

Safety and Responsibility

SAFETY IS OUR TOP PRIORITY! Each participant (and not merely the leader) should arrive on time and fully prepared. Good hiking footwear and first-aid essentials are a must, plus a daypack with plenty of water, rain gear, layered clothing, sun protection, and trail snacks/lunch. A leader can also request other items in the hike description based on the hike preview. When you sign up, consider the overall walking pace of the group you plan to join and the challenges described in the hike, such as stream crossings, boulder fields as well as sections of steep climbs or descents. Carefully review all the details related to an outing and pay close attention to requirements, especially specific equipment. If you are new to Vail Club 50 or if you have any questions about the hike, contact the leader to discuss if a particular outing is for you.

We use walkie-talkies on our hikes so that the leader and the sweep can remain in contact with each other. Remember that our hikes are group activities, and we discourage the use of cell phones on the trail. That said, it is useful to carry one (set on vibrate) should we need to call 911 to summon rescue.

We also strongly advise purchasing a **CORSAR card** available at many of our local sports equipment stores and also online from the Forest Service. For a minimal cost, this card may save you considerable expense if you sustain injury and have to be rescued. For more information go to <http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/DOLA-Main/CBON/1251592090523>.

Regulations and Guidelines

Leaders volunteer their time to ensure a fun and safe excursion. As such, review and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Leaders have the right to deny participation to those who fail to:**
 - **Sign up in a timely manner:** To participate, call or email the leader by 6 PM the evening prior to the hike. The leader must know who is coming, particularly if carpooling is involved or to contact participants if weather and trail conditions require last-minute changes or cancellations.
 - **Arrive on time:** Save and/or print the hike descriptions, including meeting place and time.
 - **Be prepared with the necessary equipment:** In addition to the hiking and first-aid essentials, a leader can request additional items such as trekking poles or headlamp. Note all specific requirements when you prepare your gear.
2. When you RSVP, give your full name and phone # as well as the name and phone # of an emergency contact.
3. If you must cancel, call or email as soon as possible and certainly no later than the evening before the hike, so that the group does not wait for you at the meeting place. This also allows hikers on a wait list to participate.
4. Due to safety, trail restrictions, or personal preference, a leader can limit the number of participants. This information will be indicated clearly in the mass-mailings.
5. Save and/or print the hike descriptions, such as meeting place and time as well as requirements.
6. **THE LEADER IS THE LEADER!!!** Unless another hiker is designated, the leader is the first hiker in the queue. The leader also designates a sweep who is the last hiker.
 - During a hike, leaders and sweeps may be reassigned. Participants always hike between the leader and the sweep. Hikers who opt to go faster than the leader or explore alternative routes without the leader's approval are **immediately considered as resigning from the hike** and are no longer treated as participants by the leader or Vail Club 50.

- Without exception, no participant should leave the group to return to the trailhead without the knowledge of the leader and the sweep. S/he should be accompanied by another hiker. So avoid scheduling afternoon appointments, unless you have your own car, have partnered with someone to accompany you so that no one hikes alone AND have advised the leader that you are departing.
- When returning to the trailhead, mark the sign-out sheet. The leader is responsible for ensuring that all hike participants arrive safely. Even if it detains the other participants, the leader cannot leave until verifying that all hikers are accounted for.

Finally and new for the 2016 hiking season is the group ...



Hiking with Dogs - Guidelines

For the summer of 2016, Vail Club 50 hiking is introducing a new group called “Hiking with Dogs.” To get this trial season started, the group organizer Sue Clark established a number of criteria. These may be revised from time to time. Suggestions and/or comments are always welcome, so don’t hesitate to contact Sue Clark at 970-748-8664 or shc.clark@gmail.com.

- Hikes are limited to a maximum of 8 dogs.
- Hikes are less than 5 miles round-trip.
- Hikes are based on water access (lakes, creeks, and such) as well as the presence of open fields/meadows for the dogs to spread and run around.
- Hikes are on trails that allow unleashed dogs.
- Owners leash the dog when wildlife is nearby/close.
- Only friendly, non-aggressive dogs (to both people and dogs) are allowed.
- When off leash, dogs must be under voice command at all times.
- Participants are responsible for their dog’s behavior at all times.

Thank you for your cooperation. We all look forward to a wonderful hiking season!

Louise Willimann
Hiking Organizer