



Hike Leaders Training

November, 2009

Ed Brimberg

Agenda

- **General Information**
- **Hike lifecycle**
- **Planning phase**
- **Pre-hike phase**
- **Hike phase**
- **Post-hike phase**
- **Other**
- **Appendix**

General Information

- **The Club**

- **Founded on April 20, 1990 by Stephanie Williams and Al Beverstock to promote the enjoyment of hiking and other recreational activities and to join together people who are interested in such activities.**
 - They wanted to allow dogs on hikes and to have a meeting near in Manassas
 - 300-500 members

- **Hiker safety policy**

- **In all our outings we will strive to make every hiker safe and comfortable. This implies that in any outing, all hikers must feel safe and comfortable. In order to implement the above policy, we advocate the following framework:**
 - Recognize unsafe and uncomfortable situations
 - Prevent the occurrence of these situations
 - Prepare for their occurrence anyway
 - Respond to the situations appropriately when they do occur
- **By taking these steps we believe that we will make hikers safer and more comfortable, and enhance their joy of the outdoors**

- **Membership fees**

- **Membership fee is on a calendar year basis**
 - Individual \$5, family \$8
 - After September 1, individual \$2, family \$3
 - After December 1, you can join for following year without additional expense for December
 - Non-members can hike for \$2
 - Members can sign up online and pay with credit card or pay the leaders

General Information

- **Weather policy**
 - Hikers should call the leader before going to the meeting place when conditions are questionable. The leader may cancel or modify the hike if weather, trail or driving conditions are dangerous. If the hike is canceled, the leader may not be at the meeting location
 - In some cases we can get another leader to go to the meeting place to inform people that it has been canceled
- **Children policy**
 - Children under 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult
 - Both the child and their parent or legal guardian must sign and acknowledge the liability disclaimer on the sign-in sheet
 - Please call the hike leader in advance to verify that the hike is appropriate for children
- **Pet policy**
 - Pets are welcome on NVHC hikes as long as they are well behaved and kept under control at all times
 - Dogs should be current on rabies vaccination, wear identification, and be kept on a standard 6 to 8 foot leash
 - Hike leader should be contacted in advance because pets are not permitted on some trails
 - All pooper scooper laws must be obeyed
 - Bring water for pet

General Information

- **Car pools and park entry**
 - Fee based on 8 cents/mile/person for roundtrip mileage of hike. e.g. 100 miles of driving = \$8/person. This was based on \$4/gallon, we are discounting as needed.
 - Voluntary car pools are formed at the meeting place to take the hikers to trail head.
 - Park entry fees, if any, are shared by everyone in the car if the fee is per car. If the fee is per hiker each pays separately
- **Hike ratings**
 - Each hike is rated with a difficulty rating of A, B, C or D. Distance and elevation are used to determine the rating, with 400 feet of climbing considered equivalent to 1 mile of linear distance. The ratings are:
 - A-Difficult (>13 miles)
 - B-Moderately Difficult (10-13 miles)
 - C-Moderate (7-10 miles)
 - D-Easy (<7 miles)
- **Meeting places and times**
 - Most hikes meet at well-known parking lots in Northern Virginia, such as Commuter Lots in Centreville, Carderock, Woodbridge, Sterling W&OD Bike Trail Parking Lot, Vienna and East Falls Church Metro
 - The meeting times are usually 8 or 9 a.m., depending on the hike and the leader. Starting times for D hikes can be later. It is hard to predict how long the hikes last. Easy, close-by ones may end by 3 or 4 p.m., while the longer and more distant hikes may take much longer
 - A good number to use for hiking time on the trail is 2 miles/hour

General Information

- **Schedules and information**
 - The Weekend section of the Washington Post (published every Friday)
 - The club's home page: <http://www.nvhc.com>
- **Annual meeting and elections take place in April**
- **Quarterly social hikes may be held once a quarter**
- **Officers**
 - President - Dave Erdman
 - Vice President – Gene Vivalda
 - Executive Secretary - Frank Trippett
 - Recording Secretary - Mark Rietman
 - Treasurer - Mike Gingerich
 - Director of Trails - Ed Brimberg
 - Director of Entertainment - Mano Malayanur
 - Director of Public Relations - Mark Rietman

Hike Lifecycle

Planning



Hiking Schedule Finalized

Pre-hike



Hike Day

Hike



Hike Completed

Post-hike

Planning Phase

- **What type of hike will I lead, A, B, C or D?**
- **Where do I want to go?**
- **When do I want to lead the hike**
 - Think about what the seasonal conditions will be
 - Check for open dates on the web page draft planning schedule
- **Review existing hikes in catalog**
 - Call previous leader if you have questions
- **Review maps and books**
- **Talk to other hike leaders for suggestions**
- **Sketch out the route**
- **Outline the driving directions or see if they are available from other leaders**
 - Car shuttle required?

