

Hoofer Outing Club Land Safety Code

Eighth Draft - Leah Rosenblum April 30, 2019

Seventh Draft - April 1st, 2017, by Ryan

Preface

The Hoofer Outing Club Land Safety Code is intended to be a comprehensive manual for leaders of all Hoofer Outing Club trips to help ensure that activities of the Hoofer Outing Club are accomplished safely.

The rules and regulations presented in this Code are minimum requirements, which must be adhered to at all times. The Land Safety Chairperson or a trip leader may, in the interest of safety, be more conservative than this Code requires.

All violations of this Land Safety Code should be reported to the Land Safety Chairperson as soon as possible. Irresponsible conduct or other violations may result in a hearing before the Land Safety Board. Demotion in leader rating or other penalty deemed appropriate by the Board may be imposed by a two-thirds majority vote at a Board meeting.

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1 Outing Club Trips

1.1 Land Trip Definition

Hoofer Outing Club activities may be divided into four categories depending on where they occur: (1) trips, (2) lessons, (3) meetings or trainings, or (4) social events. This section describes policies related to land trips.

A Hoofer Outing Club land trip is defined as any trip in which activities including but not limited to: backpacking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, car camping, etc. All participants will be Hoofer Outing Club members or approved guests thereof. Every person who uses equipment, food or transportation provided for such a trip is considered a participant on that trip and shall observe the regulations outlined in this Land Safety Code. This applies to Hoofer Outing Club members and/or guests who are using private equipment.

1.2 General Land Trip Rules and Policies

All Land trips must follow the rules outlined in the Hoofer Outing Club trip definition. All trips must follow their activities' respective rating system.

1.2.1 Required Trip Equipment of all Land trips

Group

- 1) All gear and equipment must be in good working condition
- 2) Stocked First aid kit – the trip leader should check to make sure it's stocked pre and post trip
- 3) Anticipated trip itinerary sent to the Land Safety chairperson. Include dates, locations, distance traveled and elevations when applicable.
- 4) HOC Risk Management Pamphlet (can be found at OUW desk)
- 5) Access to participant emergency contact information and pertinent medical history.
- 6) Some type of communication device. See (3.3)

Each Participant

- 1) All gear and equipment must be in good working condition

1.2.2 Required steps prior to leaving Madison

- 1) Anticipated trip itinerary sent to the Land Safety chairperson. Include dates, locations, distance traveled and elevations when applicable.
- 2) ALL LAND TRIPS MUST BE APPROVED by the Land Safety Chair. For smaller, day trips, this may be a short process. For longer trips (ie. Spring break trips), Land Safety chair may request a meeting to discuss risk management in greater detail. HOC advisor may also request a meeting. These meetings may be requested for shorter day trips or weekend trips as well if Land Safety chair or HOC advisor deem necessary. Approvals from Land Safety Chair will be sent via email or messaging. Any activity that includes a club discipline must be approved.

1.2.3 Participant to Trip Leader Ratio and Group Size Caps

The maximum number of HOC members on a Trip and the ratio of Trip Leaders to Participants vary on the context of the trip – level of trip, location and activity. Considerations for group size and Trip Leader to Participant Ratio should consider the following.

1. A group which is too large can make it difficult to follow Leave No Trace (LNT) principles, which is why many State and National Parks have group size caps. This should be researched depending on the destination.
2. Limitations due to transportation options.
3. A group which is too large can make it difficult to make significant new social relationships on a trip.
4. A group which is too large can make group management more challenging for the Trip Leader
5. Recommended maximum ratio of trip leaders/LITs to participants is 1:3

1.2.4 Process for Earning Ratings

1.2.4.1 Reasoning for Rating Procedure

- a) **Protecting the fun factor of all Trip Members by ensuring that their participants have the skills to be safe and have fun on trip.**
- b) **Offer a measurement for specific skill development progress.**

1.2.4.2 Step by Step Procedure of How to Earn a Rating

- 1) Rating assignment in a land based activity is outlined within each activities respective rating system.
- 2) When should Participant Rating be assigned?
 - a) Participating in a trip does **NOT** automatically grant the associated rating.
 - b) **In general, a participant rating is assigned when a participant has “Successfully” Participated in a Trip or Lesson at the discretion of the Trip Leader.**
 - c) At the end of the Trip, it’s suggested that the Trip Leader debriefs with the group about the skills that were demonstrated by the participants.

