

Revised: May 2018

PRAIRIE MOUNTAINEER HIKERS MEMBER GUIDELINES

CLUB MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

Our Mission

The Prairie Mountaineers provides opportunities for its members to share in the adventures and responsibilities of hiking. Our members are active hikers with a wide range of hiking abilities who are committed to the joy of hiking and the common goals of safety, friendship, and the success of the Club.

Our Values

- Safety is key in everything we do; we emphasize taking individual and shared responsibility for safety;
- We strive to achieve a positive hiking experience for all members on each hike;
- We respect the environment and will minimize our impacts;
- We care about our members, and strive to be a cohesive club where people feel they belong;
- We value getting to know each other better and do this through such activities as weekends away, potluck socials, and taking time for post hike refreshments;
- We are a club that knows how to celebrate; we take time to celebrate group and individual accomplishments;
- We enjoy all aspects of the hike experience; it is not simply about getting to the top of the mountain;
- We value the health and fitness benefits of hiking;
- The vitality and character of the Club stems from the collective talents and contribution of all members;

We believe that hiking is more than a physical experience; it refreshes the spirit.

In order to achieve this mission, the Club pursues a philosophy whereby each member, having read and signed the Acknowledgment of Risk, Acceptance of Responsibility and Waiver of Liability as part of his/her annual membership application, is fully responsible for his/her personal safety and well-being while participating in club hikes.

The role of the Hike Coordinator, as outlined in the Club's Hike Coordinators' Guidelines, is to ensure that all hikers in the group are fully informed as to the hike destination and level of difficulty, to coordinate car-pooling from the meeting place to the trailhead and return, to appoint lead hikers and tail-enders, and to endeavor to make the hike an enjoyable experience for all participants.

MINIMUM HIKING REQUIREMENTS

In order to maintain eligibility for membership in the Prairie Mountaineer Hikers, one member from each Membership unit must do **at least five club hikes** over the course of the season. This means, for example, that where a membership unit comprises a husband and a wife, either the husband or the wife must do at least 5 hikes. If each of them does fewer than 5 hikes, but their individual hikes together equal or exceed five, they will not have met the minimum requirement.

Any scheduled PMH hike, including those done on "special weekend trips" (e.g. camping at Waterton Lakes) and midweek or weekend day trips scheduled via the Hikers' Hotline, will qualify as a club hike provided that there are at least 4 persons on the hike, of whom at least 3 are members and the hike is a minimum length of 4 kms return.

****HIKING GUIDEBOOKS AND MAPS**

Most of the hikes offered in the PMH Hike Schedule are described in one of the following three guidebooks:

- **Kananaskis Country Trail Guide**, Current Edition (Gilleen Daffern)
- **The Canadian Rockies Trail Guide** (Brian Patton & Bart Robinson)

The Club strongly recommends that all members purchase at least these books for regular reference. They can be bought at several bookstores and outdoor equipment stores in Calgary (e.g. Mountain Equipment Co-op, Campers' Village), and will help you greatly in determining which hikes you should go on. You will also find other guidebooks in these stores, which are interesting and useful, and can be added to your "hiking library" one by one.

In addition to these guidebooks, a series of laminated colour maps has been produced by Gem Trek Publishers. These maps, which serve as an excellent companion to the guidebooks, cover most of the areas in which we hike, from the Sheep River north to Jasper National Park. They show hike routings, topography, and natural and manmade features of interest to hikers. They are available at various outdoor equipment, book and map stores, as well as through the Alberta Motor Association travel store for AMA members.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

It is very important that you have the proper clothing and equipment for hiking, for both your safety and comfort. Weather conditions can change suddenly, and what starts out as a warm, sunny morning in Calgary can quickly turn into a chilly snow squall in the mountains. **Be prepared for anything at all times!** The layered approach to clothing is strongly recommended for hiking. This allows you to dress warmly at the start of the hike, peel off clothes layer by layer as you warm up, and then put them back on as you cool down (e.g. at the lunch break).

