.
  - State both level of difficulty as well as distance and elevation gain.
    - The Portland rating system is given here as an example.
    - \_\_\_\_\_ Easy: Up to 3 miles, less than 700 ft. elevation gain
    - \_\_\_\_\_ Moderate: 3 to 5 miles, less than 1,200 ft. elevation gain
    - \_\_\_\_\_ Strenuous/Difficult: 5 to 10 miles, up to 2,500 ft. elevation gain
    - \_\_\_\_\_ Rugged: Over 10 miles, steep trail, over 2,500 feet elevation gain
- Identify any particular challenges such as more than usual amounts of poison oak, steep trails, rough terrain, streams that are difficult to cross.
- Determine the driving distance from your meeting location to the trail head, time on the trail, time to drive back and from that, the expected time to be back at the first meeting location.
- Determine if high clearance vehicles are needed
- Determine meeting time and location(s). Determine the time you intend to LEAVE the car pool meeting area. If you state "Meet at 9.", don't expect to be leaving at 9. If you state "We will be leaving for the trailhead at 9. Come at 8:45 to arrange car-pooling and sign the waiver form", your odds are better of actually leaving at 9.
- Determine if there is a limit to the number of hikers, based either on regulations for the area where you're going and/or your judgment as leader.
- Determine if parking fees and/or hiking permits are needed and where they can be purchased.
- Determine if permission is required to access the area.
- Determine if the area has a considerable amount of poison oak or other possible risks.
- Summarize and provide the above information with a hike description and other relevant information for the Bulletin and/or other means of communication used by your chapter.
- Provide this information, including your contact information, to your chapter's hike coordinator and/or to the person who submits your chapter's information to the Bulletin.
  - The Bulletin is published 10 times a year. The submission date is the 10th of each month for the following month's issue except for the Aug/Sept issue which is July 24 and the Dec/Jan issue which is November 24.
  - Send submissions by e-mail only to [bulletin@npsoregon.org](mailto:bulletin@npsoregon.org). (or to the person for your chapter who gathers and sends the hike information to the Bulletin).
  - Please follow the format of previous Bulletin issues for chapter event announcements.
    - For example:
      - May 5, 2012, Saturday, 9 am**    **Event Type: Event Title.** Provide a brief written narrative and trip instructions here (not to exceed 75 words in length). This may include any of the following items: leader name, overview of event, registration requirements, hike difficulty and distance, meeting location, or other details as appropriate. Contact Information: Name, phone, email.
- Get a map of the trail you'll be hiking on and surrounding area
- Identify a co-leader/shepherd if you feel that is needed. (i.e. more difficult terrain, larger groups, you want to split into groups on the trail)

- Get a copy of the NPSO waiver form (One format is attached)
- Determine what first aid equipment you can bring that is compatible with your level of first aid training. This can include a whistle, flashlight, matches in waterproof container. [I'm not a lawyer. I thought this is a pretty generic statement but it can obviously be modified.]
- If possible, get a plant list for the hike. (Plant lists at some future point may be available on the NPSO website.)
- If people carpool to the trailhead, determine a recommended amount riders should share with the driver. This can be done precisely using distance driven, the MPG of the driver's car, and the number of passengers in the car, in a more general way using distance driven, typical MPG, and typical \$/gallon gas price. Remind people if they return home in a different car than they drove to the trailhead, they need to compensate the drivers of both cars.
  - Generic formula for amount each rider gives:  $$(M \times 20 / 4) / N$  where M is the round trip miles driven and N is the number of riders not including the driver. 20 is a typical gas mileage (MPG) and 4 is a typical price of a gallon of gas. (\$/gallon) The hike leader or driver can adjust that as appropriate.

**Two weeks to preferably no less than 5 days in advance of the hike:**

- If possible, do the hike to make sure roads are open, to confirm trail is passable, to see what's blooming, etc.
- With each potential hiker: (optional)
  - Get that person's contact information.
  - Determine if they're experienced hikers and will bring appropriate shoes, rain gear, water, food.
  - Ask if they have any medical condition that has a possibility of impairing their ability to complete the hike or would negatively impact other hikers.
    - Try to avoid getting stuck on the trail with someone who is not capable of doing the hike.
  - Communicate that dogs are not allowed.
  - Make sure they have your contact information and urge them to let you know if they have to cancel.
  - Determine if they have to be back by a certain time.
  - Determine if they can drive or if they are dependent on a drive. Try to determine that you have enough drivers. Communicate road conditions.
  - Confirm that your potential drivers have any needed parking permits for the trailhead.
- Email a copy of the plant list.(optional)

**One to two days in advance of the hike:**

- Check the weather forecast. Confirm you are going to do the hike.
  - If not, contact all hikers and the hike coordinator for your chapter.
  - If so, send out a reminder email or phone call to the hikers.

