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## **Operating Procedure # O - P - 9**

**Subject:** Programming - High Risk Programming

**Effective Date:** July 6, 2015

**Revision Date:** March 21, 2016; May 3, 2019

### **Procedure Statement:**

High-risk programming includes those programs that present physical safety concerns for participants. Examples of high-risk programs include: archery, black powder demonstrations, canoeing and other water activities, caving, mountain biking, ropes course and team building activities, rappelling, shooting sports, horseback riding, wilderness survival, etc. Some programs require certified leaders. Region Managers will determine which programs are considered to be a high risk and must provide written approval. All high-risk program participants are required to complete a Registration and Waiver Release Form located in PRHS Operating Procedure O-P-12.

### **Definitions:**

None.

### **Procedure:**

#### **ARCHERY PROGRAMS**

Persons, both state employees or private citizens, wanting to conduct an archery program on a state park or historic site are required to have written permission from the region office and adhere to the following procedures:

- A. Shooting will be at designated times only.
- B. Designated safety personnel must staff the range whenever it is being used.
- C. No one is allowed forward of the shooting lane while shooting.
- D. Only shooters or instructors will retrieve their arrows.
- E. All participants must sign and return a Registration and Waiver Release Form.
- F. The archery range must be secured and closed to the public while in operation.

## **BLACK POWDER ACTIVITIES**

The use of black powder, which is an explosive, is subject to special federal, state and frequently local laws. The use of firearms or other projectile weapons on state parks and historic sites land is regulated by law (See Georgia Code 12-3-10, paragraph (o). This procedure outlines the steps by which activities can be conducted on state parks and historic sites utilizing firearms that use black powder.

### **BLACK POWDER ACTIVITIES**

- A. Activities involving the use of black powder shall be approved by the Regional Manager. Such approval can be for an ongoing interpretive program or for a special event. A "Request for Permission to Hold a Black Powder Demonstration" form shall be used to document this requirement. This form is located in the Black Powder Safety Manual.
- B. The Regional Manager or his/her designee shall inspect and approve all areas that will be used to demonstrate, store or use black powder.
- C. All activities utilizing black powder will follow the guideline established in the Black Powder Safety Manual which is the basis for training and demonstration activities for the division.

### **CERTIFIED SAFETY OFFICERS**

- A. Only those persons who have successfully passed the "Black Powder Safety Officer Examination" with a grade of over 90% as part of the Safety Standards and Certification Program will be designated to issue prior approval to possess and use black powder firearms on state parks or historic sites.
- B. The Black Powder Safety Certified Safety Officer shall be a full time D.N.R. employee, or full time DNR contract employee through the North Georgia Mountains Authority, 21 or older, who will be responsible for safeguarding employees, volunteers, visitors and property and for doing what is reasonable and prudent to maintain a safe environment in using inherently dangerous instruments.
- C. Park or site managers are responsible for having a certified safety officer on hand for all black powder activities. A current list of certified safety officers can be obtained from the Region Manager.

## BLACK POWDER SAFETY RULES

- A. All military style black powder events shall follow the safety rules entitled Military Black Powder Safety Rules in the Black Powder Safety Manual.
- B. Military re-enactment demonstrations shall follow the guidelines for Tactical Demonstrations.

## PADDLING PROGRAMS

The Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division has established guidelines for planning, staffing and conducting canoeing and kayaking programs. These procedures are compatible with the nationally recognized Safety Code established by the American Canoeing Association.