1.2.4.3 Maintaining Participant Ratings

To maintain an achieved participant rating normally requires that **a person must have participated in a trip at their highest rating during the last 5 years.** For example, to maintain a rating of BP4 from May of 2015 until May of the 2020 typically requires that the individual must have led or participated in a BP4 (or equivalent) trip during that 5-year period. The individual must maintain competence in the skills in which they are participating. A participant not satisfying this requirement may be demoted to the next lower rating. To regain the previous rating, the individual must comply with Hooper Outing Club procedures as outlined in the next section. **Exceptions may only be granted when deemed appropriate by the Land Safety Chairperson.**

1.2.4.5 Maintaining Leader Ratings

To maintain an achieved leader rating normally requires that **a person must have led or at least participated in a trip at their maximum rating during the last 3 years.** For example, to maintain a

leader rating of BPL4 from May of 2015 until May of the 2020 typically requires that the individual must have led or participated in a BP4 (or equivalent) trip during that 5 year period. The individual must maintain competence in the skills in which they are leading. Trip leaders are strongly urged to maintain their skills by participating and/or leading regularly. A leader not satisfying this requirement may be demoted to the next lower rating. To regain the previous rating, the individual must comply with Hooper Outing Club procedures as outlined in the previous section. **Exceptions may only be granted when deemed appropriate by the Land Safety Chairperson.**

1.2.5 Wilderness Medicine Certification (WMC) Trip Requirements

The purpose of Wilderness Medicine Certification Requirements on Land Trips include the following

- 1) The main difference between a WFA and WFR is the breadth of diagnostic tools. A WFR is better equipped over a WFA for extended, remote backcountry patient care and diagnostics. For specific differences, below are the topics covered by WFA and WFR respectively.
 - a) WFA Curriculum: https://www.nols.edu/portal_media/wmi/WFA_Schedule_November_2016.pdf
 - b) WFR Curriculum: https://www.nols.edu/media/filer_public/be/0d/be0da7bd-e8e2-4e49-bb54-3467c39be19a/wfr_schedule_november_2016.pdf
- 2) The Safety Audit by the Union in 2015 mandated that HOC create a system to manage Land Safety Risk.
- 3) Trips of a certain difficulty level will require WMC and these requirements can be found in respective rating systems

1.3 Backpacking Rating System

[Backpacking Rating System](#)

1.4 Mountain Biking Rating System

[Biking Rating System](#)

1.5 Trip Leader Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of a trip leader extend throughout all phases of a trip. A few general trip leader responsibilities are of particular importance:

- 1) The trip leader is the final authority on the trip. They may exceed the requirements of this Land Safety Code at any time in the interest of safety, but at no time may they lower them.
- 2) The trip leader shall comply with specific instructions given by the Land Safety Chairperson, but is always free to act in the direction of greater safety.
- 3) The trip leader may delegate their responsibility to another individual. However, they shall be responsible for all decisions made by the person to whom authority has been delegated.

An outline of other major duties and responsibilities of trip leaders during each trip is included in the Basic Leader Training documents.

2 Land Safety Board

The purpose of the Land Safety Board is to ensure that appropriate Land Safety procedures are employed in all aspects of the Hooper Outing Club program. To this end, the Land Safety Board is responsible for conceiving and administering the necessary rules and regulations such as those outlined in this Land Safety Code.

2.1 Land Safety Board Membership and General Functioning

The Land Safety Board is established on a year-by-year basis (calendar year) and will consist of all current Hooper Outing Club trip leaders of at least a BPL3 and/or an MTBL2 rating.

