

The essentials for a safe trip.

Safety and Fun Tips

To make sure your trips into the mountains are as enjoyable and safe as you can make them, it is wise to have specific things with you in case of an emergency or a delayed return to your car or camp. Each person should have the following items and know how to use them. Make up a small drawstring pouch for yourself, your spouse, and / or hiking partner. If you get separated from your group and the other person has the emergency kit, the problem becomes more critical.

13 Essentials

- 1) Map---Forest & Topo of area visiting
- 2) Compass---Know how to use it and have instructions
- 3) Headlight---with extra batteries and bulb (Do not use Lithium AA batteries in headlights)
- 4) Fire starter---There are several options for fire starter you might consider. A film can stuffed with lint and soaked in petroleum jelly, for winter travel a road flare burns at 1700 degrees, commercial fire starter sticks, sacrifice a glove and collect pitch from a tree, a flint magnesium striker, a safe sealed container of de-natured alcohol, candles, green hairy moss hanging on tree branches, rubber bands, dried orange peels and liquid hand sanitizer.
- 5) Waterproof matches and several lighters---keep in water tight container
- 6) Extra clothing---Socks, gloves, hat, rain gear & umbrella
- 7) Extra food---energy bars (snickers are better), gae, water purifier, spare lunch & trail snacks
- 8) Knife---larger knives can be used to split wood
- 9) Sun Protection---sun screen and lip balm (replace every year), 100% UV A & B sunglasses and a large brim hat
- 10) First aid kit---include Second Skins for blister relief. Replace all items every summer
- 11) Signaling device---whistle, three short blasts should alert anyone nearby to drop everything and come running, mirror or flare gun
- 12) Emergency shelter---space blanket, emergency tent or tarp
- 13) Trowel and lots of unscented paper towel---toilet paper sucks in the woods. And a blue bag to carry out all your trash and waste).

Some other things I put in this pouch, are a set of instructions for the compass and all technical items (GPS, 2 way radio, spare parts, etc), first aid instructions and

whatever else you feel will be necessary in an emergency. When you get cold in the mountains, your ability to remember things diminishes. By having instructions for all technical stuff, you may increase your chances of a safe trip.

I also carry, in my pocket, a comprehensive list (laminated) including all emergency info to include:

- 1) Your name, address and phone number(s)
- 2) Doctors & Dentist names and phone numbers
- 3) Physical details-height, weight, etc.
- 4) Blood type
- 5) Aliments
- 6) Identifying marks (scars, tattoos, etc.)
- 7) Medications
- 8) Passport number
- 9) Emergency contact names with phone numbers
- 10) Allergies
- 11) Any other info that may be needed in case of an emergency.

Every person should also carry the following:

Rain gear,

Umbrella (for both protection & photography)

Adequate water or purifier

Spare socks-gloves-hat

Gore-Tex outer jacket (waterproof jackets and pants become saunas when you are sweating up a storm)

Warm fleece middle layer

Polypropylene base layer

A large brim hat

Boot gaiters

Personal items (tooth brush, lotions, nail clippers, a face towel, etc.

Paper and pen (for directions or emergency info)

Trail snacks

Hiking boots

Copy of the forest map and topo map of the area visited

Comfortable pack.

A very important thing to know about your cloths is, COTTON KILLS. You will wish you had spent the dollars on cloths that wick the moisture away. You don't have to spend the big bucks to stay dry and warm. There are many \$12 to \$25 dollar polypropylene tops and bottoms available. If you can't afford polypropylene, search the bargain stores for wool everything. I re-sewed my old army wool pants into

knickers with leg zips for backcountry skiing. Wool stays warm when wet, and can be rung out easily.

It is very important that every person understands the following:

Route in and out

The difficulties of the outing

Any hazards

Trip objectives

Where to meet if anyone is separated from the group. You may decide to go back to the last place everyone was together, or a designated location before hand.

It is also wise for the leader of the trip to examine every persons essentials so they are responsible for themselves.

It is very important to leave your macho attitude at home.

Be sure to leave all the trip information with a responsible person, your expected return time, and who to call if you are not back by a designated time. Make the “call authorities time” realistic. If plans change, call your responsible person with the new details. Failure to do any of this may cause several days or weeks delay to find you.

The USFS asks us all to “Pack it in- Pack it out”. With the economy the way it is, and the USFS unable to finance all it's activities the way it used to, it is up to us to keep our public lands clean. And to clean up after others that are less able to comprehend this concept. Whenever I go on any kind of a hike, climb, bike, ski or kayak, I take along several plastic grocery sacks and plastic gloves to pick litter up off the trails. We must all become stewards of the land, or the land will become a garbage dump before our eyes.

For all the photography tips, how to's, and accessories that will make your images better quality, drop by the Camera Corral before you go, to learn the technics that make great pictures. We also offer individual two hour, \$50 classes on any camera and it's operation. Call and schedule a class way before your next trip, so you can bring home images instead of snapshots.

We also offer the regions best camera repair service. If you are in need of a repair, start early so the parts can be ordered and repair completed for your trip.