It is also **very important** to include in your pack an adequate lunch, extra high-energy snack and emergency food (e.g. trail mix, candies, Power bars), and an adequate supply of water (1-2 liters, more for a strenuous hike or on a hot day). To prevent dehydration, drink lots of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty.

With respect to equipment, here are some guidelines:

PACK:

Should have a capacity of at least 25 liters, with a wide padded hip belt and a sternum (chest) strap. A plastic liner or an inserted plastic garbage bag is advisable for water-proofing.

BOOTS:

Your boots must be comfortable, waterproof, and sturdy enough to support your ankles at the level of hiking you intend to do. If you plan to do only easy or moderate hikes on well-maintained trails, light walking boots should be sufficient. However, if you expect to do more difficult hikes which are likely to take you over loose scree slopes or rough rocky ridges, then you must have very sturdy hiking boots. Ankle protection is of paramount importance, as is a strong steel-shanked sole. Don't spare the expense when it comes to your boots!

Some other points to consider are:

- break in new boots on one or two City Walks, bringing along a pair of sneakers in case you encounter problems
- boots which fit too tight can cut off circulation, causing cold feet and pinched toes, while boots that are too loose can cause blisters, and
- insoles (either orthotic or generic) provide extra insulation and cushioning

SOCKS:

Wearing two pair of socks provides extra comfort and warmth, and helps to prevent blisters. Thin synthetic liner socks keep your feet dry by wicking away moisture, while thick wool outer socks provide

warmth and cushioning. It is also a good idea to carry extra socks in your pack in case the socks you are wearing become wet due to heavy rainfall, a muddy trail or stream crossings.

GAITERS:

Calf-height gaiters help to keep snow, mud, small stones and moisture out of your boots and off your socks and pant legs. They also provide additional warmth when needed. Shorter ankle-height gaiters are also available.

CLOTHING:

In addition to the foregoing, the following clothing is recommended, either to be worn or to be carried in your pack on all hikes:

- sun hat with peak or wide brim
- long-sleeved shirt, to protect arms from sunburn, scratches and insect bites
- water-resistant “breathable” windbreaker (e.g. “hard shell” jacket)
- wool/fleece sweater, toque, mittens, and fleece or down jacket, for extra warmth when needed
- shorts, long pants, or zip-leg pants that convert from long to short.
- waterproof rain suit or poncho

ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES:

The following accessories are considered to be essential for every hiker, and should be kept in your pack at all times:

- First Aid Kit, which should include at least the following:
 - band-aids (assorted sizes)
 - antiseptic ointment (e.g. Polysporin)
 - moleskin or second skin, for blister prevention/protection
 - personal medications (e.g. Tylenol, ibuprophen)
 - dressings (assorted sizes), gauze pads and swabs
 - triangular bandages (2), tensor bandage, adhesive tape
 - moist hygienic towelettes
 - quick splint (e.g. Sam splint)
 - scissors, tweezers, safety pins, mirror
 - first aid manual, notebook, pencil
 - face mask and sterile rubber gloves (2 or 3 pair)
- Sunglasses, sunscreen and lip balm
- Insect repellent (and antihistamine if you are allergic to bites)
- Toilet paper, and a ziploc bag to pack out used paper
- Needle, thread and small amount of duct tape wrapped around a film canister or pill bottle
- Extra boot lace
- Jackknife (e.g. Swiss Army)
- Emergency whistle
- A plastic bag for wet or muddy boots in the car

OPTIONAL ACCESSORIES:

The following list includes accessories that, although not considered to be essential, have been found by many hikers to be very useful:

- bear spray (a “last ditch” measure, secondary to common sense)
- a change of clothing, including shoes and socks, for the drive home
- a “sit-upon” (e.g. a piece of foam padding) for the lunch stop
- guidebook, map, compass, altimeter, pedometer, GPS
- camera, binoculars
- umbrella
- walking stick (e.g. collapsible ski pole, or two)
- light sneakers or sandals for stream crossings
- fire starter (matches or lighter, candle)

