

**Cold River Camp Supplement**  
**to the**  
**Appalachian Mountain Club's**  
**Outdoor Leader Handbook**

**November 2014**

## Contents

|      |   |    |
|------|---|----|
| 1    | Introduction.....                                       | 3  |
| 2    | Goals of the Trip Leader.....                           | 3  |
| 3    | Trip Leader Requirements.....                           | 3  |
| 4    | Trip Leader Responsibilities.....                       | 3  |
| 5    | Week's Trip Leader Coordinator Duties.....              | 4  |
| 6    | CRC Routine Procedures.....                             | 4  |
| 6.1  | Initial Trip Leader meeting.....                        | 4  |
| 6.2  | Posting the week's schedule.....                        | 5  |
| 6.3  | Saturday evening orientation meeting.....               | 5  |
| 6.4  | Daily trip process.....                                 | 6  |
| 6.5  | End of week responsibilities.....                       | 6  |
| 7    | Hike Planning.....                                      | 6  |
| 7.1  | Knowledge of the hike.....                              | 6  |
| 7.2  | Hike Leader equipment and supplies.....                 | 7  |
| 7.3  | In-camp pre-trip meeting, before departing.....         | 7  |
| 7.4  | At the trailhead.....                                   | 7  |
| 8    | Canoe/Kayak Trip Planning.....                          | 8  |
| 8.1  | Canoe Trip Leader Qualifications.....                   | 8  |
| 8.2  | Canoe/Kayak Trip Preparation.....                       | 8  |
| 8.3  | Trip Leader equipment and supplies for Water Trips..... | 9  |
| 8.4  | Example of a water trip preparation time line.....      | 9  |
| 8.5  | At the put-in.....                                      | 11 |
| 8.6  | During the trip.....                                    | 12 |
| 8.7  | At the take-out.....                                    | 12 |
| 9    | Trip Documentation.....                                 | 12 |
| 10   | "Leading"—From the Front or the Rear?.....              | 13 |
| 10.1 | Factors that favor leading from the rear.....           | 13 |
| 10.2 | Factors that favor leading from the front.....          | 13 |
| 11   | Managing Groups.....                                    | 13 |
| 11.1 | The Trip Leader.....                                    | 13 |
| 11.2 | Group Management.....                                   | 13 |
| 11.3 | Guest leaving a led trip.....                           | 14 |
| 12   | Safety and Emergencies.....                             | 14 |
| 12.1 | Minimizing the risk of emergencies.....                 | 15 |
| 12.2 | Emergency scene management.....                         | 15 |
| 12.3 | First aid.....  | 16 |
| 12.4 | Searching for a missing trip participant.....           | 16 |
| 12.5 | Reporting on emergencies.....                           | 16 |
| 13   | Hiking in designated Wilderness Areas.....              | 16 |
| 14   | Excluding Guests from Participation.....                | 17 |
| 15   | The Intern Program.....                                 | 17 |

# 1 Introduction

This supplement to the AMC's *Outdoor Leader Handbook* (OLH) provides guidelines and procedures for volunteer Trip Leaders (Hike Leaders and Naturalists) at Cold River Camp (CRC). It complies with the 10th edition of the OLH, the primary guidance and policy document for AMC Trip Leaders. Together, this document and the OLH provide the framework within which CRC Trip Leaders should operate to provide safe and enjoyable experiences for CRC guests. This document will be reviewed and revised periodically. Comments and suggestions should be sent to the current CRC Hike Leader and Naturalist Coordinators.

## 2 Goals of the Trip Leader

- Provide trips, programs and other activities that are appropriate, safe and enjoyable for camp guests.
- Provide information and advice on hikes and other activities to guests planning activities on their own.
- Build a sense of CRC community.

