

New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club

Guidelines for Tour Participants

I. PURPOSE

These **Guidelines** will help you to know what is expected of you on a New Mexico Cross Country Ski Club (NMCCSC) outing, and help you to have a good time and return safely. Participants are responsible for their own well-being while on a NMCCSC ski tour. Leaders are not trained to administer first aid, nor do they carry a first aid kit for participants. All trip participants are responsible for bringing their own gear. Our trip leaders are volunteers. They receive no compensation for their services, and are not required to take anyone on a trip who is not properly prepared, equipped or experienced. The success of a NMCCSC ski tour depends on a teamwork between leaders and participants.

II. NORMAL PROCEDURES

Scheduled tours are advertised in the NMCCSC newsletter, e-groups and/or the website. Impromptu tours are advertised through the NMCCSC e-group. You must read the tour announcement carefully and compare your skiing ability and endurance with the details of the tour description. If you have any doubts about being able to complete the tour safely or about your ability to keep up with the group, contact the leader before the day of the tour and discuss it with him/her.

Plan ahead and follow the advice below:

- Check the rating of the tour to be sure you match your skill/experience level (*see **Tour Ratings***)
- Call the leader before the tour to let him/her know you are planning to come, especially if you are unsure of how well your skills and fitness match the tour description.
- Inform the leader if you have any medical conditions that might unexpectedly come into play on a tour or in an emergency.
- Read the tour description carefully and make note of the time and meeting place.
- Check out all of your equipment before the ski day.
- **Pay attention when the leader is giving the pre-ski briefing.**
- Stay with the group during the ski tour.
- Be courteous and considerate to everyone.
- Bring everything you need for the tour (*see list below*). Don't rely on the leader to have everything.
- Don't ski alone.
- Don't bring your dog.
- Be prepared to pay the driver a mileage fee.
- Show up if you tell the leader you are coming or let them know if you decide to cancel.

Bring the following items in a sturdy daypack (10 Essentials & suggested optional items):

1. Map of the area you will ski (*optional*) and compass
 2. Water (*more than you think you need ~ 2 liters or 10 oz./hour of skiing*)
 3. Food for expected consumption and some extra high-energy food for emergencies
 4. Clothing appropriate for extreme cold and worst imaginable conditions (*i.e. polypropylene underwear, fleece shirts, waterproof shell, down jacket or vest and **extra** headgear and gloves/mittens*)
 5. Sunglasses and sunscreen and a sun hat
 6. A tool for cutting, i.e. knife, scissors or Leatherman
 7. First aid kit
 8. Matches or lighter and a fire starter
 9. Headlamp and extra batteries
 10. Whistle
- Optional:*
11. Hand and/or foot warmers
 12. Space blanket and small insulating pad to sit on for lunch
 13. Fully charged cell phone if you have one
 14. Avalanche equipment (*unless required by the leader*)
 15. Two-way radios
 16. GPS and extra batteries
 17. Camera

TOUR RATINGS:

CLASS I: Tour with less than 1,000 feet of elevation gain and less than 5 miles in total length. Skiers should be able to execute stops and turns. *Some, but not all*, tours are appropriate for novice skiers with minimal cross country experience. The pace will be slow (*1 to 1.5 miles per hour*). Persons with no cross country skiing experience **MUST** take the beginning lessons or must obtain the leader's permission prior to joining a CLASS I tour.

CLASS II: Tour with less than 2,000 feet of elevation gain and is less than 10 miles in total length. Tour requires intermediate skills and ability to maintain control on moderate slopes with techniques such as snowplowing, turning and traversing. Skiers should have enough stamina for sustained kick and glide touring on near level ground at a pace of 2 miles per hour for several miles and should also be experienced at using climbing skins to climb trails with moderate slopes.

CLASS III: Tour with greater than 3,000 feet of elevation gain and greater than 10 miles in total length. Tour usually requires advanced skills and ability to competently and confidently climb and descend steep, narrow trails. A skier with advanced skills should be able to do Telemark, parallel, or comparable turns on moderate slopes. That skier should also be very experienced with using climbing skins for both climbing and safely descending steep slopes. Skiers should have the endurance for skiing 10 miles or more *within the time constraints of the tour*.

Trail slopes are categorized as follows:

- 1) Gentle slopes have less than 5% grades.
- 2) Moderate slopes have grades greater than 5 % but less than 15 %.
- 3) Steep slopes have grades greater than 15 %.

Exploratory designation. In addition to a CLASS rating, a tour may be designated exploratory (Exp). This means the leader has not skied on this route recently (*or ever*) or is unsure about some aspect of the proposed route. Participants should be experienced in backcountry skiing. They should be prepared for any possible situation and should have emergency gear with them.

III. TOUR LOGISTICS – MEETING PLACE

- Arrive at the meeting place before the departure time and call leader if you are running late.
- Introduce yourself to the leader.
- Read and sign the *Release of Liability* form.
- If you bring your cell phone, give the leader your number.
- **Stay home** if you think you have a communicable illness.

IV. AT THE TRAILHEAD

- Gather your belongings and get yourself ready to ski in a timely manner to avoid getting cold.
- Stay near the trailhead until the group is ready to begin the tour.
- Tell someone if you need a personal break and that you will be out of sight for a few moments.
- Wait for the leader. Don't start skiing ahead without permission from the leader.
- If departing from the bus, assemble your gear and skis away from the bus where the bus driver can see you.

V. ON THE SKI TOUR

- Follow the leader and participate with the group (*this sometimes means you have to do what the group wants to do rather than what you, as an individual, would prefer*).
- Select a *buddy* to ski with so the two of you ski together and keep each other in sight throughout the tour. You will still ski as a group, but in case the group gets ahead this insures that no one skis alone.
- Keep up with the group to the best of your ability. If you can't, tell the leader.
- Tell the leader if you have a problem or need to stop for any reason (*e.g. a hot spot on your foot*).
- Be considerate of others, e.g. if you need to stop get out of ski track so that others may pass.
- Tell someone if you need to leave the trail or leave your pack or some indicator on the side of the trail (*not in the tracks*) to go off the trail to relieve yourself.
- Tell the leader if you think you must turn back and follow his/her instructions.

VI. AFTER THE TRIP

- Make sure the leader knows that you have returned to the trailhead.
- Assure all vehicles start and can get out of the parking area before you leave.
- Pay your driver if you were a passenger.