### TRIP LEADER GUIDELINES

- A. Each trip must be accompanied by at least one site staff member who has been certified by the **Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites Paddling Training Program**. This person is the designated trip leader. A second leader should be appointed by the trip leader who will be an assistant leader. The designated assistant leader must be approved by the trip leader and Site Manager.
- B. A trip leader certification will last for a period of three years, ending on 12-31 of the third year. After three years, the trip leader must be re-certified to lead paddling trips.
- C. The trip leader will have a thorough knowledge of the type of water (lake, river, etc.) that is used for the program and be aware of how possible changes in water level can affect the difficulty of the run.
- D. The trip leader will inform participants of expected river conditions and review safety procedures and determine if the prospective paddlers are qualified for the trip. All decisions will be based on group safety and comfort.
- E. The trip leader is responsible for all required group equipment for the program, this includes:
  - 1) a throw rope or throw bag, a whistle, and flashlight
  - 2) first aid kit with fresh and adequate supplies
  - 3) extra paddle and flotation device
  - 4) repair materials
  - 5.) cell phone or radio contained in a dry sack
  - 6.) knife
- F. The trip leader should remind each member of their responsibility in keeping the group compact and intact between the leader and sweep boat. If the group is large (more than 10 boats) divide into smaller groups, each of appropriate paddling strength, a DNR group leader should be designated for each group.

- G. The trip leader should establish and file a float plan with park or site superintendent before leaving the park/site. This plan should include estimated arrival and departure times from certain areas. Checkpoints should be established along the way at which communication could be made if necessary.
- H. The trip leader should offer the opportunity for basic instruction on paddling and should assess the skill level of the participants in the maneuvering of their boats before the actual river trip begins. Adjustments or instructions should be made to insure the safety of both individuals or the group.
- I. A trip leader may deny any participant from joining a paddling trip if the trip leader feels the participants' safety or the safety of others might be jeopardized by the participants inclusion on the trip. Participants under the influence of drugs or alcohol are not permitted to participate.
- J. Guided trips and night trips such as full moon paddle programs should be offered in impounded bodies of water within a State Park or where there are no other boats during the program.
- K. Paddling programs conducted on federal waterways (U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Reservoirs) must carry a sounding device and a light (A bright flashlight and whistle meet these requirements.)**

#### PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Each participant is required to wear a coast guard approved life jacket whenever they are on the water.
- B. Each participant must be physically able to control their boat in the type of easy to moderate water conditions experienced in our programs.
- C. Everyone must be suitable dressed. Adequate shoes should be worn and clothing should protect the paddler from the sun as well as cold.

#### **Canoe and Equipment Preparedness (for both DNR equipment and participant's personal or rented equipment)**

- A. Leaders should examine new or unfamiliar equipment before relying on it for programs.
- B. Be sure each piece of equipment is in good repair and can function safely. Note: Flotation devices should be physically dated and retired after three (3) seasons of use.
- C. Have strong, adequately sized paddles for controlling the boat and carry sufficient spares for the length of the trip.
- D. Be certain there is absolutely nothing to cause entanglement to the participant in the boat.
- E. A trip leader should carry a rope of adequate length to tow a boat back to shore if necessary and know how to safely attach the rope to a boat for use during an

emergency.

- F. The canoe/kayak manufacturer's occupancy limits, for each boat, must be observed. (In most cases two adults is the maximum capacity for most 16 feet canoes.)

## **Water Activities**

Some Special Events such as Junior Ranger Camps may include a water activity. Sites are encouraged to incorporate nature-based and recreational activities with water such as creek or marsh walks, sprinklers, splash pads, etc. These types of activities are permissible since they do not involve swimming. Sites are not permitted to conduct swimming activities with the exception Victoria Bryant and Franklin D. Roosevelt in their lifeguard staffed pools.

## **ROPE COURSE AND TEAM BUILDING PROGRAMS**

At least one staff member at sites with ropes course elements or team-building activities must attend a formal training course with an industry professional to learn facilitation skills. The recommended training facility is Project Adventure in Covington, Ga.

All sites with a ropes course must have a site-specific "Local Operating Procedures Manual". An annual site and equipment safety inspection by an industry professional such as Project Adventure is required for all sites with a ropes course/team building facility.

## **OTHER HIGH RISK PROGRAMS**

Other high risk programs such as tree climbing, zip lines, etc. may be added once they are approved.

### **Authority:**

O.C.G.A. 12-3-10 (o)

O.C.G.A. 12-3-9

DNR RULES 391-5-1-.01 (c)

### **Attachments:**

Attachment 1 – Request for Permission to Hold a Black Powder Demonstration Form

Attachment 2 – Request for Permission to Hold an Archery Program Form