**Day of the hike, at the meeting location(s):**

- Have each hiker sign waiver form at the meeting location(s).
- Remind hikers of the difficulty of the hike.
- Tell them the estimated return time.
- Provide all drivers the route to the trailhead and identify any meeting places along the way. Preferably provide this information as written instructions.
- Exchange cell phone numbers among drivers, although often phones are not useful in remote areas.
- Ask if anyone is planning to leave early. Explain that is only possible if that does not lead any riders stranded and they must tell you when before they leave the group. Request that anyone leaving early inform you (or the shepherd if there is on) when leaving the group.
- Inform hikers of availability (or lack) of bathrooms on the drive. Arrange, if possible, a bathroom stop near the trailhead.

**At the trailhead:**

- Count the number of people
- Give an overview of the hike-when you plan to stop for lunch, where bathroom stops might be feasible, etc
- Ask for a volunteer shepherd if you do not already have one and the group is large. Make sure the shepherd knows how to keep track of the back of the group
- Tell hikers if they leave the trail to go to the bathroom, they should leave their backpack or some other identifying item on the trail to show where they left the trail
- Make sure drivers know they should not leave the trailhead to return home unless all the people who rode to the trailhead are in their vehicle for the return
- Remind hikers to pay their share of carpooling and, if they don't return with the same driver, to also reimburse the person they drove up with

**On the hike:**

- Be positive, help people identify plants to the extent and at the level of detail they want.
- Encourage non-NPSO members to consider joining.
- Leave gates as you found them.
- Keep track of everyone by counting heads, especially at each trail fork.
- Make sure everyone is OK. Rest as needed.
- If anyone needs to leave early, make sure they are not leaving stranded anyone who rode to the trailhead with them.
- Leader should ensure everyone has a ride for the return trip.
- Leader's car should be the last to leave, unless specific other arrangements have been made.

**STREAMLINED HIKE LEADER'S CHECKLIST****Well in advance of the hike:**

- Determine hike date.
- Determine length, elevation gain of hike and identify it as easy/medium/difficult or some similar description. State level of difficulty as well as distance and elevation gain.
- Summarize that information needed for posting in the Bulletin.
- Determine meeting time and location(s).
- Determine the driving distance from your meeting location to the trail head, time on the trail, time to drive back and from that, the expected time to be back at the first meeting location and the amount carpoolers should pay a driver.
- Determine if there is a limit to the number of hikers, based either on regulations for the area where you're going and/or your judgment as leader.
- Determine what parking fees and/or hiking permits are needed and where they can be purchased.
- Get a copy of the NPSO waiver form (One format is attached)
- Determine what first aid equipment you can bring that is compatible with your level of first aid training. This can include a whistle, flashlight, matches in waterproof container.

**Two weeks to preferably no less than 5 days in advance of the hike:**

- If possible, do the hike to make sure roads are open, to confirm trail is passable, to see what's blooming, etc.

**One to two days in advance of the hike:**

- Check the weather forecast. Confirm you are going to do the hike.
  - If not, contact all hikers and the hike coordinator for your chapter.
  - If so, send out a reminder email or phone call to the hikers.

**Day of the hike, at the meeting location(s):**

- Have each hiker sign waiver form at the meeting location(s).
- Remind hikers of the difficulty of the hike.
- Tell them the estimated return time.

- Ask if anyone is planning to leave early. Explain that is only possible if that does not lead any riders stranded and they must tell you on the trail when they leave.

**At the trailhead:**

- Count the number of people
- Give an overview of the hike-when you plan to stop for lunch, where bathroom stops might be feasible etc
- Tell hikers if they leave the trail to go to the bathroom, they should leave their backpack or some other identifying item on the trail to show where they left the trail
- Make sure drivers know they should not leave the trailhead to return home unless all the people who rode to the trailhead are in their vehicle for the return
- Remind hikers to pay their share of carpooling and if they don't return with the same driver, to also reimburse the person they drove up with
- Ask if anyone is planning to leave early. If so, explain that this is only possible if no one is left stranded. Also, the hike leader must be informed when the person(s) are leaving the hike.

**On the hike:**

- Leave gates as you found them.
- Keep track of everyone by counting heads, especially at each trail fork.
- Make sure everyone is OK. Rest as needed.
- Leader should ensure everyone has a ride for the return trip.
- Leader's car should be the last to leave, unless specific other arrangements have been made.