



## ORINDA HIKING CLUB HIKE LEADERS' MANUAL

We've provided this manual for hike leaders planning their day hikes. Even experienced leaders are advised to occasionally review this document in order to be current on club protocol and policy.

### HIKE SCHEDULE

The day hike schedule is organized by Spring (January to June) and Fall (July to December). The schedule is included in the quarterly newsletter that is e-mailed to all dues-paying members and is also maintained on the club website, OHC Hike Schedule. The schedule is organized by date, hike type and location and also includes the hike co-leaders, refreshment provider and contact phone numbers. We offer four types of hikes distributed throughout each month.

TYPE OF HIKE	DAYS SCHEDULED	LENGTH
Regular	1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturdays 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Sundays 5 <sup>th</sup> Saturday	7 – 10 miles
Short	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Saturdays	4 – 6 miles
Extreme	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday	10 – 15 miles
Street Stroll	3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday	1.5 – 3 miles

Each month two regular hikes are sometimes repeated: The 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday hike is repeated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday hike is repeated on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday.

Regular hikes are typically up to 2000 feet of elevation gain, while extreme hikes can be up to 4000 feet of elevation gain. The hike description should always include an estimate of the elevation gain expected.

Most of these hikes leave promptly at 8:30AM from the club assembly point at the old Phairs parking lot at 3 Camino Sobrante (next to the Starbucks). Extreme hikes and regular hikes that require a longer drive to the trailhead will be scheduled for an 8:00AM or earlier departure. Wednesday hikes typically leave at 9:00AM to avoid rush hour. All strolls meet at the start of the stroll. Evening strolls, in the summer months, usually meet at 6:30PM and morning strolls, during the rest of the year, at 10:00AM. Participants should arrive 15 minutes before these times to allow time for sign in and carpooling arrangements.



## **CO-LEADERS RESPONSIBILITIES**

The co-leaders of an OHC outing are responsible for planning and leading the hiking activity as listed in the Schedule.

### **BEFORE THE HIKE**

**Planning:** All hike co-leaders shall pre-hike the route several weeks before the actual hike. For the hikes which will be done two weekends in a row, hike leaders for both weekends should do the planning and pre-hiking together. Leaders are free to select the specific route they wish to follow within the destination area. Information on hikes done previously in the same area is available in the Members Only section of the OHC website. Counsel is also available from any member of the OHC Day Trips Committee.

During the pre-hike, estimate (or measure, if you have a GPS or altimeter) the hike length and cumulative elevation gain. Also note water and toilet availability along the way, trail conditions, distances and landmarks for accurate driving directions and total mileage from Orinda. Information about your hike area (history, flora and fauna, geology, etc) may optionally be researched for later presentation to the hiking group at appropriate places along the way.

Note that pre-hikes are required for extreme hikes, as well, except for the annual New Year's Day Mt. Diablo Summit hike.

Contact the person who is to bring refreshments to confirm their participation.

**E-mailed Hike Description:** 1 – 2 weeks before the hike, a description must be e-mailed to the Club's Google Groups email address. Mei-Hsia Lee (or her backup Linda Lin), the Club's Membership Communications Coordinator, will check it over, and if it passes and has all the required info, will release it to all club members. The hike description should include date (including day of the week), general area, meeting time and place, names and phone numbers of the leaders, name of the refreshment person, hike distance, cumulative elevation gain, trail difficulty, water and toilet availability, estimated completion time, driving instructions for those wishing to drive directly to the trailhead, and the club calculated contribution for sharing the cost of driving. (total roundtrip driving distance \* \$.50 + bridge tolls + parking fee divided by 4 people). It doesn't matter how many people actually are in the car, the calculation is always based upon 4 people sharing a ride. It might be appropriate to mention extra water, lunch, long pants or insect repellent. Hike leaders will also receive an e-mail a month or more in advance, with more detailed instructions for writing and transmitting the hike description.



**Driving Directions:**The hike leaders are responsible for providing directions, in the hike description, for driving to the trailhead on the day of the hike. Directions should start from Orinda, except for strolls, and be detailed enough to avoid confusion. The address and name of the trailhead should be included for ease of using navigation. GPS coordinates for the trailhead parking are also recommended.

