

CHECK LIST FOR HIKE LEADERS

By the end of September, send a summary of your hike to the Handbook Committee for inclusion in the next SMHC Handbook. Include your name and that of your co-leader, along with the hike difficulty level and distance.

FOR ON-TRAIL HIKES: Use the following as a guide in describing the hike's degree of difficulty.

- Easy: 5 miles or less and up to 1000' elevation change, on-trail.
- Moderate: 5-10 miles and/or elevation change of 1000-2000', on-trail
- Difficult: 10-14+ miles and/or elevation change of 2000' or more, mostly on-trail, some off-trail possible.
- Strenuous or special conditions: If the hike is particularly strenuous or presents difficulties not captured in the above, hike leader should so state. For example, water crossings that may require wading, or long pants and sleeves for briars.

FOR OFF-TRAIL HIKES: The leaders are encouraged to explain any unique difficulties that may be encountered, and the experience levels recommended for the hike. Most off-trail hikes should be described as difficult.

- By the fifteenth of the month before your hike, scout the hike, and then email a description of your hike, with meeting time and place, to the Newsletter Editor. Include the leader names, phones and/or email addresses. If you consider it necessary for safety or hike management, you may state in the newsletter description that pre-registration with you or your co-leader is a requirement. If you prefer that your on-trail hike not be published in social media send an email to that effect to Cindy spangler spangler@utk.edu
- Obtain any permits or private land use permissions that may be required.
- Carry an emergency telephone number for the area in which you will hike, e.g. (865) 436-1230 for GSMN Park. If the hike is not within the GSMN Park, please try to get an emergency contact phone number.

AT THE MEETING PLACE OR THE TRAILHEAD

- Arrive at the meeting place at least 15 minutes early to greet visitors and coordinate transportation.
- Obtain the signatures of all hikers on the sign-up sheet, with complete addresses of visitors (If you did not receive a sign-up sheet in the mail, print one out from the website. smhclub.org). Each guest receives the next two Club newsletters, so the addresses should be legible.
- At the carpool meeting place and/or the trailhead, ask everyone to introduce themselves. Ask specifically about newcomers to an SMHC hike, welcome them, and encourage them to ask questions.
- Briefly describe the plan for the hike, particularly any challenging areas to be aware of.
- Ask if anyone has medical training. Ask that you be informed of any medical conditions that could negatively impact hiking ability.
- Do a final head count.
- Take full charge of the hike, one leader in front and one at the rear. Ask hikers to stay between the two leaders.
- As the leader, you have the right and responsibility to:
 - Exclude those who, in your judgement are not physically able, and experienced or not properly equipped,
 - Appoint a co-leader at the trailhead if that job is vacant,
 - Inform hikers that a leader must be notified if anyone needs to leave the group.
- As a rule, stop at all trail junctions. It is also a good idea to stop at any difficult sections, such as creek crossings or areas involving climbing over obstacles.
- Dogs are not permitted on Club hikes. This Club policy is for the enjoyment of the many members who would rather not share the trail with dogs. Firearms are not allowed on SMHC hikes.
- For Group A.T. maintenance hikes, all the above applies. In addition, tool safety instructions should be given, types of tools explained, and try to give newcomers a choice in the tasks they would like to perform.

AFTER THE HIKE:

- Check off all hikers at the end of the trip and determine that all drivers can start their cars.
- Email a brief account of the trip highlights to Sarah Wimmer ches1995@yahoo.com soon after the hike.
- Mail the sign-up sheet to Jean Bangham using the SASE that was sent to you with the sign-up sheet.

CARPOOLING

Members and visitors should carpool whenever possible; parking at the trailhead is often limited. Passengers recompense their driver for fuel used in driving to the trailhead and back. At recent gas prices, five cents per mile per passenger is considered adequate but may vary according to the number of riders and gas prices.