RESPONSIBILITIES OF KMC TRIP LEADERS

The role of the trip leader is to choose and coordinate either a summer or winter trip. The leader is not a guide, and is not expected to function as such, but should choose trips that are commensurate with their own ability level.

Before The Trip:

1. Choose a trip that you have the ability, fitness, and technical skill to conduct and contact the Summer or Winter Trips Coordinator to get your trip scheduled.
2. You may wish to use the Trip Planning Sheet and Route Card to plan your trip.
3. Familiarize yourself with the terrain in which you will be traveling by studying maps (paper maps, Gaia, Google Earth), route descriptions, reading past trip reports, talking to other climbers/hikers etc., and conducting a reconnaissance trip if appropriate. Select your route and any alternate routes that might be necessary.
4. Categorize the trip using the KMC Trip Grading Scale and, in winter, the ATES rating of the terrain.
5. Decide what level of fitness, technical skill and equipment participants should have and ensure that all prospective participants meet these criteria. Be specific. Use the KMC Guidelines for Avalanche Safety to determine if avalanche safety gear (beacon, shovel, probe) will be required.
6. Limit the group size to a suitable number of participants considering such things as the difficulty of terrain, exposure to avalanche hazard, length of daylight hours, and speed of travel required to complete the trip safely.
7. Decide on a date, meeting time and place for the trip. Ensure you have allowed enough daylight hours to conduct the trip safely. If in doubt, start early.
8. Send out an email to the KMC list-serve (kmc-members@kmc.topicbox.com) during the week prior to your trip detailing the route you plan to follow, the level of fitness, technical ability, and equipment that participants must have to participate in the trip, and any special hazards that might be encountered on the trip. You can also include the maximum number of participants for the trip.
9. Ensure that people who are interested in your trip have the required skill and fitness to safely complete the trip. If you are unsure about any individual, ask them to tell you about the last four trips they have completed, or the trips they have done in the last four months. If you are still unsure, ask for a reference (someone they have hiked or climbed with in the recent past) and contact the reference to obtain more information.
10. Make sure that all participants, newcomers in particular, have appropriate equipment for the trip (eg. proper boots, rain gear, food, water, basic first aid kit, etc.) including any special equipment needed (eg. ice axe, ropes, avalanche probes, beacons, shovels, etc.).
11. The leader or a member of the group should have a satellite SOS/texting device to use in case of emergency. Consider bringing two-way radios for communication within the group.
12. Once you have reached your group size issue a note saying the trip is full. If you choose, you can keep a waiting list to replace people who cancel.

At The Meeting Place:

1. Non-members must sign a trip waiver. Current KMC members do not need to sign a trip waiver. If you choose, have participants fill in a trip registration form. to identify a contact person and their telephone number.
2. Review the trip plan and ensure that all participants have the required equipment before you leave the meeting place. Participants without the required equipment should be turned away.

3. Set some basic travel and communication rules for the forthcoming trip, such as making decisions as a group, keeping the group together, regrouping frequently, etc.
4. Organize carpools and remind passengers to share transportation costs.
5. Explain the route to the trail head and where vehicles should be parked. If necessary, have participants follow your vehicle to the trailhead/parking spot.

At The Trail Head:

1. Share out group gear between party members.
2. Before leaving the trailhead, briefly review the trip plan and decide on the first regroup location. Assign a tail-gunner to bring up the rear. If necessary, equip the tail gunner with two-way radio, first aid kit, repair kit, etc. Do **NOT** leave inexperienced or slower members of the party to bring up the rear.

On The Trip:

1. Keep the group together by setting frequent regroup locations and traveling at a pace that allows the party to stay together. You may have to "rein in" the enthusiastic jack rabbits at the front of the group.
2. Check in with participants frequently to ensure that no-one is becoming excessively fatigued, fearful or is having any other kind of difficulty with the trip. Pay particular attention to new hikers/climbers, stragglers and people who appear to be struggling with the terrain.
3. Make decisions as a group and ensure that all members of the party have an equal voice in decision making. If there are locations where special travel precautions are required, for example, crossing avalanche slopes one at a time or spacing out to avoid rock-fall, make sure everyone in the group understands and agrees with the plan.
4. At trail junctions, locations where you change direction or when bushwacking through thick forest, stop and make sure all members of the group make the correct turn. If you have experienced members use their skill and experience for the benefit of the group by doing such things as spacing them out throughout the group, buddying them with less experienced members or having them bring up the rear.
5. Decisions, such as which route to take, whether or not to cross an avalanche slope, when to put the rope on etc., should be made as a group allowing for a substantial safety margin.
6. Be prepared to turn around if conditions (including the fitness, ability, and skill of the group) warrant.
7. Keep the group together at all times including on the return journey when "back to the barn syndrome" takes over. Do **NOT** leave the weakest members of the party to straggle down the trail by themselves at the end of the day. Either assign a competent tail gunner or bring up the rear yourself.
8. Some standard practices for safe travel include:
    - Starting early.
    - Roping up when crossing snow covered glaciers.
    - Carrying standard avalanche equipment when in avalanche terrain, i.e. shovel, probe and avalanche transceiver for each member of the party.
    - Assessing avalanche conditions before entering avalanche terrain and exposing only one member of the party at a time.
    - Spacing group members out in areas where there are rock-fall hazards,
    - Wearing a climbing helmet when there are potential hazards from falling rock or the climber may fall.
    - Monitoring the weather and turning around if inclement weather is approaching.

In Case of An Accident/Injury:

1. Appoint a leader to manage the accident scene. This will not necessarily be the trip leader but should be the person best suited to manage the particular accident.
2. Develop a plan of action. Make sure everyone understands and agrees with the plan. The safety of remaining members of the party should be paramount.

3. If you have any special skills (such as first aid training) don't hesitate to let the leader know.
4. If outside help is required, communicate with authorities using a satellite texting device/sat phone or send out two or three people to notify emergency services. Make sure you provide authorities and the people going for help with written details of the exact location (use GR or GPS coordinates) of the accident site, the exact number of injured people and the extent of the injuries, as well as exactly what type of help is required.
5. Members of the party remaining behind at the accident site should prepare adequate shelter to spend the night out.
6. Record the accident or injury on the Incident Reporting Form after your return and send it to the Summer or Winter Trip Director.

After The Trip:

1. Consider sending a trip report and photos to the newsletter editor and/or posting a report on the KMC Facebook page.
2. Send signed non-member waivers to either the Summer or Winter Trips Director.
3. Contact the Summer of Winter Trips Director after your return to indicate the number of members/non-members on your trip, and any concerns or suggestions.

Waivers And Forms*:*

The following forms are available on the KMC website:

- Route planning card .
- Summer trip planning sheet .
- Trip waiver . Current KMC members do NOT need to sign a waiver, but non-members participating in KMC trips must sign a waiver. Please forward any signed waivers to either the Summer or Winter Trips Director.
- Trip registration form to record names and contact information for trip participants.
- Emergency event guidelines .

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