**Hiking Maps:**Trail or park maps should be electronically attached to the hike announcement. If possible, the hiking route should be highlighted. Optionally, hike leaders may bring copies of the maps to handout at the trailhead.

**Safety:** The hike leaders should do their best to ensure the safety of the group. This begins with the planning of the hike. Consider whether the route chosen is one that can be safely negotiated by a large group of people with varied hiking experience. It is acceptable for the leaders to change the hike route at any time to protect the well-being of the group.

**Hike Bag:** Call the leader of the hike before yours and arrange for the transfer of the “hike bag”. The bag will include two 2-way radios and charger, a first-aid kit, a cool kit and two clipboards. If any of the items are missing or need resupply, please contact Brian Waters who manages the Club's radios, Sandra Steinbeck who manages the first-aid kits and clipboards or Rana Adamson who manages the cool kits. These should be used on all hikes except street strolls. Make sure that the 2-way radios have freshly charged batteries. Also included in the OHC “hike bag” are welcoming cards to be given to OHC guests or new members prior to beginning the hike.

**Sign-up Sheets:** Prior to each hike, Marsha Hurd, will send sign-up sheets to the co-leaders. It is important that these sheets be used, since they include a liability waiver to protect hike leaders and the club.

**Permits:** Anyone leading hikes on EBMUD property must have a “Trail Leader” permit which enables the holder to lead groups of up to 30. Trail Leader permits cost no more than regular permits, and all OHC members who wish to have EBMUD permits are encouraged to apply for the “Trail Leader” permit. Just purchase a regular EBMUD individual permit online and then complete the hardcopy EBMUD Application for Trail Leader Permit. Paul Prehn will provide you this form with the OHC sponsoring section already filled in. Once completed, mail it to EBMUD and a few days later you will see your permit updated in your account on the EBMUD website. You can then print your Trail Leaders Permit. The permit means that you, the leader, are responsible for the conduct of your entire group on EBMUD lands.

If permits are required for hiking in other areas, the leaders are responsible for



obtaining them in advance. Free permits are required when hiking in the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (e.g. Windy Hill, La Honda Creek, Monte Bello, El Corte de Madera Creek, Sierra Azul, Russian Ridge, Saratoga Gap, etc.) and can be requested at <https://www.openspace.org/visit-a-preserve/permits>. Permits, with a \$30 processing fee, are also now required for Marin County Open Space Preserves (e.g. Rush Creek, Indian Tree, Indian Valley, Mount Burdell, Ring Mountain, etc.) and can be requested by calling (415) 473-7608 or (415) 473-2816.

**Weather Conditions:** Forecasted weather conditions (too hot, rain, mud) can make the planned hike a poor choice. In these circumstances, hike leaders should consider finding an alternative hike or canceling the hike. The hike leaders are responsible for making the final decision. Hike leaders can contact Paul Prehn, the Club's, Day Hikes Committee Chair, to get help with planning an alternative hike. When a hike is canceled, it would be helpful if one of the hike leaders still goes to the Assembly Point in case any members don't see the email notification.

### **AT THE ASSEMBLY POINT**

Arrive at the Assembly Point 15 minutes before the scheduled departure time.

1. Make sure you have the sign-up sheets for OHC members and non-member guest hikers available on each of the clipboards. As each hiker arrives, they should sign in on the appropriate sheet. Issue 3x5 welcome cards to guest and new members.
2. Leaders have the authority and are encouraged to screen participants. If the leaders judge that a person is not properly equipped, not qualified to participate, or has been disruptive on a previous hike by not following the Club's or leader's guidelines, that person may be denied participation in that day's hike or walk. Factors to be considered include the physical condition of the participant and proper equipment such as boots, sufficient water, appropriate clothing for the weather, etc. The well-being of the entire party should always be considered.
3. About 5 minutes before the scheduled departure time ask all the hikers to circle up.
  - a) Facilitate the organization of carpools. Make sure that everyone has a ride. Hand out driving directions to the drivers. Announce that everyone is expected to contribute to the cost of driving and mention the club calculated amount.
  - b) Briefly describe the nature of the hike: where it is, its difficulty, water and toilet availability, estimated hike completion time, and any special considerations such as entry fees, parking suggestions, or navigation difficulties. Mention any special rules that might be in force at the particular park or wilderness area.
  - c) Discourage the participation of anyone who does not appear to have at least the minimum equipment, especially hiking footwear, and water for the day's hike.