At the first meeting of each calendar year, the Board for the coming year will be established. Members of the Board during the preceding year who have maintained their leader ratings as outlined previously will be included at their previous rating. The Board is responsible for drafting the safety regulations in this Code and revising them when necessary. A meeting at which rule changes may be made must be announced at a Land Safety Board meeting or a general Hooper Outing Club meeting and the proposed rule changes posted at least one week in advance. A 2/3 majority of the Land Safety Board Members present plus designated proxies at a board meeting is required for revisions. Rule changes do not become effective until they have been posted on the Hooper Outing Club website or published in the Hooper Outing Club Land Safety Code.

On matters concerning general trip policy, the Land Safety Board makes recommendations to the Executive Board of the Hooper Outing Club, which then determines policy.

A meeting may be called by any Board Member at any suitable time as long as a reasonable effort has been made to contact all other Board Members. Those Board Members present at a meeting constitute a quorum. Absent members may submit proxy votes on specific agenda items. A majority shall consist of majority of Board Members present at a Land Safety Board meeting, plus proxies.

2.2 Land Safety Chairperson

2.2.1 Election

A Land Safety Chairperson is elected as outlined by the Hooper Outing Club's bylaws.

The elected Chairperson shall appoint another Land Safety Board Member to serve as temporary Chairperson during their absence, for a period not to exceed four (4) weeks. For longer periods of absence, the Board must elect the replacement.

The Chairperson may be removed for cause or demoted by a 2/3 majority vote at a meeting announced via all relevant platforms one week in advance.

2.2.2 Responsibilities and Duties

The Land Safety Chairperson shall make certain that all the requirements set forth in the Land Safety Code are fulfilled. They may raise the standards in the interest of greater safety at any time. They shall approve the trip leader for each trip and make certain the personnel are appropriate for the trip to be taken. The Chairperson presides at Land Safety Board meetings. The Chairperson is the representative of the Land Safety Board to the Executive Board of the Hooper Outing Club. The Land Safety Chairperson may update Appendices to this Land Safety Code containing reference materials and trip listings with approval of the Land Safety Board at the next Land Safety Board meeting. Updates to this code take effect only after approval by the Land Safety Board.

3 Trip Safety and Risk Management

Familiarization with the hazards associated with outdoor activities and the procedures to avoid and to overcome these hazards is the responsibility of all participants, and particularly trip leaders.

3.1 Risk Prevention

Trip leaders should review possible risks before leaving for a trip and review these with the HOC advisor. Pertinent risks include, but are not limited to: reliable water sources along trail, nearest hospitals, appropriate elevation gain, how to prepare for extreme hot/cold, depth of river crossings, etc.

3.2 Methods for Decision Making to Manage Risk (Source 2009 NOLS Leadership Educator Notebook)

	Low event consequences	High event consequences
Low event probability	GO!	MAYBE?
High event probability	MAYBE?	STOP!

Judgment & Decision-Making

3.3 Ease of Communication and Remoteness

Trip leaders must have a Front Country contact while in the Backcountry. This contact should have the Trip Itinerary and should know the plan for communication. The communication plan should include primary method communication, expected check-ins when needed and plan in the event of an emergency. More information can be found HOC Risk Management Pamphlet. For trips that are remote where there is no cellular coverage, it's highly suggested that a Trip Leader consider other forms of communication - Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs), or other communication devices. PLB's can be rented through the outdoor UW office. See rating systems for how levels of communication access are associated with Trip Classification.

3.4 Trip and Behavioral Incidents and First Aid

Follow the training from WFR, WFA or CPR/First Aid Certifications. Follow instructions of HOC Risk Management Pamphlet. In the event of an incident, may that behavioral or physical, fill out a Trip Incident form found outside of the UW Hooper Office or on hooperleaders.org [here](#).

3.5 Trip Admin Forms

Participant information forms can be accessed under the Hooper Outing Club Leader Resources drive. Health and safety forms should be filled out for each participant. These are found under HOC Leader Resources → Trips → Tools/Materials

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BP=Backpack (rating 1,2,3,4,5)

BPL=Backpack Leader (rating 1,2,3,4,5)

MTB=Mountain bike MTBL=Mountain bike leader

WMC = Wilderness Medicine Certification

WFA = Wilderness First Aid, WFR = Wilderness First Responder