

SJOC ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

Activity Difficulty Ratings (for hiking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, etc.):

- EASY - Flat to rolling terrain; minimal elevation gain/loss; duration of activity 2 to 3 hours, mostly on trails or roads, slower pace.
- MODERATE - Elevation gains of 800 to 2000 feet; 3 to 5 hours duration; trails and bushwhacking, faster pace, higher elevations.
- DIFFICULT - Greater than 2000 feet of elevation gain; higher elevation destinations, steeper terrain, greater distance; probably bushwhacking and route finding, fast pace; 4 or more hours in duration.

General Rules (note that the term “hiker” is used for any participant in an activity):

- 1) All hikers must be a member of the San Juan Outdoor Club. Invited guests of members may join a hike if the activity leader approves and if the club member takes sole responsibility for the visitor.
- 2) All hikers must sign up for the activity on Signup Genius using the link provided in the club weekly newsletter. Each hiker must complete their own sign up which includes an agreement to our club waiver statement.
- 3) All hikers are responsible for their own welfare and safety.
- 4) All hikers must purchase and carry on their person a current Colorado Search and Rescue Card (CORSAR). Cards may be purchased on-line at <https://dola.colorado.gov/sar/cardPurchase.jsf> or at one of several outdoor activity stores in the Pagosa Springs area. If you purchase a Colorado hunting or fishing license, the cost of a CORSAR card is included in your license fee.
- 5) Hikers are responsible for ensuring that they have the physical capability to participate in the activity that they are signed up for (see Activity Difficulty Ratings above). Join the group that matches your speed and endurance.
- 6) Hikers are responsible for their own First Aid supplies including any drugs required for special health concerns. All hikers can receive (free of charge) a San Juan Outdoor Club name tag to be attached to their backpack that can include a discrete notice of special health concerns, if any. In any case, all hikers with special health concerns must advise the hike leader of such health concern in advance of the activity.
- 7) Be aware that most club activities involve exercise at high elevation, ranging from 8000 to 12,000 feet. If you have not acclimated to activity at these elevations, check with your doctor so that you do not place yourself and/or others at risk.
- 8) All hikers must have the 10 Essentials in the pack for every activity. A good overview of the 10 Essentials can be found at the following REI website (<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/ten-essentials.html>). The 10 Essentials may NOT be shared between hikers.

- 9) All hikers should be prepared for the potential to experience all four seasons during any hike at elevation. In addition to the 10 Essentials, all hikers should wear appropriate hiking shoes for the expected terrain and conditions and bring hiking poles if desired. All hikers are also responsible to bring their own toilet paper and disposal bag(s).
- 10) All hikers must have an active walkie-talkie on their person while hiking. The San Juan Outdoor Club transmits on FRS channel 6. Note that this is a license-free channel that transmits at 0.5 watts even if you have purchased a higher wattage radio.
- 11) All hikers should arrive at the designated activity meeting location 15 minutes prior to the established departure time to allow time for announcements, organization of carpools, and communication of directions to trailhead.
- 12) All hikers must ride to and from the activity trailhead in the same vehicle unless the hike involves a “key exchange” (i.e., two hikes starting at different trailheads but crossing at the midway point where keys are exchanged and ending at the other hike’s trailhead). Drivers and passengers have equal responsibility to return together. When driving to and from the trailhead, there should be an active walkie-talkie in each vehicle.
- 13) All hikers must stay together on the trail. Hikes are planned as group hikes, and hikers are expected to stay with the group for their own safety as well as that of the group. Leaders and hikers share a responsibility of maintaining group contact so that if any hiker has a problem or goes astray, others will know immediately. Hikers must inform the activity leader if they leave the trail for any reason. Any hiker who stops short of the group's endpoint or who returns to the trailhead must be accompanied by another hiker and must inform the hike leader. If someone does not stay with the group, it can put all hikers at risk.
- 14) Be courteous. Group hikes demand that all hikers be considerate of their fellow hikers and of any wildlife. If you note that there is a hiker behind you who wishes to walk at a faster pace, let them pass. Hiking in a group also requires that people have an opportunity to enjoy the peace and quiet of the outdoors. Moderate the level of your voice and the length of your conversations with your fellow hikers.
- 15) The San Juan Outdoor Club adheres to the seven principles of “Leave No Trace” activities. Please refer to the following National Park Service website for an overview of “Leave No Trace” (<https://www.nps.gov/articles/leave-no-trace-seven-principles.htm>).
- 16) The activity leader has complete discretion to change activity plans to minimize the risks to participants.
- 17) The activity leader has ultimate discretion to deny participation to any hiker who does not appear to be physically capable of the activity or who is not properly equipped for the activity. Hikers who have not hiked with the group previously must satisfy the hike leader that they understand and can meet the demands of a given hike.

- 18) Dogs are not allowed on hikes without permission of the activity leader in advance. dogs must be kept on a leash at all times.
- 19) During the Covid-19 pandemic, carpooling to the trailhead is at the discretion of the driver and occupants of the vehicle. If you have NOT been vaccinated at least 14 days in advance of the activity, you must inform the driver. If you have not been vaccinated, the club recommends that you drive yourself to the trailhead.