- d) Introduce any guests or new members, and make sure that they have received a welcome card.
  - e) Have everyone count off. Check to make sure the count number corresponds to the sign-in number.
4. Leave the assembly point on time and proceed to the trailhead.

### **AT THE TRAILHEAD**

1. Make sure those meeting you at the trailhead sign in.
2. Test the radios to make sure they work, and that each leader knows how to use them. The two-way radios are to be used by the hike leaders to communicate with each other. This is important in case of emergency or so that the lead hiker does not get too far ahead. The hike leaders shall carry the first-aid kit and the cool kit (when the weather is warm).
3. When all carloads have arrived, ask the group to circle up, repeat 3b through 3e in the previous section. Introduce the hike "lead" and "sweep". Explain to any new hikers that they are not to get in front of the "lead" or be behind the "sweep".
4. At the trailhead, people should be discouraged from making announcements, handing out flyers, selling anything, or in any other way interfering with your management of a successful hike. With the approval of the leaders, any such activities can be done at the lunch break or at the end of the hike.
5. Anyone at least 18 years of age, club member or not, is welcome to hike with us. Dogs or other pets are not allowed on club outings.

### **ON THE TRAIL**

Whenever the "lead" reaches a trail junction he/she should stop or ask for a volunteer to act as the junction guide until the sweep arrives. This will prevent someone taking a wrong turn, which has certainly happened more than once on OHC hikes. No hiker is to be in front of the "lead" or behind the "sweep".

When hiking on roads, the group should generally walk on the side of the oncoming traffic.

Keep the walking pace comfortable for the whole group. The lead should ensure that the group is not strung out over a great distance. Since not everyone hikes at the same pace, the faster hikers must wait periodically for everyone to catch up. Allow the slower hikers time for a break before starting out again.



Lunch is a good time for the leaders to ask for Club announcements.

Arrange “potty” breaks as needed or requested.

### **Trail Etiquette Tips**

- Observe regulations
- Don't pick flowers or plants
- Be considerate to others on the trail
- Stay on the trail, don't take short cuts
- Remember that uphill hikers have right-of-way
- Respect private property
- Move to the right if someone overtakes you
- Bikers should give way to hikers and hikers to horses. When horses approach move off the trail, ten feet if possible, and remain quiet and still.

### **AFTER THE HIKE**

At the end of the hike take a count to make sure no one is missing.

The co-leaders should stay until everyone else has departed to clean up any trash, rescue items left behind and to be sure that no one is left without a ride.

Make sure that the sign-up sheets are updated with the total miles hiked and are sent to Skip Lees, our clubs Database Manager. Include copies of any hiking and driving maps or other supporting documents for the hike. This information is then filed for the use of future hike leaders. Also, make sure that the 2-way radios, first aid kit, welcoming cards and clipboards are passed on to the leaders of the next hike.

### **IF YOU CAN NOT LEAD THE HIKE**

If a co-leader cannot be there for the hike, that co-leader is responsible for finding a replacement. The three typical ways you can find a replacement are: 1) calling club members you know 2) asking your co-leader if she/he knows of anyone who might be able to step in and 3) asking club members at upcoming hikes you attend. These three methods usually result in finding a replacement co-leader. Whether you find a replacement or not please contact the Day Hikes Schedule Coordinator, Paul Prehn. Paul can arrange for an e-mail to be sent to all club members announcing the need for a replacement leader. If all efforts fail, either the remaining co-leader can lead the hike on his/her own (assigning a sweep on the day of the hike), or the Day Trips Committee will arrange to have an e-mail sent out canceling the hike.

Revised 7/24/2024