## 3 Trip Leader Requirements

During the week of their leading, all Trip Leaders are required to be AMC members, to have cleared an AMC approved criminal background check within the last three years and to have the following valid certifications:

- Wilderness First Aid (or higher certification)
- CPR
- AMC Leadership

## 4 Trip Leader Responsibilities

To meet the Trip Leader goals, Trip Leaders are expected to:

- Work with other Trip Leaders to plan the week's hikes, canoe trips, evening programs and other activities, taking into consideration guests' abilities and interests, leaders' abilities and knowledge, and weather, trail or river conditions.
- Lead four trips during the week and announce and report on each trip. In addition, Hike Leaders offer or arrange for one evening program and Naturalists lead the Junior Naturalist Program during the week. Hike leaders and Intern Hike Leaders should coordinate evening programs before coming to Camp.
- Change the week's or day's trip plan to meet camp needs or for guest safety, in consultation with the Trip Leader Coordinator and other leaders.
- Offer an alternative activity when severe weather or other conditions would compromise planned trip safety.
- Maintain, carry and know how to use a fully supplied CRC first aid kit on all led trips.

- Supplement their knowledge by using the expertise of fellow leaders, staff, crew and others.
- Be familiar with CRC and other related agencies' programs and activities (e.g., Junior Naturalist Program, Chatham Trails Association, and the U.S. Forest Service).
- Encourage the integration of first-time guests into Camp life, and foster a sense of cooperation among guests, staff, crew and other leaders.
- Complete Trip Description and Trip Log forms accurately and on time.
- Avoid creating or fostering situations where a guest could feel that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, discrimination, or disrespect.
- Consider serving as mentor to a Trip Leader Intern during the week. See Section 15.

## **5 Week's Trip Leader Coordinator Duties**

In addition to the responsibilities of the Trip Leader, the Weekly Trip Leader Coordinator is responsible to:

- Lead Saturday's Trip Leader meeting to develop a balanced, guest-focused schedule of trips and programs.
- Present the Trip Leader segment of the Saturday evening orientation meeting.
- Mentor any new leaders.
- If not the mentor of a Trip Leader Intern, ensure mentoring is occurring. See Section 15.
- Maintain good lines of communication between Trip Leaders, Camp management and staff.
- Keep the Trip Leaders apprised of the daily weather forecast.
- Work with leaders and Camp Managers to facilitate guest safety and satisfaction with trips.
- Mitigate problems arising among leaders and/or guests.
- Ensure that leaders have complete CRC first aid kits at the beginning of the week, and access to parking passes and report forms throughout the week.
- Participate in decisions regarding the ability of guests to undertake specific trips, based on the guests' physical condition and other factors.
- Ensure that first aid kits and parking passes are returned to the office at the end of the week, and that reports are completed accurately and on time.
- Complete and submit the WMNF Summary of Use form to the Camp Manager.

## **6 CRC Routine Procedures**

### ***6.1 Initial Trip Leader meeting***

All of the week's Trip Leaders (including interns) meet in the Manager's quarters at 4:30 p.m. on the first Saturday of the week. The purpose of the meeting is to plan the full

week of trips, activities and evening programs, and receive information from the Camp Manager. The Coordinator should lead the meeting, including

- Reviewing Trip Leaders' interests and goals.
- Distributing first aid kits and parking passes to all Trip Leaders.
- Discussing the use and location of the Trip Description forms, Trip Log Forms and Medical Release Forms for Minors.

## **6.2 *Posting the week's schedule***

After the initial Trip Leader meeting and before the Saturday evening orientation meeting, the Coordinator should post the week's tentative schedule of activities on the Lodge porch bulletin board.

## **6.3 *Saturday evening orientation meeting***

At this meeting, the Coordinator should:

- Introduce all Trip Leaders.
- Describe the goals of the Trip Leader.
- Describe the events of a typical day and where the activities schedule is posted.
- Acquaint guests with the reference materials on hiking, canoeing and other activities available in the Camp libraries.
- Discuss responsible hiking practices, Wilderness Area restrictions and parking pass requirements.
- Discuss general risks of and safety precautions for outdoor activities.
- Emphasize the responsibility of each guest to carry adequate and appropriate supplies and equipment on every led hike:
  - Food and water
  - Materials for food and sanitary disposal
  - Suitable clothing and footwear, allowing for quick changes in weather on the trail including extra clothing for wet and/or cold weather
  - Sun screen and insect repellent
  - Personal medicines
  - Medical Release form for minor not accompanied by own parent/guardian
  - Parking pass, when needed
- Review the need for adult supervision of minors and the use of the Medical Release Form for Minors.
- Require the use of the Wanderer's List when doing self-led activities and explain why it is important.
- Ask other leaders for comments and ask guests for questions.
- Remain after the meeting with other leaders to answer questions.

