

**Northern Rivers Outdoor Adventure Club Inc.  
BUSHWALKING ESSENTIAL INFORMATION DOCUMENT**

## **1. Risk Management**

- All participants must register for an Event on Member Jungle and, in so doing, formally acknowledge the club's procedures and conditions of participation, as set out in this document. Children under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an authorised responsible adult who must sign the relevant attendance form for the child;
- All participants must bring an Emergency Medical Information Slip with their details completed. This document is available from the following page on the club website: <https://www.nroac.org.au/resources/forms-and-documents>
- Each participant must comply with the club's procedures and requirements, and follow instructions from the activity leader;
- Each participant must determine and accept the level of risk for each activity from a personal perspective, or if necessary, by consensus within the party. Each participant must realistically assess their fitness and experience. Upon request, the leader and/or experienced club members will assist participants with a risk assessment, but participants must take sole responsibility for their decisions, irrespective of the influence of others, including the leader.
- Participants must advise the leader, before the walk, of any limitation or medical condition that may impair their walking ability and/or requires special treatment and/or medication in the event of incapacitation;
- Leaders are volunteers and are only responsible for the organisational aspects of that activity and are not necessarily expert in all aspects of bushwalking, and may rely upon the expertise of others within the party;
- Each participant acknowledges that participation in walking may involve a real risk of serious injury or death from various causes, as well as damage to personal property. Northern Rivers Bushwalkers Club Inc, its office bearers and leaders do not accept any liability in respect of such risk. The club is covered by Personal Accident, Public and Association Liability insurance through 'Bushwalking Australia' <http://www.bushwalkingaustralia.org/>. If anyone is injured during a club activity, please advise the leader.
- The 'NRBC Bushwalking Risk Management Plan' is available from the following page on the club website:  
<https://www.nroac.org.au/resources/forms-and-documents>

## **2. General Risk and Safety**

- Risk may include, but is not limited to: slippery and/or uneven surfaces, dislodged rocks, height exposure, creek crossings, hypothermia and heat exhaustion. Rain, weather changes, lack of track maintenance, landslides, erosion, fallen trees and other unforeseen circumstances may exacerbate

risk;

- Snakes are rarely encountered but can be encountered on any walk. The degree of risk increases in the spring and summer months and in remote locations. Protection is at participants' discretion;
- Leeches, ticks, mosquitoes and other biting insects are variable seasonal hazards. Protection is at participants' discretion;
- Members are encouraged to acquire a reasonable knowledge of navigation, bush safety, and first aid. The club will assist with instruction, if requested;
- All participants should advise a responsible person of the details of the walk and the possibility of a late return as a result of bad weather and/or unforeseen circumstances;
- The emergency phone number for fire, police and ambulance is 000 and, for mobile phones, 112.  
Be prepared to give accurate relevant details including the map name, the map datum and the map reference coordinates. It is recommended that you download the Emergency Plus app. This will show your exact coordinates. A club GPS and Personal Locator Beacon can be used on remote club walks.

### **3. Equipment**

- All participants must adequately equip themselves for the type of walk being undertaken, and reasonably provide for possible adverse conditions, including sun exposure, wet/windy weather and vegetation obstructions;
- All participants must provide their own first aid kit including: band aids, emergency blanket, compression bandage, blister protection, necessary medications, water purifying tablets, whistle, matches, small torch, pocket knife;
- All participants must carry adequate water. All water obtained direct from the environment should be purified by boiling and/or chemical treatment;
- All participants must wear suitable footwear in good condition. A hat is recommended. Leg, arm and hand protection is at the discretion of each participant.

### **4. General Instructions**

- Follow the instructions of the activity leader;
- Walk together as much as possible, always keeping in sight of the person ahead and behind. Advise the leader if you are having difficulty in keeping up. An experienced responsible member should be posted at the rear of the party;
- If a participant wishes to leave the activity, they do so at their own risk and

are responsible for informing the leader of their intention so they can be accounted for;

- Observe fire restrictions and extinguish all fires with water;
- Leave campsites clean and tidy and take out all rubbish;
- In wilderness areas limit group size to 12 and obliterate, as much as possible, all signs of your passing;
- Use of soap or detergent is not recommended, but must be at least 50m from any watercourse;
- All human waste must be buried 15cm deep and at least 50m from any watercourse.