- temporary shelter (e.g. space blanket, 2 large garbage bags), and
- flashlight or headlamp with fresh batteries

GUESTS

- Members are encouraged to bring guests along on club hikes, especially if they are on our membership waiting list. However, **we request that you adhere to the following guidelines:**
- ensure that your guests are fully aware of the level of difficulty of the hike, are capable of doing this type of hike, and have the appropriate clothing and equipment;
- ensure that your guests read, understand and sign the club waiver before leaving the meeting place in Calgary, and that you initial the waiver as sponsor;
- ensure that your guests are fully aware of the club's cost-sharing policy for car-pooling, and try to have your guest ride in the same car as you;
- accept full responsibility for your guests during the course of the hike, and hike with your guests at all times – do not leave them to the responsibility of either the coordinator or the tail-ender;
- advise your guests that they are each welcome to do up to 4 hikes with the club, regardless of how many different sponsors they each may have; and
- Maximum of 2 guests on any given hike - it will be difficult for you to keep an eye on them.

Note: No member is allowed to invite a guest to join a PMH hike where the sponsoring member is not on the hike.

GUEST HIKES BY APPLICANTS ON THE WAIT LIST

Applicants on the wait list also are encouraged to hike with the Club a maximum of 4 times. By exercising this privilege they will be better able to decide if they truly want to become members in the future. The rules for applicants are the same as those outlined above for guests. However, the procedure will be as follows:

- applicants will be furnished with an Email copy of the hike schedule and will choose the hikes they wish to do;
- an applicant wishing to do a specific hike must either be the guest of a member or must phone and introduce themselves to the hike coordinator;
- the hike coordinator will confirm the suitability of the hike for the applicant and the ability to accommodate the applicant on the hike;
- the hike coordinator alone will make the decision whether or not the applicant is to be included in the hike; and
- the hike coordinator may request that a member participating in the hike assume the role described above for those bringing guests on a hike.

CHOOSING A HIKE

The Hike Schedule indicates the intended destination, hiking distance (round trip), elevation gain (net from trailhead) and level of difficulty, as well as the meeting place and time, and the name and the Email &/or phone number of the hike coordinator.

****Where the hike description says - Please Contact**, this means that the hike coordinator is allowed to cancel a hike by emailing or phoning all registrants, and is not required to show up at the designated meeting place. This is intended to avoid the disappointment to hikers of showing up for a hike, only to learn that it has to be cancelled because there are fewer than four hikers. This happens most often on difficult hikes.

All hikers are strongly advised to **read the description of the hike in the appropriate guidebook** and/or to ask the coordinator about any special challenges or concerns before deciding whether or not to do the hike. Do not select a hike that appears to be beyond your level of capability! This will not be enjoyable for you, and could put the safety of the entire group at risk.

The Hike Schedule has been planned so as to provide a wide range of choices for all members of the club. To assist you in your choice of hikes, the following definitions of the **various levels of difficulty are provided:**