## **6.4 Daily trip process**

Each day of a led trip, a leader should:

- Complete a Trip Description form and place it on the clipboard in the dining hall before breakfast.
- Make the trip announcement at breakfast, emphasize any gear and equipment to be packed due to weather or activity and pass around the Trip Description form and sign-up sheet.
- At the announced trip meeting time, coordinate round trip transportation using as few vehicles as possible.
- Lead a safe and enjoyable trip, making sure to get back before dinner time.
- Give or encourage someone else to give a trip report at dinner.
- Complete a Trip Log form.

## **6.5 End of week responsibilities**

- Return first aid kit and parking passes to Camp office.

# **7 Hike Planning**

The goal of hike planning is to provide a safe, appropriate and enjoyable hike for Camp guests. This planning includes evaluating the suitability of a hike for Camp guests, determining hike route and its probable conditions, and planning for emergencies. As a general rule, exceptionally difficult or hazardous hikes should not be offered.

## **7.1 Knowledge of the hike**

Trip Leaders should always know the following about a proposed hike:

- Trailhead – directions and distance to, type of transportation, shuttle requirements, parking pass requirement
- Trail – name(s) and blaze(s), distance(s), anticipated hiking time, trail junctions, condition and ease of following, whether in Wilderness Area, features such as vistas or other points of interest, overall difficulty
- Elevation – starting elevation, high point, total elevation gain, steepest and average slopes, length of steep slopes, difficulty of scrambles
- Probable surface conditions – trail width, overgrown or clear, rock ledges, boulders, scree, dry or wet, boggy or muddy, slippery
- Exposure – above tree line or wooded, sun, precipitation, wind
- Water – sources, potable/non-potable, treatment options, stream crossings
- Alternate routes that might be needed as a result of injury, illness or other emergency, severe weather, unusually slow group, etc.
- Predicted and current weather – including temperature range, wind, likelihood of thunder storms, and possibility and type of precipitation (especially at higher elevations). If the forecasted weather poses a high level of risk, the leader should

substitute another trip for the day. Note: Notify Coordinator and Camp Manager of any change.

Trip Leaders should ideally have completed a hike they propose to lead at least once prior to leading it or acquired information on the hike from a credible source. The *AMC White Mountain Guide* and Don Devine's *Cold River Camp-AMC Hiking Guide* provide useful trail information. Trip Leaders should be aware that trailheads, trail routes, and trail conditions are subject to change.

## **7.2 Hike Leader equipment and supplies**

In addition to the hiker equipment listed in Sec. 5.3, the Leader should carry:

- Fully stocked CRC first aid kit
- Compass
- Whistle
- Area map
- List of participants
- Flashlight
- Matches
- Pencil and paper in waterproof bag

## **7.3 In-camp pre-trip meeting, before departing**

Meet with all participants before leaving camp:

- Verify that all who signed up are present.
- Check to make sure guests have the equipment and supplies needed for the trip. Remind guests of equipment and supplies needed for the trip (Sec. 5.3).
- Assign transportation using as few vehicles as possible.
- Ensure vehicles have parking passes, if applicable.
- Describe the walk or drive to the trailhead, including shuttle instructions if any.

## **7.4 At the trailhead**

Before the group leaves the trailhead, the Trip Leader should:

- Have participants introduce themselves to each other.
- Check that everyone has all desired gear out of cars.
- Check that drivers have car keys, all cars are locked, all car lights are turned off and, if applicable, parking passes are visible.
- Show on a map the route to be taken; describe any special concerns.
- Describe blazes and other trail markers.
- Clearly designate someone as the lead hiker and someone as the sweep (last hiker in the group); set a rule that no one goes ahead of the lead hiker or gets behind the sweep.

- Remind hike participants that they should inform the leader of any medical conditions or medications they are taking that could impact their safety or that of the group.
- Describe any additional rules that apply to the hike (e.g., specific rules for minor on the hike without parents, stop and wait at every trail junction, no one should hike alone).
- Set the policy for trail breaks and the lunch stop.
- Re-verify the number in the group and the participants by name.