Planning Phase

- **Scout the hike and complete the detailed driving directions and hike route**
 - It is good to document the details, as you may not be leading the hike for a while
 - A handheld voice recorder comes in handy
 - The club will reimburse leaders 10 cents/mile for scouting trips
 - **Safety Management**
 - Be aware of options to cut the hike short and the shortest exit routes
 - Be aware of emergency numbers and county where you are hiking
- **Generate write-up for hiking schedule or use existing catalog item**
- **Submit hikes when requested to Director of Trails, Ed Brimberg**
 - Call for hikes, from the Director of trails, is generally issued three weeks prior to 1st Saturday of March, June, September and December
- **Review draft hiking schedule**
- **Submit corrections**
- **Electronic means, e-mail and web, are used for most communications**

Pre-Hike Phase

- **Hike leaders are mailed a package**
 - Hiking schedules
 - Sign-in sheets
 - Membership applications
 - Hikers guide
 - Pre-paid mailing envelopes
- **Answer prospective hiker phone calls and e-mails**
 - Leaders e-mail address listed on web page is desired
- **Screen hikers on phone**
 - Try to determine whether they are capable of handling the hike
- **Cancel if conditions are bad**
- **If you can't lead your hike for any reason, send a message to leaders e-mail list to look for a sub**
- **If you need to cancel let Ed Brimberg know. He will:**
 - Update web page
 - Have voice recording updated
 - Possibly find someone to go to meeting place to tell people it is canceled

Hike Phase

- **Arrive at meeting location at least 15 minutes before schedule time**
- **Tasks at meeting location**
 - Complete header information on sign-in sheet, including emergency phone number. The numbers are available on web page
 - Have hikers sign-in as they arrive. Ensure that data is complete with signatures
 - Enroll new members or collect guest fees
 - You may choose to read the safety and liability messages on the sign-in form
 - Distribute hike information: maps and good detailed driving directions
 - State the preparations the hikers need have made in order to go on the hike. Be firm, and do not hesitate to turn away unprepared hikers. The list of preparations is included on the sign up sheet under "Safety Message". You may add to this list if you wish
 - **Medical Fitness:** Are you medically fit to participate in this event?
 - **Experience:** Have you done a hike of similar difficulty in recent past (same hike rating or one lower)?
 - **Food and Water:** Have you enough food and water (two quarts; more in hot weather)?
 - **Footwear:** Have you proper footwear (hiking boots recommended)?
 - **Clothing:** Have you proper clothing, especially for cold weather (layered clothing, warm wool sweater or jacket, gloves or mittens, ear muffs, hat, rain gear, and so on)

Hike Phase

- **Tasks at meeting location (continued)**
 - Make announcements about the trail: distance, elevation change, hike rating, terrain, stream crossings, rock scrambles, view points, and other special features
 - Make announcements about the hike: (This may also be done at the trail head) Pace, regrouping points, bailout points, places of interest, and special instructions such as the signs used to mark the trail
 - Make announcements about driving: Encourage drivers to follow you. If directions are complex consider meeting at a more convenient place near the trail head and driving on from that spot in a "caravan". Indicate stops for gas or food, parking at trail head, car pool fee, and park entry fee
 - **Arrange car pools.**
 - Assume four people per car and at least one extra for car shuttles
 - Do not pick drivers or assign persons to car pools; the car pools should be formed voluntarily
 - Ensure that each car pool has the driving instructions
 - Try to balance the number of people in each car
 - If some hikers has a park pass try to have one in each car
 - **Car shuttle planning**
 - This takes some thought on how to work it
 - Provide an estimate on when you will return to meeting location. Always error on giving a later time

Hike Phase

- **Take head count and make sure it agrees with sign-in sheet**
- **Tasks at trail head**
 - Brief hikers at trail head
 - Reiterate important points
 - Assign a sweep if warranted
 - For groups larger than 10 use a sweep. A sweep may be useful even with smaller groups. The sweep should be a reliable person, and should preferably know the trail well. The sweep should never leave anyone behind
 - Caution hikers to leave pack on trail if they go off it
 - Caution hikers to stay between leader and sweep
 - Mention how long you expect to be on trail, including lunch, breaks and views. Hikes generally go at the pace of 2 miles/hour
 - Indicate where and when lunch stop will be
- **D hikes could have large number of people, pace may be slower**
- **Lead the hike**
 - Take cell phone if you have one
 - While a cell phone may be helpful, they frequently don't work in remote areas of the trail and should not be relied upon as a primary method of contact
 - Take sign-in sheet
- **Take head counts periodically**
- **Don't lose anyone**
 - Mark or wait at all trail junctions:
 - Every trail junction is important! Therefore either wait at each trail junction even if only a few yards from the previous junction, or mark the right trail. If you use marks, clearly explain the marking convention to all hikers at the beginning of the hike and use the mark consistently. Watch out for false trails!
 - Be cautious about letting people go ahead or go back by themselves
 - If someone needs to return the cars, if possible, the leader should communicate directly with this person and understand what the person plans to do when they get back to the car. If it is not the leader that talks to the person then someone else should have a clear understanding of what the person should do.

