

Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club

Policies for All Activities

2016 February 1

The Central Okanagan Naturalists' Club (CONC) was formed as a Registered Society to foster the enjoyment of nature and the outdoors. CONC is a member of the Federation of BC Naturalists (BC Nature), which provides guidance and services for CONC and other naturalists' clubs in BC. There are several interest groups within CONC, including hiking, birding, botany, conservation, and bicycling. The following policies have been developed to ensure CONC activities are delivered as safely as possible.

It is the policy of CONC to:

1. facilitate organized activities in areas of interest, including hiking, birding, botany, conservation, and bicycling, for its members. **The safety and well-being of all participants during activities is paramount at all times.**
2. require each person joining CONC to sign a waiver of legal rights (**Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement**), including the right to make a claim for damages with respect to CONC activities and absolve CONC and its representatives from liability. The activities inherently have significant potential risk which **must be assumed by the individual participant**, as it is impossible to protect everyone at all times.
3. use the **Registration and Waiver for Visitors** for visitors (non-members) for each activity at all times, as prescribed by BC Nature. This form clearly indicates that each participant waives certain legal rights, including the right to make a claim for damages with respect to the activity and absolves CONC and its representatives from liability. A copy of this form is included at the end of this document.
4. use the **Member Attendance Sheet** for CONC members for each activity at all times. A copy of this form is included at the end of this document.
5. provide liability insurance for claims related to bodily injury or property damage, when such claims are made against CONC, or one or more of its directors, officers, members, designated volunteers, or employees.
6. provide Activity Leaders for each activity. If a scheduled Activity Leader does not show up to lead the activity, the activity is cancelled unless another Activity Leader is in attendance and they agree to lead the activity.
7. require a parent (or legal guardian) of participating visitors under 19 years of age to read, understand, and sign the **Registration and Waiver for Visitors** (see below) on their behalf.

8. rate hikes (and possibly other activities) according to the ratings shown below.

Cumulative Elevation Gain: (total of all the ups)

- A Less than 300 m (1,000 ft.)
- B 300 to 600 m (2,000 ft.)
- C 600 to 900 m (3,000 ft.)

Distance Walked:

- 1 up to 10 km. (6 mi)
- 2 10 to 20 km. (12 mi)
- 3 20 to 30 km. (18 mi)

Surface Conditions:

- a Good trail, sometimes sidewalks or road
- b Rough trail
- c Obstacles in paths and/or uneven terrain. Steeper grade requiring agility
- d Very Steep, insecure footing. Long hike. Good physical condition needed

Thus a hike like Little White would be ranked C2c while Phase 1 of the Mission Creek Greenway would be A1a. Note that steep hikes have the first character B or C and the second character is usually 1. Of course, all hikes may have short steep sections.

Rate bicycle trips according to the ratings shown below.

Cumulative Elevation Gain: (total of all the ups)

- A Less than 300 m (1,000 ft.)
- B 300 to 600 m (2,000 ft.)
- C 600 to 900 m (3,000 ft.)

Distance Ridden:

- 1 up to 30 km. (20 mi)
- 2 30 to 60 km. (40 mi)
- 3 more than 60 (more than 40 mi)

Surface Conditions:

- a Generally paved
- b Gravel or dirt

These ratings will be listed in the published Hike Schedule (see the March newsletter and www.okanagannature.org) and communicated to participants in each activity. Participants are expected to use their own judgement as to their ability to handle the stated conditions. If there are questions about the ranking, the participant should ask.

9. allow no pets on any CONC activity.
10. require participants to follow directions of the Activity Leader at all times.
11. require **all** participants to inform the Activity Leader before the activity of medical problems (including allergies) that might affect their performance during the activity and to inform the Activity Leader of any problems participants may be encountering during the activity.

12. expect participants to be properly equipped, in good physical condition, and to contact the Activity Leader at least a day in advance if there are any questions about the activity. Participants whose preparation is questionable are strongly encouraged not to participate until a later time. Participants who insist on joining the activity will be reminded by the Activity Leader that they do so at their own risk.
13. encourage members to carpool to destinations to minimize impact on the environment.
14. encourage new participants but recognize they may warrant additional attention.
15. develop a general contingency plan for dealing with emergency situations