## **8 Canoe/Kayak Trip Planning**

Trips on the Androscoggin or Saco River are a regular and popular part of the CRC weekly schedule. (Trips on streams, lakes and ponds are also offered occasionally.) Water trips are complex to lead because of the logistics of securing equipment from the outfitter, the typically large group size (40+ is common), the money involved, and the variables and risks inherent in traveling on the water. Thus, advance planning is critical for a successful trip.

### **8.1 Canoe Trip Leader Qualifications**

To ensure qualified canoe trip leaders, the following guidelines should be met:

- Any present leader who has led CRC canoe trips, without negative reports, is qualified to lead CRC canoe trips. In case of negative reports, the Hike Leader or Naturalist Coordinator will investigate the report and determine that leader's qualification to lead.
- The Hike Leader or Naturalist Coordinator will consider another canoe trip leading experience as a substitute for the above qualification.
- Any intern who wants to lead canoe trips when becoming a leader and any present leader who has not led a CRC canoe trip but wants to lead one in the future must lead a canoe trip under the supervision of a CRC leader qualified to lead canoe trips. The supervising CRC leader will determine if the person is qualified to lead CRC canoe trips in the future and communicate the decision to the appropriate Coordinator.
- It is mandatory recommended that a canoe trip leader have canoed the river before leading others on it.

### **8.2 Canoe/Kayak Trip Preparation**

Information on current outfitters is on file in the camp office. Since special rates for CRC trips may have been negotiated at the beginning of the season, consult the Camp Manager for rate information before making reservations. The outfitter is an excellent source of up-to-date information on river conditions.

At a minimum, all trips should have a qualified front admiral and sweep. For trips with more than 20 boats, a qualified middle admiral should be assigned. The leader should



select and talk with people for these positions well before the trip so that he/she is confident in their abilities.

Trip Leaders should be knowledgeable about the following aspects of the trip:

- Outfitter information – type of boats available, Personal Flotation Device (PFD) size categories, boat delivery and pick-up procedures, costs, payment methods
- Put-in/take-out – directions and distance to, type of transportation, shuttle requirements, parking pass requirement
- River or pond – name(s), travel distance and time, water level and flow rate, points of interest (beaches, confluences, etc.)
- Known hazards – dams, planned releases, drops, rapids, downed or submerged trees
- Alternate take-outs – in case of emergency (e.g., injury or illness), severe weather, unusually slow group, etc.
- Predicted and current weather – temperature, wind, possibility and type of precipitation and storms. Water travel during lightning should be avoided.

### **8.3 Trip Leader equipment and supplies for Water Trips**

In addition to the equipment and supplies required of a Hike Leader (Sections 5.3 and 6.2), the following are required on water trips:

- River map
- One extra canoe paddle and kayak paddle, carried by the sweep or other boat staying near the rear.
- One extra 90+ pound PFD
- Two throw ropes
- One whistle per boat to be used for emergency only. The emergency signal will be 3 blasts. A cord will be attached to the whistle and the cord attached to either a PFD or thwart. Whistles will be collected and then washed by the crew after each trip.

### **8.4 Example of a water trip preparation time line**

Canoe/kayak trip planning requires advance planning several days ahead. Below is a suggested time line for a Wednesday trip (the most common weekday for water trips):

#### **Saturday**

At the Trip Leader meeting, decide on Trip Leader(s), river, outfitter and trip date.

Confirm with outfitter:

- availability of boats (canoe, kayak, tandem kayak) on desired date
- cost per boat
- desired route
- meeting time
- car/people shuttle arrangement

- outfitter requirements – release forms, deposit requirement, method of payment, etc.

