

Guidelines for Trip Coordinators

Alpine Club of Canada – Vancouver Section
Updated January 16, 2009

Thank you for volunteering to organize a trip for the Alpine Club of Canada. Below are reminders for how to conduct the trip. The objective is for everyone to have a good time on a safe trip, including you!

1. Trip Planning

Plan a trip that you are comfortable going on. It doesn't have to be somewhere you have gone before if you are an experienced person, but for your first few times organizing a trip it would be best to go somewhere that you know your way. Plan something that you would like yourself.

- Make sure this trip is well within your abilities. We carefully use the term “organizer” instead of “leader” to emphasize that we are amateurs and not guides. However people will be looking to you for guidance on the trip.
- Think about how many people and what mix of skill levels would be appropriate for the trip. Also think about what individual and group gear will be required, especially for climbing trips.
- Get current information on route/access conditions, weather, and avalanche situation.

Be ready to answer the following questions:

- Where is the trip?
- How long will it take?
- Where and when are we meeting?
- Who else is going?
- What do they need to bring?

2. Talk to the prospective participants

With email becoming the norm for signing up for trips, it is still important to talk to people that you don't know. Make sure that they have the right experience and equipment for the trip.

You might want to give the participants your cell phone number, in case they sleep in or are late.

Ask:

How much experience do you have? Have you climbed any similar mountains?

Have you taken a climbing course? (if applicable)

How good of a skier are you? (if applicable)

Are you a member of the Alpine Club? Membership is not mandatory for club day and weekend trips but it is encouraged. Priority will be given to ACC members first, VOC members second, and others third.

Can you drive? What kind of vehicle? How many passengers?

Get their name, email, and phone number. A cell phone number is always handy. Get an emergency contact number for each person.

Make sure that the participants have answers to all the questions listed above in the trip planning section.

3. Leave a trip plan

Leave a list trip participants, contact numbers and emergency contacts, planned destination and route, and expected time of return with a trusted person. Tell them to call the police if you are late. I usually tell my wife to call the police if she does not hear from me by dark (later in winter) to ask them to plan for a search the next morning.

4. Policies, procedures and forms

The Alpine Club of Canada has established policies regarding Waiver Administration, Incident Management and Reporting for all ACC activities. The information here is available for Activities Coordinators and all Trip Leaders.

4.1 Trip Waivers

Any participant in activities sponsored by The Alpine Club of Canada is required to sign the Release of Liability, Waiver of All Possible Claims, and Assumption of Risk ("the Release"). The importance of this document to The Alpine Club of Canada cannot be over-emphasized. The following form is provided for section trip leaders to print out and require their trip participants to read and sign.

Forms are available at: www.accvancouver.ca

5. At the Meeting Place

Be sure to get everyone to sign the waiver before you start!

- Make a final check on cars, tents, stoves, ropes, hardware, and any other gear. You don't want to have an embarrassing situation like arriving at the campsite with too few tents!
- If people haven't arrived within about 15 minutes of the meeting time, feel free to leave without them. (Use your discretion.)

It's a good idea to meet for coffee at a major junction before you start off on logging roads. Make sure everyone has enough gas to get back to the closest gas station. Sometimes we go a long way on logging roads.

6. On the Trip

Try to keep the group together if possible. Keeping a group together is often not feasible for larger groups. However you can make sure the group comes together at designated meeting points. Take counts to make sure everyone is there. Having a designated person act as a sweep can help. The key here is to not leave stragglers on their own. There are some firm rules that the group should adhere to:

- No one hikes down the trail or access route until everyone is off the technical part of a climb.
- No one skis down the access route until everyone is off the portion of the route subject to avalanche danger.
- No one heads down from a campsite until everyone is back in camp.
- No one drives off until everyone arrives back at the cars.

Be sensitive to the needs of each participant. Some will definitely be stronger and more experienced than others. Use other strong members of the group to help make sure the whole group is taken care of.

If someone wants to go back because the trip is too difficult or strenuous for them, make sure they are capable of going out safely on their own. If in doubt, ask someone to go out with them. Instruct them to stay on the trail. Make sure their car is gone when you arrive back at the parking area.

Sometimes a person will want to leave the trip because they disagree about the objectives/route or they think the group is too slow for them. In that case make sure they clearly understand and agree that they are no longer part of the ACC trip. It would be helpful to have others witness this.

If you have non-members on the trip, feel free to promote membership in the ACC. We have lots of great members like you and we are looking for more!

7. Post Trip Activities

If you left someone behind in the area, phone to make sure they got home safely.

If you had any difficulties with the trip, feel free to discuss them with the Climbing Coordinator or Section Chair.

Pass the completed waiver form to the Climbing Coordinator or Section chair at our regular Van Dusen Socials or mail it to the ACC-Vancouver Section c/o the FMCBC, 130 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1P3.

It is very important that the waiver form be returned. This is required to show we have a track record of having participants signing waivers on ACC trips.

Send a trip report to the Avalanche Echoes Editor.

8. Emergency Contacts

In the event of an emergency, the first contact is **911**. The 911 operator will contact the ambulance service or RCMP, who will in turn contact a local search & rescue group if required for rescues or evacuations.

Also contact the Section Chair or the Climbing Coordinator. If necessary they will contact the National Executive Director. Do not talk to the media.

8.1 2009 Contacts:

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