OCV Guidelines for Hike Leaders

Before your hike

Be sure you are comfortable with your knowledge of the hike you are leading. If not, contact the Hike Leader Representative or other experienced hikers to pre-hike the trail with you. Make note of short-cut options in case of an emergency.

Notify a hiking schedule coordinator (A or B/C hikes) that you are willing to lead a hike. Your name will be added to the list of hike leaders who are notified by email approximately the middle of each month requesting hike offerings for the following month. Each leader should "reply all" with dates and hikes offered to avoid duplication of hikes. Include the date, name of hike, hike rating, start time, trailhead and estimated elevation gain, distance and duration.

When the hiking schedule is posted on the website later in the month, hikers will email you asking to join the hike. Confirm with them that they are on the list, or that the hike is already full. You can offer to put their name on a waiting list.

If you are unable to lead your hike, let the participants know. Also let one of the hiking schedule coordinators know so the calendar can be updated.

Safety

As well as basic hiking equipment carry a basic First Aid Kit (Tylenol, antihistamine, antiseptic and tick removers) and a fully charged cellphone. Consider bringing an emergency blanket and a cellphone charger. (The well-known "10 essentials" lists on various websites are a good guide.)
Although you are not responsible for the safety of the group, be prepared to use or share your safety supplies in the event that a hiker neglected to bring any of them.

Carpooling

Leaders are not responsible for organizing carpooling; however, you will have all the hikers' emails so you could suggest suitable meeting place(s) to the group and invite them to coordinate sharing rides to the trailhead.

Hike day

Record all hikers first and last names on the *OCV Hike Report* (available on the OCV website under Hike Trip info/forms), or another format, as well as the name of an emergency contact person and their phone number.

Do not lead a difficult hike in a remote area with fewer than 4 people.

Gather the group together at the trailhead. Review the hike route, degree of difficulty, length and estimated completion time. Have hikers number off and give their names.

Ask for a volunteer to act as an end-person (sweep). Ask the sweep to confirm all hikers are accounted for, including when the group proceeds after a break.

Ask hikers to let the people ahead of them know if there is a large gap behind them and to wait at turning points, intersections and forks on the trail until all hikers have caught up.

Emergency response guidelines

In case of an accident (i.e., an injured hiker cannot walk out), call 911 for an Emergency Rescue. Use an app such as AllTrails, Gaia, WikiLocs or Google Maps to provide GPS coordinates to emergency responders. If necessary, organize some hikers to walk out to meet the first responders or, if there is no cellphone coverage where you are, have some hikers walk out and initiate the Emergency Rescue call when they have coverage. Have someone stay with the injured person.

If the injured person is having any difficulty, err on the side of caution and call for help as soon as you have cellphone service.

Once the injured person is stabilized and/or attended to by emergency responders, or is enroute to the hospital, call the person listed as their Emergency Contact on the *Hike Report* sheet.

After the hike

Remind hikers to check carefully for ticks when they get home.

Stay until all cars have started.

Send the *Hike Report* to the Membership Chair including a list of the participating hikers and comments and a report of any serious incidents. (A picture of the report via email works well.).

Incident communication / reporting

If there has been a serious incident involving the need for significant first aid or a doctor or hospital visit, the Club President should also be informed and an FMCBC *Incident Report Form* will need to be completed and submitted as soon as possible.

Know that you are appreciated for taking the time to facilitate these hikes!!!