## **Sunday**

- Announce at breakfast:
  - The trip description, date and expected cost for boat rentals
  - The requirements that every participant (1) be able to get in and out of a boat unassisted, and (2) wear a properly fitting, Coast Guard approved PFD while in a boat
  - That people who are not strong swimmers or who have little or no canoeing or kayaking experience should consider whether they are appropriate participants for the trip. Parents should be strongly discouraged from bringing infants and toddlers on canoe trips. In all cases, all participants must have appropriately sized and approved personal flotation devices (“PFD”) and wear them while in a boat. As always, the Trip Leader has final discretion on a person’s participation.
  - That inexperienced paddlers should identify themselves to the Trip Leader to be paired with more experienced paddlers if possible.
  - That a participating minor child must be accompanied by a parent or delegated adult, with signed medical release form
  - 
  - The requirement to sign up for the trip by Tuesday breakfast and pay for the trip by Tuesday evening
- After breakfast, place a sign-up sheet for the trip on a clipboard in the lodge, indicating the cost of each type boat and the PFD size (generally, less than 50 pounds, 50-90 pounds, and more than 90 pounds) and asking for:
  - Name(s)
  - Desired numbers of boats by type
  - PFD size for each participant
- Notify outfitter of preliminary numbers (Sunday evening or Monday morning); especially important for tandem kayaks, which are in limited supply.

## **Monday**

Announce the trip again at breakfast and dinner; remind people to sign up by Tuesday breakfast; start collecting money and signed outfitter release forms.

## **Tuesday breakfast**

- Announce the trip at breakfast—last call to sign up.
- After breakfast, collect money and collect signed outfitter release forms.
- Phone the outfitter, confirming meeting place and time and giving final numbers: total number of people, number of PFD’s by size, number of boats by type.

## **Tuesday dinner**

- Announce trip and time to meet the next morning.
- Recommend that participants:
  - Pack for the trip before going to bed.

- Pack items in plastic bags or dry bags.
- Take a set of dry clothes to leave in the car.
- Announce final collection of money and signed outfitter release forms after dinner.
- Phone outfitter with any revisions in numbers.
- Designate two people to be responsible for the throw ropes and ensure they know how to use them.

### **Wednesday breakfast**

- Make usual trip announcement, have usual pre-trip meeting, and travel to the site specified by the outfitter.

## **8.5 At the put-in**

If the meeting place is the put-in, leaders should:

- When the outfitter arrives, gather the entire group, and cover the following points:
  - Have each participant choose a paddle and PFD that fits properly.
  - Enlist volunteers to help unload boats from the trailers and take them to the river.
  - Put one extra canoe paddle and one extra kayak paddle in one of the boats at the rear of the group, preferably the sweep boat.
  - Distribute river maps among the boats (preferably, one apiece).
  - Provide or ask the outfitter representative to provide river safety and paddling instruction to inexperienced paddlers – basic strokes, water reading, requirement of wearing a fastened PFD, how to get in and out of a boat safely, and what to do in case a boat tips over.
  - Outfitters should be encouraged to discuss specific river conditions and provide river maps and emergency contact information.
  - Designate a lead boat and a sweep boat, with competent paddlers and swimmers in each.
  - Identify the locations and characteristics of known hazards, landmarks, and the take-out site.
  - Identify the lead and sweep boats.
  - Review the basic rules for the trip:
    - A PFD must be worn, fastened, at all times, when in a boat.
    - No one should pass the front admiral boat or fall behind the sweep boat.
    - Each boat must be mindful of boats in front and behind, so that the entire group follows the same route.
- Before beginning the trip, review these tips for “reading” the river:
  - In fast water, V-shapes on the water surface with the point facing *down* stream usually indicate a channel of deeper water.
  - In fast water, V-shapes on the water surface with point facing *up* stream indicate a submerged object and should be avoided.
  - The fastest and deepest water is normally on the outside of a curve.

- Broad areas of riffles (small standing waves) often indicate very shallow water and should be avoided.
- Review these rules for safe boating:
  - Stay low and centered in the boat, especially in fast water.
  - Avoid downed trees, logs, and other debris in the water.
  - Go through fast water one boat at a time, to prevent interference or collisions with other boats.
  - If the boat capsizes, stay upstream of the boat; float with knees bent and feet pointing downstream; swim across the current towards the nearer shore; let others in the group collect the boat and floating belongings.
- Describe the location of the take-out.
- Describe known hazards (fast water, submerged obstacles, “sweeper” trees...)
- Water fights: The Trip Leader should set rules on water fights. If water fights are permitted, the rules should ensure that individuals who choose not to participate in water fights are not inconvenienced or unwillingly involved.  
One possible set of rules is that only boats showing weapons (squirt guns, etc.) or who have actively attacked your boat in the past five minutes may be attacked.

