

Port Ludlow Hiking Club

General Information for Hike Leaders and Assistants

Revised 6/6/2021

- Acquaint yourself with the route to the trailhead.
- Hike the trail if you are not familiar with it. Find out what fees will be charged. If necessary, check with a park or forest ranger on trail conditions, snow level, etc., a day or so before the hike.
- If serious weather is predicted at the trailhead and the hike is being cancelled, please send the scribe an email with that notice the day before the hike; also go to the Bridge Deck between 8:15 and 8:30 and inform anyone coming to hike that the hike is cancelled.
- Before leaving the Bridge Deck, outline the general route to the trailhead. Provide printed directions if necessary.
- Have everyone sign in with their name and phone number.
- Count-off with the hikers prior to departure and at the trailhead, during, and after the hike.
- Assist in forming car pools to minimize the number of cars at the trailhead. Know who your drivers are by circling their name or using a check mark in front of names on the sign-in sheet.
- Make sure drivers have the appropriate pass to meet the trailhead requirements.
- Ask for volunteers to sweep (the last one on of the group on the hike) if no assistant.
- During the first 10-15 minutes of the hike, take it easy to allow people to warm up.
- Take a break early in the hike to allow hikers to remove jackets or to hydrate. Take water breaks often if the trail is steep or it's a hot day.
- **Remember – take time to enjoy the surroundings. No hike is a race!**
- **Do not allow a person to hike alone at any time.** Emphasize that if pit stops are taken or a hiker wants to go ahead of the group or return to the trailhead, he/she must always have someone with him/her. The hike leader or sweep must be notified.
- It may be advisable to take a separation break (pit stop) with men and women heading to different directions, joining after the break.
- **As a rule of thumb, the hike leader is the first one on the hike; nobody hikes in front of the leader. The sweep is the last one in the group of hikers; nobody may hike after the sweep.**
- Be prepared to mark the route at junctions on the trail for those who are behind the main group or wait at the junction for all to catch up.
- The club has a pair of two-way radios that can be used for leader and sweep communication if the group needs to stop for some reason or to allow the group to get caught up if too separated.
- The club also has a small first aid kit that the leader should carry.
- If for some reason you cannot lead the hike or be an assistant, please find a replacement.
- Forest service rules do not allow groups of more than 12 hikers at the same time in the wilderness area of the forest. If more than 12 people are on a hike, the leader should divide the group into an “A” group (for faster hikers) and a “B” group (for those who want to enjoy the flowers). Be sure to assign a leader and a sweep for each group. The two groups should be separated by a 10-minute time span starting from the trailhead. They should meet up at the turn-around or lunch break during the hike.
- A note of the two groups (A and B) shall be made on the sign-in sheet and a count done of each group.
- The hiking bag, containing the two radios, a radio charger, and the first-aid kit, should be given by the hike leader to the next hike leader, etc., unless an agreed-upon plan is reached. This will keep the bag passed along throughout all hikes, from leader to leader.
- Dogs are not allowed on trails in the National Parks, etc. Owner should check on specific trail.