

## PRE-TRIP PLANNING

Planning and preparation can be one of the most challenging parts of the whole hiking experience yet it's very important that you not only prepare for your trip but you do it properly.

Remember – Failing to plan is planning to fail

The types of activities that are club is involved in are usually more successful if the participants are ready and if they have some idea of what to expect. So be ready to meet the challenges, be prepared to be flexible and to make the best of all circumstances.

### Phase 1 – Deciding, Researching and Planning Trip – six months-one week prior to trip date

1. **Decide on your destination.** Choose a trip that is appropriate for your skill and fitness level, and that of the group. Consider having a back up option in case the trip you are planning is not accessible at the last minute due to weather or trail conditions.
2. **Gather information** to familiarize yourself with the trip - maps, books, online info (i.e. All Trails), experience club members who have done the trip before, COC private Facebook page. **Consider doing a reconnaissance trip.**
3. **Work out details** of proposed route:
  - **Estimate time, distances and elevation;** both overall as well as for individual sections.
  - Determine possible **campsite areas.**
  - Pinpoint the location of **water sources.**
  - Are **permits** required? Are there **group size limits?**
  - Identify notable **landmarks** and/or points of reference along your chosen route.
  - Note potentially **hazardous areas** and possible evacuation routes in case of a worst-case scenario.
  - Identify timing and places for breaks (water, snacks, rest spots, lunch)
4. **Decide some of the travel logistics** – Meeting place and time, how to get to trail head, where will vehicles be parked, certain hikes start and end at different points, making it necessary to arrange transport between points. Are campground reservations required? Do you need to book ferries?
5. **Decide if the amount of time you have allotted** for the trip is adequate. Consider sunrise and sunset times. If it is too long for a day trip, consider making it an overnight trip.
6. **Plan the route** – identify your starting location on a map, then trace your planned route carefully making note of key features you will pass on the way. It is a good idea to hike with a map, compass, GPS in an easily accessible pocket to consult it if necessary. Familiarize yourself with all aspects of the route. Review maps and Gaia or All Trails tracks

7. **Make a list of all the potential hazards** (exposure to falls, avalanche danger, creek crossings, hypothermia or heat stroke, injuries, getting lost, water availability, terrain features, daylight and wildlife dangers).
8. **Brainstorm risk management strategies** (choose a different route, leave early in the morning to avoid heat, ensure everyone has appropriate clothing to avoid hypothermia, carry maps and GPS). **Do you want to pre-screen participants?**
9. **Decide on what gear is needed** (snowshoes, micro spikes, ice axes, camping supplies, activity related equipment including all safety equipment)

## **Phase 2 – Communication**

### **– 3-6 days prior to the trip for day trips. 2-6 months prior to trip if multi-day**

10. Once you have decided that the trip is within the abilities of your group, **prepare a message to club members with details of the trip**. When, where, length in distance and time, elevation gain, the difficulties expected, meeting place and time, number of participants, required gear.
11. **Plan for Emergencies-**
  - a. **Prepare for the unexpected-** People should know where and when to look for you, and that your actions are rational and predictable in spite of the emotional trauma associated with any kind of emergency situation.
  - b. **Prepare a contingency plan** to lessen the risks involved and increase the probability of being found in case of an emergency situation.
  - c. **Consider preparing an emergency contact list** with names of all participants and their emergency contacts.
  - d. **Consider getting some basic medical information** if going into the backcountry.
12. **Procure safety gear** required – In Reach or Spot for alerting SAR. Radios, ropes, micro spikes
13. **For multiday trips, prepare a trip plan** (see attached example)
14. **Designate a homebase contact** -Ensure someone knows your destination and approximate return time so they can alert search and rescue if you don't return.

## **Phase 3 – Last Minute Checks – 1 month to 1 days prior to trip**

15. **Confirm participants,**
16. **Arrange carpooling,**
17. **Check the weather,**
18. **Check recent trip reports.** Ensure that trip is still viable.
19. **Check highway and other transportation conditions.**
20. **Check avalanche reports**

**Group 1 - Develop a summer plan for a day hike up Slesse.**

**Group 2 – Develop a plan for a winter snowshoe up Zoa.**

**Group 3 – Prepare for a 3 day summer backpack to location of choice.**

**Group 4 – Prepare a trip of your choice.**