

Trail Adoption Orientation

SAFETY

Planning: Trail work requires an extra measure of planning as the remoteness of many work locations makes transportation of injured persons difficult and the time required for transportation can increase the severity of some types of injuries or medical emergencies. Cell coverage not very good in Uwharries.

Let someone know your are going out to do trail maintenance. (Date, start & end time, location)

Be observant: There are rocks, roots, holes, etc. where you can twist an ankle or trip and fall. A wet root can be very slippery so try to avoid stepping on them. Steep slopes can be very slippery when wet also. There are low hanging branches that can poke out an eye. There are venomous snakes, bees and other things that can make you miserable.

Buddy System: Strongly recommended, but not required. Nice to have someone to talk to who has your back if run into problems such as choking on your Cliff bar. 3 is better: injured, 1 to get help, 1 to stay w/injured. Or if have to carry out, 3 is better.

Safety Circles: Allow plenty of room to use long handled tools. (a.k.a. blood circles). Don't carry these tools on your shoulder as if turn around, could hit your previous buddy. There is a lot of momentum when you swing a mattock and it could cause a lot of damage if you hit someone. Cutter mattocks and axes are very sharp in some cases. Have a sheath if possible for the sharp edges. Carry an unsheathed ax with the blade pointing out and the head flat so if you fall it won't hit your leg. When walking past another volunteer or a hiker, please say something so they know you are there.

Wear proper cloths:

Long pants & long sleeve shirts to protect from black berry stickers, insects, snakes & sun

Hat &/ or sun glasses to protect from the sun. Bring & use *sunscreen*. *Melanoma* is a nasty form of cancer. Wear hunter orange in season.

Shoes with toe covering, preferably boots w/ steel toes. Sandals just don't work! Water proof boots a help in rainy weather or crossing streams.

Gloves protect you from stickers and slivers as well as blisters from friction with tools

Rain gear: No use being miserable and soaked. A raincoat will also protect you from the wind.

Heat stroke: Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated, even on cooler days. Watch for feeling light headed or dizzy or developing a head ache.

Hypothermia: A wind can make you feel very cold, even at 70 degrees. Carry a windproof jacket/rain coat.

Insects: Use DEET repellent for mosquitoes. Permethrin is a more potent repellent, but be careful you don't get it on your skin. It is for clothing only. Permethrin is slightly better than deet for *ticks* and *chiggers* in my opinion. Cover top of spray cans with cardboard tube and duct tape so trigger isn't hit in your pack. Repellent helps with *bees, hornets and wasps* if they aren't already agitated. North Carolina does have a few **scorpions** that can give a very painful bite.

Snakes: Keep a watchful eye out for them so they don't surprise you. Please don't kill them, even if it is a copperhead or a timber rattler.

First Aid Kits: Good to have in your pack so it is readily available. Most of the time injuries will be small and minor so band aids and ointment will be basic. Tweezers to pull stickers & slivers or bee stingers are very handy. Alo Vera is great for burns or purple marks on your thin skin (old people).

Smart Phone: Most people carry one of these today. Great to take pictures of problems, find location coordinates (see Compass app)

Satellite Tracker: If someone is really worried about you getting injured, you can buy a SPOT Gen 3 Satellite Messenger for \$99 that will send your location to them at time intervals you select. There is a fancier version: SPOT Gen 3 Satellite Messenger, for \$199. There is a monthly service fee as well.

There are also **Personal Locator Beacons** that don't have a monthly fee, but initial cost is higher and they only report to EMS.

Snacks: You may need some extra food as trail work uses a lot of energy. *Cliff bars* should be eaten in small bights with water handy to wash them down as they are dry and easy to choke on.

Lifting: Be careful when lifting as it easy to lift too much and get a hernia. Use a Spartacus for multiple people to lift heavy objects. Big rocks on stairs and in water bars can really mess with your back as well. Know your limits. These activities are done on work days, not normal trail maintenance.

Day Pack: To carry your lunch, snacks, water, first aid kit, folding saw, phone backup battery, smart phone, flagging tape, rain gear, etc.

Enjoy the scenery and wildlife. This is not a race.

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