City	A hike in the city rated easy to moderate. All hikers should be welcome and the hike is generally done at a relaxed pace, with plenty of opportunity to stop for rests, to look at flowers, or simply to socialize. All hikes must be a minimum of 4 kms return & can include but not be limited to just stairs
Easy	Generally btwn 4 – 12 kms (rtn) in length maximum 299 m elevation and no steep slopes. May be a longer distance but minimal elevation. Well maintained trails with few, if any hazards. A relaxed pace, with plenty of opportunity to stop for rests, to look at flowers, or simply to socialize.
Easy-Moderate	Typically in the range of 4 to 16 km in length, with a max of 399 meters net elevation gain, and may have the occasional steep section and some rough trail (e.g. exposed roots or rocks or loose scree). But very limited. Distance vs Elevation Gain is considered in this rating ie: longer hike but minimal elevation/minimum distance but more elevation. Done at a more relaxed pace but a little less time to smell the roses.
Moderate	Typically in the range of 4 to 22 km in length, with a max of 599 meters net elevation gain. May have more steep sections than Easy-Moderate and more rough trail (e.g. exposed roots or rocks, or loose scree). Rough Trail, Easy Scramble Sections, Trail Finding, Distance vs Elevation Gain is considered in this rating ie: longer hike but minimal elevation/minimum distance but more elevation. A steady but comfortable pace is maintained, with stops every 15-20 minutes or as required. More endurance required than on most EASY hikes
Moderate-Difficult	Generally more 4 to 22 km in length, with 400-899 meters of net elevation gain. Rough Trail, Possibly Some Minimal Scrambling, Trail Finding, Distance vs Elevation Gain is considered in this rating ie: longer hike but minimal elevation/minimum distance but more elevation. Trail conditions generally similar to those of MODERATE hikes, but pace somewhat faster, and greater fitness and stamina required.
Difficult	Up to 26 km in length with 500-1050 m elevation. Likely to encounter some quite steep spots, as well as some difficult footing (loose scree), Can be also be an Easy Scramble, Trail Finding, Distance vs Elevation Gain is considered in this rating. Weather can be a factor in the higher elevation. A brisk pace is required and hikers must have both endurance and strength to handle the combination of distance and elevation.
Very Difficult	Easy Scrambles may start at 10kms in length, otherwise hikes are generally more than 25 km in length, with more than 1000 m elevation and / other specific risks (very steep sections, narrow exposed ridges, etc.). Weather can increase these hazards greatly. Superior stamina and very strong legs are essential. Only very strong hikers should attempt these.
Scrambles	
Easy Scramble (can be under Difficult or Very Difficult hike listing)	Mostly hiking, minimal use of hands, little exposure if any, e.g. Mount Bourgeau, Heart Mountain
Moderate Scramble	Frequent use of hand holds, perhaps some exposure, some route finding required e.g. Cascade Mountain, Big Sister, Mount Lady MacDonald – only to the east of the final ridge, Yamnuska Traverse, etc.

Choose with care.

You are the only one who can make the right decision on each outing!!!

REGISTERING FOR A HIKE

For those hikes where the description in the Hike Schedule indicates **MUST CONTACT**, you are required to register for the hike through our Website. This allows the coordinator to advise prospective hikers of any special challenges, or to jointly determine whether or not this is an appropriate hike for that person. Indicate whether you intend to bring along any guests.

Where the Hike Schedule does not require pre-registration, simply show up at the designated meeting place 10 minutes ahead of the time indicated. This will be the case for most local hikes (e.g., "city walks").

*Do not email/contact the coordinator later than 9:00pm the night before the hike. If it is necessary to cancel your preregistration later than this time, either call at an appropriate time in the morning or simply don't show up at the meeting place (the coordinator will wait only 5 minutes for your arrival). Be careful – too many no shows for a where you pre-registered many weeks in advance could be cause for disciplinary action.

***MAIN MEETING PLACES

Main Meeting Locations	
Bowcroft School - NW	Public School located at 3940 - 73 Street NW - Just off Sarcee Trail and the TransCanada Hwy Junction. Access via Sarcee Trail South and 34 Avenue OR North of Bowness Road on 73 Street NW
Maranatha Church - NW	2111 - 52 St. NW (Parking area on north side off Home Road)
Valley Ridge - NW	(16th Ave West toward Banff. Turn right at Valley Ridge Blvd NW; Keep right through the traffic circle and go right at the 4-way stop onto Valley Ridge Dr. Go past the little strip mall and the field on your right to the first stop
Anderson Station - SW	C-Train Station at McLeod Trail & Anderson Road SW. Meet just south of pedestrian overpass to South Centre at foot of bridge.
Weasel Head Parking lot North Glenmore Park - SW	Corner of 37 St and 66 Ave SW in Lakeview – meet in northeast corner. If coming from Crowchild - Turn into Lakeview to 66 Ave & 37 Street. If coming from Glenmore - Turn on to 37th Street to the end of the street

For all other meeting places, please call the coordinator if you have any questions regarding location or access.

