



GNHA HIKE LEADERS GUIDE

This guide does not cover all of the situations that will arise during the planning and conduct of a hike. Also, some of the items listed below will not apply to all hikes. Hike Leaders must use their best judgment to decide what is best for a given situation.

Items for the Hike Description Write up.

- Refer to the “GNHA Hike Rating System” for a general hike difficulty rating.
- Describe the general location of the hike and a detailed description of the hike.
- Include the trails to be used, distance, elevation gain, hike rating, pace, terrain, stream crossings, rock scrambles, bushwhacking, viewpoints and any other special features.
- Include estimated time places of interest and special instructions.
- Include details of any special clothing, footwear or equipment that may be needed.
- Consider potential weather conditions.
- Included your contact information.
- Select the meetup location(s) for the group.
- Prepare driving directions.

Before the Hike Considerations

- Scout the hike for trail conditions, parking limitations, access roads and other potential obstacles.
- Be aware of options to cut the hike short and the shortest exit routes, regrouping points, bailout points.
- Screen hikers on the phone to determine whether they are capable of handling the hike.
- If you can't lead your hike for any reason, try to locate a substitute. The club's email can be a good source.
- Check the weather forecast a few days in advance of the hike. Cancel if weather dictates.
- Pack the Essentials for a Day Hikers Pack.
- Have a track file for a phone app or GPS unit for others in the group.
- Have a paper map of the hike available.
- Consider the use of walkie talkies for larger groups. The Motorola Talkabout T4XX series of radios are reasonably priced models designed for recreational use. The **club channel is 20** and the **privacy code is 2**.

Hike Activities at the Meeting Place

- Arrive at the meeting place at least 15 minutes before schedule time
- Use the GNHA HIKE FORM sign-in sheet to document contact information before the start of the hike.
- Evaluate preparedness of hikers for this hike.
 - Physical fitness
 - Experience
 - Food and water
 - Footwear
 - Clothing
 - Do not hesitate to turn away unprepared hikers.
- Make announcements about the hike: estimated time, pace, regrouping points, bailout points, places of interest and special instructions.
- Make announcements about driving: encourage drivers to follow you. If directions are complex or the trip is long, arrange an intermediate stopping point. Discuss parking at the trailhead, shuttle arrangements, car pool fee and park entry fee.
- Arrange car pools. Assume four people per vehicle and extra vehicles as needed for a shuttle.
- Ensure that each car pool has the driving instructions.
- Try to balance the number of people in each vehicle.
- If some hikers have Park passes, try to have one in each vehicle.
- Describe shuttle arrangements.
- Provide a conservative estimate for returning to the meeting place.

Hike Activities at the Trail

• Tasks at the trailhead

- Take a head count and make sure that it agrees with the sign-in sheet.
- Brief hikers by repeating important points.
- Assign a Sweep.
 - The Sweep should be a reliable person who knows the trail and will never leave anyone behind.
 - The leader and sweep should carry two-way radios if available.
- Caution hikers to stay between the Hike Leader and the Sweep.
- Explain trail marking conventions such as arrows noting direction of travel.
- Indicate where and when lunch will be.

• **Lead the hike – Have Fun!**

- Moderate the pace of the hike to keep all hikers within reasonable sight.
- Take appropriate trail breaks for clothing adjustments and personal needs.
- Take a cell phone if you have one. Cell phones should not be relied upon as a primary method of contact because they frequently don't work in remote areas.
- Take the sign-in sheet.
- Take periodic head counts.
- Don't lose anyone.
- Wait at all trail junctions.
- Discourage people going ahead or going back alone.
- Stop the hike and return to the trailhead if storms, darkness etc. threaten the group's safety.

After the Hike

- Account for all hikers at the conclusion of the hike.
- Do not leave the trailhead until all the other cars have left or at least started their engines.

GNHA is a nonprofit organization led by a group of all-volunteer officers, directors and hike leaders.

[Meetup.com/ GNHA-HIKING-CLUB](https://www.meetup.com/GNHA-HIKING-CLUB)

or visit our web site @ www.greenvillehiking.com.



GNHA Hike Rating System

<https://www.greenvillehiking.com/hike-rating-system.html>

HIKE ABBREVIATIONS:

M: miles, **EG:** elevation gain, **Rating:** below; **Drive RT:** round trip miles, cost; **L:** limit of hikers

Hike Rating System			Hike Rating:
Hike (miles)	Elevation Gain (feet)	Points	Add points for distance and elevation gain
1	200	1	● E (Easy) = 0-4
2	400	2	● M (Moderate) = 5-8
3	600	3	● MS (Moderate/Strenuous) = 9-12
4	800	4	● S (Strenuous) = 13-16
5	1000	5	● VS (Very Strenuous) = 17-20
6	1200	6	● VVS (Very Very Strenuous) = 21-30
7	1400	7	● VVSS (Very Very Super Strenuous) = 31+
8	1600	8	
9	1800	9	Example:
10	2000	10	M: 8 [Distance of hike: = 8 points]
11	2200	11	EG: 1000 [Elevation gain: = 5 points]
12	2400	12	TOTAL = 13 Points
			Rating = S (Strenuous)

Hike Leaders Pace

Slow: 1 -2 MPH

Moderate: 2 - 2.5 MPH

Fast: 2.5 & above MPH

All hikers must RVSP to hike.

GNHA Meetup.com is the preferred method, over phone or email to hike leaders.