## **8.6 During the trip**

- Assign the front admiral to choose rest, swimming and lunch stops at a place with enough room to beach all boats, a safe swimming area nearby, and close to a shrubby or wooded area for separations.
- Schedule stops for swimming and eating every 60 to 90 minutes.
- The leader may reassign individuals to different boats to ensure individual and group safety and timely trip progress, or to change the lead or sweep boats.

## **8.7 At the take-out**

- Ask all paddlers, within their abilities, to help bring boats and gear off the river and to the staging area.
- The Trip Leader should ensure that everyone is safely off the river and has a ride back to Camp.
- Ask participants to check with the leader before leaving for Camp.

# **9 Trip Documentation**

A written description of the planned route and a list of all trip participants for every led trip should be left on the clipboard in the lodge or with the Camp Manager. This is best done by leaving the trip announcement sheet on the clip board in the lodge. If a leader wishes to bring a written list of participants on the trip, the leader may copy the list by hand or use the copy machine in the Camp office.

## 10 “Leading”—From the Front or the Rear?

As long as competent people have been designated to “lead” and “sweep” the trip, the Trip Leader may “lead” the trip from any position within the group. The choice will depend on both the individual leader’s preference and the needs of the group.

### 10.1 *Factors that favor leading from the rear*

- The designated lead hiker or paddler is knowledgeable, strong and responsible.
- This enables the leader (1) to assess firsthand the state of body or mind of stragglers and the likelihood that they can finish the trip within a reasonable time, and (2) to offer encouragement or suggestions if needed.

### 10.2 *Factors that favor leading from the front*

- The designated sweep is knowledgeable, strong and responsible.
- No member of the group has the skills to be the lead hiker or lead paddler.
- The leader can alter the trip route and communicate it to all participants in case of group or weather problems.
- The condition of the trail makes it hard to follow or dangerous.

## 11 Managing Groups

How a leader manages a group is a personal matter, with no one style fitting all. Below are issues a trip leader may face and possible ways to cope with them.

### 11.1 *The Trip Leader*

The Trip Leader is in charge when leading a trip. Challenges to the leader’s authority can largely be avoided by the leader being prepared, knowledgeable, punctual and reasonable.

### 11.2 *Group Management*

Some groups seem to manage themselves with little input from the leader, while others require significant management effort. The amount of management required depends on the composition of the group, the comparative difficulty of the trip given the group’s abilities, time constraints (e.g., the feasibility of making it back to Camp in time for dinner), and the personality of the leader. The leader may need to put extra effort into managing a trip if:

Individual paces vary greatly

- Possible approaches to slow hikers: maintain regular contact, engage in conversation, offer encouragement, pair slow hikers with a slightly faster companion.

- Possible approaches for fast hikers: require them to maintain some contact with the rest of the group and to wait at specific places; designate a participant with a moderate pace as lead hiker.

The group is large

- Possible approaches: designate places where the entire group must gather, divide the group into sub-groups with similar interests or abilities. At group stops, verify that all participants are present. Establish other means of communication between the groups (e.g. cell phones, whistles)

The group contains many children

- Possible approaches: alert adult participants to the number of children, ensure adult supervision for each child, carry snacks or treats.
- The group contains an individual who is 1.) creating an undue safety risk to him/herself or to others or 2.) adversely affecting others' enjoyment of the trip  
Possible approaches: discuss privately with the individual how the behavior is disruptive or unsafe: (if a child) discuss with the responsible adult; solicit help from other participants.
- In extreme cases, the leader may abort the led trip and return to Camp with the entire group. The Camp Manager and Coordinator should be notified as soon as possible if this occurs.

### ***11.3 Guest leaving a led trip***

Occasionally, one or more hikers may ask to take a different route back to Camp from that planned by the Trip Leader or otherwise leave a led hike. The Leader may grant permission to leave the group, provided (1) all the people leaving the trip are competent hikers and are suitably equipped with food, water and clothing; and (2) their departure does not jeopardize the safety and enjoyment of the rest of the group. The leader should have other members of the group witness the request to leave the group and the leader's permission to do so. The Trip Leader should phone Camp to notify the Manager that people have left the hike and that a specific return trail will be used. Hikers should report their return to the Camp office. Individuals who voluntarily leave a hike become independent agents, with the same status as hikers not participating on CRC-led hikes.