CAR-POOLING

For those who wish, car-pooling is arranged by the hike coordinator at the meeting place. If you will require a ride, you should be at the meeting place 10 minutes in advance of the specified time. If you are a slow hiker on a difficult hike, let the coordinator know so that you can be placed with a driver who also likes to hike at a slow pace or doesn't mind having to wait for you.

******Driver reimbursement is considered voluntary – However, all passengers (guests included) are encouraged to offer the driver the amount indicated in the table below to help offset some of the vehicle operating expenses. For trips into one of the National Parks, where neither the driver nor any of the passengers has an annual pass, the cost of purchasing a day pass will be divided equally among the driver and passengers. It would be appreciated if all club members who have cars would take their fair turn as drivers.

The gasoline price is the prevalent price shown on the pump for regular grade (after all discounts). The distance is the total driven, to and from the trailhead:

Gas Price/Cents/litre	Driver Reimbursement/cents/km
Less than \$0.60	\$0.06
\$0.60 – \$1.00	\$0.07
\$1.01 – \$1.40	\$0.08
\$1.41 – \$1.80	\$0.09
\$1.81 – \$2.20	\$0.10
\$2.21 – \$2.60	\$0.11
>\$2.61	\$0.12

Drivers should try to take only 3 passengers unless they can carry more comfortably. A conscious effort should be made at the meeting place by members and coordinators to distribute passengers as equally as possible in the vehicles that will be used.

The recommended per-passenger rate (cents/km) of driver reimbursement is the same irrespective of the actual number of passengers in the vehicle.

Where the round trip distance exceeds 350 km and only a single passenger is carried, an additional 3 cents/km over and above the amounts shown above should be paid. This situation can occur when extra baggage must be accommodated. Without the extra charge a significant additional cost burden is placed on the car owner on these long trips. The distance to and from Lake Louise is just under 350 km.

******Vehicles used in car-pooling must be properly maintained and be in roadworthy condition. This occasional use of your vehicle for carpooling is contemplated under your Personal Auto Policy.

******Since this is not a usual or frequent use of your vehicle it is not considered as a vehicle used or licensed for bus or taxi service or any other share the ride arrangements (such as an UBER driver).

ON THE TRAIL

The Hike Coordinator will designate both a lead hiker and a tail-ender (sweep) for the hike. Where the group is large (e.g. 15 or more), the group may be split into faster and slower sub-groups of at least 4 hikers each.

All hikers should ensure that they stay behind the lead hiker and ahead of the tail-ender at all times!

- The designated leader(s) will be requested to stop every 15-20 minutes to allow for rests, water intake, “separation breaks” and regrouping. If you should need to stop at any other time, please notify the coordinator, leader or tail-ender. If you need to go off-trail to relieve yourself, leave your pack at the edge of the trail where it will be easily visible by other hikers. The lead hikers/ coordinators will wait at all junctions to ensure that all hikers take the correct route.
- The coordinator will try to ensure that an appropriate pace is set for the group or sub-groups. Club hikes are also social opportunities, so if you are inclined to be a fast hiker, try to adjust your pace to that of the leader and not allow yourself to become impatient - there is no prize for being

the first one to the top! If you are a slow hiker, try to keep up to the pace of the slower group so that the tail-ender is not constantly forced to fall back with you.

- If during the course of the hike the trail becomes impassable due to poor trail or weather conditions, or the presence of a bear or other dangerous animal, the coordinator will consult with other members of the group to determine whether or not the hike should be terminated. Do not proceed on or turn back on your own.

Please respect the environment!

- Pack out all garbage (including banana skins, orange peels and apple cores), and do not feed the wildlife - even those cute little ground squirrels and bold whiskey-jacks. Our impact on the natural environment must be minimal!
- If you get back to the trailhead ahead of the coordinator, try to wait in your car until he returns. However, if you and your car-mates must return to Calgary early for some reason, please notify the coordinator in advance or leave a note on the windshield of his/her car.
- And finally, keep in mind that a prime reason for you participating in a Prairie Mountaineer hike is for the comfort and enjoyment of hiking with a group of like-minded people.