## 5. Walk Descriptions

- Walk programs provide a brief description of each walk. More information is available from walks leader;
- It is the club's policy that off-track routes not be shared eg via social media, photos or other means. This is to prevent possible injuries from inexperienced walkers subsequently following the route, and to help maintain the pristine state of the area walked;
- A walk grading is estimated for every walk. Due to subjective nature of an assessment and the variability of walks, the walk grading is for guidance only;
- Distance estimates in the walk descriptions may not be an accurate guide for estimating time;
- The map/s covering the walk is sometimes stated (usually 1:25000 topographic maps);
- Terminology:

<i>Through walk:</i>	A back-packing walk of two or more days duration
<i>Rock hopping:</i>	Stepping or leaping from rock to rock. Rocks may be loose and/or slippery
<i>Rock scrambling:</i>	Negotiating sloping rock features requiring the use of hands
<i>Abseiling:</i>	Descending vertical drops using specialised equipment

<i>Height exposure:</i>	Proximity to cliffs etc from which a fall would cause severe injury or death
<i>Scratchy:</i>	Presence of thorny rainforest vines, lantana thickets, dense scrub etc

## 6. Walk Gradings

- Grade 1: No bushwalking experience required. Flat even surface with no steps or steep sections. Walks no greater than 5km;
- Grade 2: No bushwalking experience required. The track has a hardened or compacted surface and may have a gentle hill section or sections and occasional steps. Walks no greater than 10km;
- Grade 3: Some bushwalking experience recommended. Tracks may have short steep hill sections, a rough surface and many steps. Walks up to 20km;
- Grade 4: Bushwalking experience recommended. Tracks may be long, rough and very steep. Directional signage may be limited;
- Grade 5: Very experienced bushwalkers with specialised skills, including navigation. Tracks are likely to be very rough, very steep and unmarked. Walks may be more than 20km;
- Grade 6: Same as grade 5 but off-track, could include some height exposure, and possible rock scrambling.

Exploratory walks, for members only, may be conducted to determine conditions on a walk not previously attempted. It is the club's policy that off-track routes not be shared e.g. via social media, photos or other means. This is to prevent possible injuries from inexperienced walkers subsequently following the route, and to help maintain the pristine state of the area walked.

## 7. How To Participate

- Intending participants must register on Member Jungle prior to the walk.
- Leaders may cancel a walk if there are insufficient participants or if unforeseen circumstances arise. Participants will be notified via the Member Jungle chatroom;
- The leader should tailor the number of participants to suit the length and difficulty of the walk. The recommended minimum number is 3.
- The leader may decline to accept a person on their activity if they assess that the person does not have the relevant capability or experience for the activity. The leader should enquire about the capability and/or relevant experience of the people registering for their activity if this is not already known to the leader. The leader can also seek supporting information/references from

other trip leaders who have had this person on their activities.

- Prospective members, visitors and guests may attend two one-day club activities free of charge, prior to joining the club, after which the full club subscription is payable;
- Prospective members are advised to start with easy walks;
- Dogs are not permitted on club walks;
- Participants must cancel by way of the event on Member Jungle if they cannot attend the activity.

## **8. Transport and Convoy Procedures**

- All transport is by private vehicle. Where possible, the leader will organise shared vehicles;
- When driving in convoy, each driver must keep the vehicle behind in sight, at all times, especially when turning off;
- Passengers are expected to contribute to vehicle running costs. A suggested contribution per passenger is estimated cost of fuel multiplied by 1.5 then divided by the total number of persons in the vehicle;
- Please be punctual because participants are not expected to wait.

## **9. Photographs**

Group photographs may be posted on the club website and Facebook page. Please inform the leader if you do not wish to have your image taken and/or posted online. Photographs of children under the age of 18 are not allowed to be taken by any member of a club activity.