## **12 Safety and Emergencies**

The Trip Leader is responsible for trying to maintain the safety of all participants on a led trip. Most emergencies occur when a trip participant is injured or goes missing from the group. In these and other emergencies, leaders are expected to render aid appropriate to their levels of training and competence, and to take actions that make victims and non-victims alike as safe and comfortable as possible under the existing conditions. In all emergencies, the following principles should guide the leaders' activities:

- Personal and group safety is as important as that of the injured or missing guest.
- Keep calm, think carefully and then act.
- If help is needed, seek it.

If the Trip Leader must leave the group or is unable to lead because of injury or emergency, another person should be designated as Trip Leader and assume the Trip Leader's responsibilities and authority.

## **12.1 Minimizing the risk of emergencies**

Effective trip management is the best way to prevent injured and missing participants (Sec. 6, 7 and 10). During the trip, the Trip Leader has the authority to change routes or even cut short the trip to avoid undue risks. The Trip Leader should:

- Be aware of route options, including bail-outs.
- In case of threatening weather, estimate how long the slowest member of the group will take to get to safety.
- Regularly assess the condition, energy level, pace and attitude of every participant, along with the weather, the water situation, and any other potential problems.
- Be aware that people out of sight of other hikers may take the wrong trail at a junction, mistakenly wander off the trail, or stop off-trail and be passed by the rest of the group. The best way to avoid such miscues is through proper instruction before a hike begins (*e.g.*, always leave one's pack on the trail when leaving the trail, or always wait for the Trip Leader at every trail junction). During the hike, be regularly in touch with all group members and "count noses" frequently.
- Notify the Camp Manager as soon as possible if the group is likely to return to Camp later than expected.

## **12.2 Emergency scene management**

In case of an injured or missing hiker, the leader should:

- Assess emergency needs and develop a plan.
- Implement the plan, continually reassessing and revising as necessary.
- Ensure the safety of all uninjured or remaining people in the group.
- In the case of injury, stabilize and treat the victim, documenting the care given.
- Complete SOAP notes. Form is in the CRC first aid kit.
- If professional assistance is needed, dispatch one or more people with the Camp emergency cell phone to find an area with cell phone service and follow the AMC Cold River Camp Emergency Action Plan instructions. The Plan is in the CRC first aid kit.
- If cell phone service is not available or is uncertain, dispatch at least two trip participants for help. Make sure they carry suitable equipment and other supplies (water, food), as well as written details of the emergency location, situation, and plan of the people remaining at the scene.
- If injured hiker can walk out on his own and the decision is made to continue the planned hike, at least two competent and suitably equipped trip participants should accompany him. Trip Leader should notify the Manager of walk out and specific trail to be used. Returning party should report their return to the camp office.

### **12.3 First aid**

When providing first aid, leaders should:

- Create a safe environment to prevent further injury to victims and ensure the safety of the rest of the group.
- Treat injuries to stabilize victim(s), prevent further injury, protect wounds, and provide comfort.

### **12.4 Searching for a missing trip participant**

There are a wide range of possible responses when a trip participant is identified as missing. The responses chosen will depend on the specifics of the situation. They range from waiting for the person at a trail junction or trailhead, to retracing steps along the trail, to requesting a large scale search effort through local authorities.

Issues to be considered in formulating a response include:

- The length of time the hiker has been missing
- The missing hiker's last known location
- The missing hiker's general health, condition and experience
- What the missing hiker is carrying in the way of food, water, and equipment
- The time of day
- The complexity of the trail system along the trip route
- Existing and forecasted weather conditions

### **12.5 Reporting on emergencies**

The Camp Manager should be notified of any of the following emergencies as soon as is practicable:

- Any injury to a CRC led-trip participant that requires treatment by a health care professional or may restrict the injured person's ability to participate in Camp activities.
- Any incident of a missing trip participant that requires either the assistance of non-CRC people or a search by the trip's group which significantly alters the planned trip.

The AMC Cold River Camp Emergency Action Plan, included in the CRC first aid kit, should be followed.

