

## Outdoor Ethics

### Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Mountaineers to reflect in its outdoor philosophy, practices, and educational materials a sense of ethics that respects and preserves the outdoor experience for all.

### Application

1. Mountaineers volunteers and staff shall conduct activities in such a way that minimizes our environmental footprint, our impact on others with whom we share outdoor spaces, and our impact on the land and water.
  - Mountaineers shall practice low impact recreation, guided by Leave No Trace principles as described by the Center for Outdoor Ethics.
  - Mountaineers shall schedule activities in a way that is consistent with our core values.
    - Minimum and maximum party size shall be determined by the leader for all activities, including courses, trips, and events, and for break-out groups within an activity, *based on the following considerations*:
      - Land manager requirements
      - Sensitivity and capacity of the area
      - Typical public demand for the area (Mountaineers should strive for smaller party sizes in popular areas to increase nimbleness and to model camaraderie with the outdoor community)
      - Goals and objectives of the activity
      - Assessment of leader skills and abilities, and participant skills and abilities
      - Risk management and safety considerations
    - In general, leaders should maintain a maximum party size of 12, unless determined otherwise by the above considerations.
    - In general, activities should be scheduled such that no two Mountaineers parties are on the same route at the same time, unless determined otherwise by the above considerations. Some high use areas can support multiple parties. Leaders shall make the decision whether to schedule a trip in the same location as another Mountaineers party based on the same considerations used to determine minimum and maximum party size.
    - Leaders and participants should make a good-faith effort to minimize vehicle presence at trailheads and other shared public spaces.
  - Mountaineers leaders are encouraged to provide written minimum and maximum party size recommendations or requirements in their Clubwide Activity Standards. Mountaineers leaders shall follow party size recommendations and requirements as written in Clubwide Activity Standards.
2. Mountaineers activities shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of land managing agencies, including but not limited to the U. S. Forest Service and the National Park Service. This includes:
  - Obtaining permits as required.
  - Registering parties in advance when required.
  - Following all other rules and requirements of the land managing agency, including maximum party size.

3. The Mountaineers shall be proactive on issues involving outdoor ethics and wilderness preservation.
  - Courses shall include applicable outdoor ethics training, including Leave No Trace and low-impact recreation principles.
  - Activity committees shall encourage leaders to practice and promote Leave No Trace and low-impact recreation principles.
4. The Mountaineers shall promote member stewardship of public lands and waters through maintenance, restoration and preservation activities.

### **Responsibilities**

Division, branch, or staff sponsors of activities are responsible for administering this policy.