Post-Hike Phase

- **Record your notes on hike for future use**
 - Time to complete hike
 - Speed of hikers
 - Driving times
 - Any unique observations
 - Weather conditions
- **Mail in sign-in sheet, membership applications and money to Treasurer**
 - Pre-paid envelopes should have been provided in your hike leaders package

Other

- **Electronic communications**
 - Hiker leaders e-mail list
 - nvhc_leaders@yahoogroups.com
 - Officers e-mail list
 - nvhc_officers@yahoogroups.com
- **Reimbursement for training**
 - The club's normal policy is to reimburse leaders 50% of their training costs
 - CPR
 - First Aid
 - Wilderness First Aid, <http://wfa.net/>
 - Submit request to payment to NVHC Treasurer
- **Two-way Radio Subsidy**
 - If you have led six hikes in the past year you are eligible to apply for \$25 after you purchase two-way radios
- **Hike leaders material available on the web page at: <http://www.nvhc.com> then click on “Hike Leaders Material”**
 - Membership application
 - NVHC Catalog Database
 - Hike Leader Guide
 - Includes list of things to carry
 - Hike Sign-in Sheet
 - Hike Leaders Instructions
 - Hikers Guide

Appendix

- **Sign-in Form**
- **Membership Application**
- **Sample driving directions**
- **Sample hike handout**

Sign-in Form



Northern Virginia Hiking Club

Hike Name: _____ Hike Date: _____ Hike Rating: _____
 Leader(s): _____ Phone: _____ Emergency #s: _____
 Linear Distance: _____ miles Elevation Gain: _____ feet Suggested Carpool Fee: \$ _____ per person Park Entry Fee: \$ _____
 /car

HIKE RATING GUIDE: Elevation gain is divided by 400 and added to linear distance. Hike is rated **D (Easy)** if the total is less than 7; **C (Moderate)** if between 7 and 10; **B (Moderately Difficult)** if between 10 and 13; **A (Difficult)** if more than 13.

SAFETY MESSAGE: We recommend that you **DO NOT HIKE** if you answer **NO** to **any** of the following questions:

- **MEDICAL FITNESS:** Are you medically fit to participate in this event? **FOOTWEAR:** Have you proper footwear (hiking boots recommended)?
- **EXPERIENCE:** Have you done a hike of similar difficulty in recent past (same hike rating or one lower)? **FOOD AND WATER:** Have you enough food and water (two quarts; more in hot weather)?
- **CLOTHING:** Have you proper clothing, especially for cold weather (layered clothing, warm wool sweater or jacket, gloves or mittens, ear muffs, hat, rain gear, and so on)?

LIABILITY DISCLAIMER: I the undersigned do hereby agree to assume all risks and liability related to or resulting from any and all Club functions. I will not hold any of the Club's leaders, officers, or representatives liable for any injury, loss, or damage to my own person or any members of my family, children, pets, or property, arising directly or as a consequence of a Club hike or other activity.

#	Hiker's Name	Home Phone	Email	Emergency Phone	Current Year Member? (Y/N)	Signature	Mem Dues/Guest Fee
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							



Membership Application



Northern Virginia Hiking Club

www.nvhc.com

Membership Application

Avoid the paperwork by registering and paying online at www.nvhc.com

Name(s) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Emergency Phone _____

E-mail _____

Check One: New Membership Renewal

Check One: Individual Membership (\$5 per year; \$2 after Sept 1st) Family Membership (\$8 per year; \$3 after Sept 1st)

Membership for children under 18 is free. Please provide names and ages of children:

Participation of Children: Children under 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Both the child and their parent or legal guardian must sign and acknowledge the liability disclaimer on the sign-in sheet. Please call the hike leader in advance to verify that the hike is appropriate for children.

Liability Disclaimer: All adult members (18 years and older) must sign:
I do hereby agree to assume all risks and liability related to or resulting from any and all Club functions. I will not hold any of the Club's leaders, officers, or representatives liable for any injury, loss, or damage to my own person or any members of my family, children, pets, or property, arising directly or as a consequence of a hike or Club activity.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Payment enclosed Pay by credit card (We will email you a payment request via PayPal.)

Make check or money order payable to "The Northern Virginia Hiking Club, Inc." and mail to the Club treasurer: Mike Gingerich, 15065 Lindbergh Lane, Dumfries, VA 22025-3039. Mail only the first page of this form.

Revision 12/1/2006

Sample Driving Directions

- **From Route 28 Parking Lot To Penmar, PA:**
 - Exit parking lot and go left on Route 28 North and go 2.4 miles and exit onto Route 7 West
 - Take Route 7 West 7.3 miles and turn right onto Route 15 North
 - Take Route 15 North approximately 25.2 miles and exit right onto Rt. 40 West. (after 19.6 miles merge with Rt. 340 East and continue North on Rt. 15. After 24.4 miles turn left to continue on Rt. 15 North.)
 - Take 40 West 2.8 miles and turn left onto I-70 West
 - Take I-70 West 14.5 miles and take exit 35 and turn right onto route 66 North
 - Take route 66 North 4.9 miles and turn right onto route 64 East
 - Take route 64 East 1.6 miles and turn right onto Raven Rock Road, MD 491 North
 - Take MD 491 North about 2.1 miles and turn left onto Ritchie Road and park in pull-off area on right
- **Total driving time: 1 hour 10 minutes.**

Sample Hike Handout