****RESPONSIBILITY OF HIKE COORDINATORS**

Hike coordinators are volunteers not professional guides and act to provide basic logistical arrangements for initiating and running each hike activity.

What makes it possible for members to enjoy the many and varied hikes? It is the hike coordinators who willingly and cheerfully donate their time.

1. A day or so before the hike the Coordinator should check the trail conditions and if necessary update their hike posting indicating any changes or concerns.
2. If canceling a hike, inform all registered hikers by email &/or phone. Update your hike posting and advise the Club Statistician of the cancellation.
3. Arrive at the meeting place 15 minutes beforehand.
4. As hikers arrive, ensure they register by initialing the attendee hike form.
 - Guests must sign the guest waiver form.
5. Arrange for a social gathering after the hike for those interested in participating and consider these plans in car-pool arrangements.
6. Organize car pools and give directions to the trailhead (and maps if needed).
7. Wait 5 minutes for any late arrivals.
8. At the trailhead give the odometer reading to drivers, and notify all hikers how much they will owe their drivers.
9. After introductions are made, appoint a leader and a sweeper. Give a brief outline of where the lunch stop will be, viewpoints, hazards etc.
10. During the hike, attempt to maintain communication with all members. This is necessary to ensure there are plenty of rest stops. Walkie-talkie radios are ideal for this.
11. If there is an incident during the hike, take appropriate action depending on the situation. Advise the Club Chairperson or Hike Coordinator upon returning to Calgary, if it is serious.
12. On returning home, prepare the hike report. Document any incidents with complete details. Note the reasons if any hiker(s) were not granted permission to join the hike. Mail it to the statistician a.s.a.p.

RESPONSIBILITY OF HIKERS

Each hiker assumes all risks and consequences of their participation in the club-organized activities. Any person who does not feel confident or self-reliant in their abilities or who does not agree with the Club's Mission and Values should not participate in these activities.

Register for the hike.

1. Get informed about the hike - either by reading up on it or simply asking the coordinator. They won't mind.
2. Tell the coordinator of any health concerns you might have BEFORE the hike. A hike coordinator has the right to refuse you permission to join in the hike if they feel it is beyond your capabilities. The coordinator also must know beforehand if it is your intention to do only a portion of the hike. In many cases it may not be possible to shorten the hike, or it may place a burden on others to accompany you back to the trailhead.
3. Remember that when you sign up for a hike you are committed to your hiking buddies for the day. It takes priority over your social agenda that evening.
4. If you can't stay for an after-hike social, inform the coordinator at the meeting place in Calgary in order for proper carpooling to be organized.
5. Stay in groups of a minimum of 4 persons and please don't wander off on your own.
6. If you need a 'pit' stop, tell someone before you head off into the bushes.
7. If you need to stop for a rest or tape up a blister - just say so!
8. Respect the environment and stay on the trails.
9. Pack adequate clothing (for warmth and rain) and sufficient food and water.
10. Our volunteer hike coordinators are the heart and soul of our club. At times coordinators will be forced to make decisions that may displease some members of the group. However, we must respect the hike coordinator's final decision. Issues should be discussed calmly, and in the unlikely event that they can't be resolved, both people should contact the Club Chairperson or Hike Coordinator after the hike.

WEBSITE PHOTO GUIDELINES

When members send photos to be published:

- They grant the Club permission to use the photos on the Club website and for newsletters / documents.
- Ownership/copyright of all photos remains with the original photographer.
- Copying of photos posted on the website is prohibited, unless permission has been granted by the owner of the photo(s).
- **It is a Club value and policy that members will respect each other and honor this condition.**
- Members submitting photos should upload at a size of **Less than 1 MB** in order to maintain website integrity and speed.
- Photos are uploaded in a Secured Member's Area. The Club is not responsible if individuals choose to use them for any purpose.