## **13 Hiking in designated Wilderness Areas**

The Speckled-Caribou Mountains, Wild River and Great Gulf areas are designated by the NFS as Wilderness Areas. As a result, certain rules apply:

- A group is limited to 10 people including the leader.



- Two groups, Camp led and/or self led, can be no closer than ¼ mile apart, including at the summit.

These limitations generally preclude 2 or more groups in one of the Evans Notch Wilderness Areas in any one day.

## 14 Excluding Guests from Participation

Guests are rarely excluded from participation in CRC activities. The main reasons for excluding a guest from participating in a CRC led activity is the leader's determination that:

- The guest lacks the ability to complete the trip safely and within the time allotted—
  - (hikes) physical condition, motor skills and balance;
  - (river trips) an inability to safely and independently get into and out of a boat.
- The guest, based on past observation, is given to behaviors that may threaten the safety or enjoyment of the other participants.

The decision to exclude a guest from a trip should involve the Trip Leader, the Coordinator and the Camp Manager. The participation of all three in the decision making process serves to protect (1) the guest's ability to participate in camp activities; (2) the entitlement of the entire Camp community to participate in safe, enjoyable activities; and (3) the Trip Leader from being perceived as biased against an individual guest.

When a decision to exclude a guest from participation in a CRC activity has been made, the Trip Leader and the Camp Manager or Coordinator should privately inform the guest of the decision, explain the basis for the decision, and discuss their expectations for the guest during the rest of the week in Camp.

## 15 The Intern Program

The 12 scheduled trips per week are an integral part of the CRC experience. These plus Extension Week trips require 20 hike leaders and 9 naturalists. In order to maintain an adequate number of leaders to fill these slots, an intern program has been established to train future leaders.

Relevant training and experience are vital to Camp guests' safety and enjoyment on led trips. Criteria for selecting leaders include:

- physical and mental capacity to lead groups of Camp guests on day long hikes
- interpersonal skills to lead safe as well as enjoyable trips
- outdoor skills and knowledge, including knowledge of trails and awareness of particular trip risks
- willingness and ability to perform the administrative duties of trip leading
- willingness and ability to work with other leaders in devising suitable, varied weekly trip offerings

- recommendation by another leader, Camp Manager or other trusted source

All prospective Trip Leaders are required to serve as an Intern Trip Leader for one week during the regular summer season unless the relevant CRC Coordinator (Naturalist or Hike Leader) and CRC Chair or Vice-Chair explicitly waives the requirement. Waiving this requirement should be done only when the prospective Leader has been interviewed thoroughly by the relevant Coordinator and when those responsible for the waiver believe the prospective Leader has already demonstrated that he or she possesses both the criteria listed above and the Trip Leader expectations listed in Section 4.

One of the week's leaders will serve as mentor and evaluator of an Intern. It is important that, during the week, the mentor take the lead in interacting with the Intern...sharing information and techniques, instructing in paperwork requirements, encouraging time for questions and discussions, pointing out areas of strength and areas for improvement, ensuring that the expected intern program participation occurs .

An Intern Trip Leader is expected to participate in all of the activities connected with the week's trip leading, including:

- attending the Trip Leaders' planning meeting Saturday afternoon
- accompanying each of the three Trip Leaders on a led trip, to observe different leaders' styles and skills and (if asked) to assist the leader on the trip (*e.g.*, as sweep or lead hiker)
- co-leading one trip during the week, including planning the trip, announcing it at breakfast (including preparing the sign-up sheet), reporting on the trip at dinner, and filling out the trip report form.
- if naturalist intern, working with the Naturalist on the Junior Naturalist program
- if hike leader intern, providing one evening's prepared entertainment.
- If interested in becoming a canoe trip leader, must lead a canoe trip under the supervision of a CRC leader qualified to lead canoe trips. .

At the end of the week, the Intern will meet briefly with the mentor, who will have sought feedback from the other Trip Leaders and the Camp Manager(s). They will review the week's activities and discuss any problems or questions. The mentor will give the intern a summary evaluation.

The mentor/evaluator will provide a report on the internship to the relevant CRC Coordinator as soon as possible after the week ends. At that point, the Coordinator will decide whether the Intern is qualified to serve as a Trip Leader at Cold River Camp.

Interns serve for a full week. In return, they receive 50% credit toward their room and board for the week.