

## **Wilderness Trek™ Safety Policy** (Revised 9/17/04)

Wilderness Trek™ considers safety to be a top priority. By setting and maintaining strict protocols, Wilderness Trek has had an excellent safety record for almost 20 years. We trust the credentials and standards listed below will answer most of your questions concerning our commitment to the highest standards of safety. We strive to ensure a high quality experience for everyone who participates in Wilderness Trek™. If you have questions please don't hesitate to call.

### *Licenses and Permits*

The summer backpacking program of Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp is outfitted by Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. operates in the State of Colorado with a commercial outfitting permit. Licensed since 1989 by the USDA Forest Service to operate in the national forests associated with Wilderness Trek™, Wilderness Expeditions has proven to be a vital partner in accomplishing the mission of Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp.

### *Insurance*

Liability insurance is carried, as required by state law, by Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. Liability insurance is also carried by Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp, a not-for-profit organization registered in the State of Texas. Neither Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp, nor Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. provide individual or group medical coverage for participants. It is the responsibility of individual campers to provide their own medical insurance.

### *General Statement - Safety Procedures*

A property manager lives on the property at the Wilderness Trek™ base camp in Salida, Colorado. There is a staff member available at all times in the event of an emergency. There is at least one supervisory staff person and one guide staff person with each group of 20 participants on backcountry trips at all times. These staff members are familiar with the locations of the nearest medical facilities. Each group traveling in the mountains carries a radio (or mobile phone) at all times and is in daily contact with the base camp. Ambulance, Search and Rescue and Life Flight Services are available in the event of life and death emergencies. Heart-of-the-Rockies Medical Center is only ten minutes from the Wilderness Trek™ base camp. Where as activities conducted in the outdoors do involve some risk, all sites and activities have been researched and chosen to balance adventure with the well being of all participants.

### *Personnel*

Those who serve as **supervisory staff** for Wilderness Trek meet or exceed the following standards:

- Are at least 21 years of age\*
- Have American Red Cross First Aid training and CPR certification
- Have technical experience consistent with their specialized role on the staff
- Have participated in at least five (5) group backpacking trips as guide staff before becoming a supervisor
- Have completed Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. guide training program
- Have exhibited the maturity necessary to be an effective leader of young people and other staff members.

\* In some rare instances a supervisory staff member may be under 21 years of age, but no younger than 18 years of age, if the Executive Director and Outfitter agree on waiving this standard.

Those who serve as **staff** for Wilderness Trek™ meet or exceed the following standards:

- Are at least 18 years of age
- Have American Red Cross First Aid training and CPR certification
- Have technical experience consistent with their specialized role on the staff
- Have participated in at least three (3) group backpacking trips
- Have completed Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. guide training program
- Have exhibited the maturity necessary to be an effective leader of young people.

Those who serve as **volunteer staff** for Wilderness Trek™ meet or exceed the following standards:

- Are at least 16 years of age
- Have participated in at least two (2) group backpacking trips
- Have exhibited the maturity necessary to be an effective leader among their peers.

#### *Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. Guide Training Program*

All guides and supervisors for Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp must complete an annual week long training course conducted by the staff of Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. Guide training covers low-impact camping, field cooking and wilderness hygiene, leading Bible studies and devotionals, basic leadership and counseling skills, as well as, provides specific training in mountaineering skills such as backcountry navigation, rappelling and search and rescue procedures.

If you would like a complete copy of the *Wilderness Trek™ Safety Policy* please contact **Edd Eason**, Executive Director, PO Box 831040, Richardson, Texas 75083-1040.

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### **Additional Policies and Procedures**

#### *Necessary Assurances to the Governing Body:*

Wilderness Trek Christian Camp, a non-profit organization and a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Texas is the governing body of Wilderness Trek Christian Camp. Wilderness Expeditions, Inc., a for-profit corporation in the State of Colorado, is an Outfitter for Wilderness Trek Christian Camp. Wilderness Trek Christian Camp has the ultimate legal responsibility for the safe operation of the camp from the first week of June to the second week of August each year. Therefore, the Outfitter is responsible to the Board of Wilderness Trek to provide the following each year before camp operations begin:

- A copy of the permit and usage agreement submitted by the Outfitter to the USDA Forestry Service.
- A copy of the operation plan submitted by the Outfitter to the USDA Forestry Service
- Written proof that the Outfitter has been approved to operate in the national forests where Wilderness Trek trips will be conducted.
- Proof that the Outfitter has current liability insurance coverage to meet the USDA Forest Service's requirements

The Outfitter shall provide these items to the Executive Director of Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp. The Executive Director shall inspect these documents, verify their authenticity and keep them on file for the Wilderness Trek™ Board.

Before camp operations begin each year, the Outfitter shall also provide to the Executive Director, or his appointed representative, for review the following:

- Personnel files on all Wilderness Expedition employees who will have direct contact with Wilderness Trek™ campers. These personnel files will verify the staff member's age, references and whether or not they have been convicted of a felony. They will also contain a current health history and verification the staff member has a statement signed by a licensed physician clearing them for employment as guide.
- Proof that all staff members have Red Cross First Aid and CPR certification
- Proof that all staff members have their own medical insurance coverage.
- A copy of the employee handbook used by Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. to prepare staff members for employment. This handbook shall contain at least the following:
  - Job description for supervisory staff
  - Job description for staff
  - Policies and procedures for various emergency situations (i.e. accidents, fatalities, lost campers, etc.)
  - Policies and procedures for providing adequate supervision during all Wilderness Trek program activities
  - A list of medical facilities closest to the areas where Wilderness Trek™ activities will occur.
- Proof that all equipment, buildings and toilet facilities used by Wilderness Trek™ campers are safe, are in good working order and meet code specifications, where applicable. Proof may be provided through a visual inspection by the Executive Director, or his appointed representative.
- Proof that fully stocked first aid kits are available to all staff.
- Proof that Wilderness Expeditions has an adequate facility for separating a sick (and possibly contagious camper) from other campers while at base camp.

*Necessary Assurances to the Outfitter:*

Before camp operations begin each year the Executive Director of Wilderness Trek™ Christian Camp shall provide to the Outfitter the following:

- An accurate estimate of the number of campers, when they will be coming to participate in Wilderness Trek trips and the number of vehicles expected on Wilderness Expedition's property.
- A compensation agreement signed by the President of the Wilderness Trek™ Board of Directors.
- The Outfitter shall receive these items no later than February 25<sup>th</sup> each year.

*Additional Requirements for all staff:*

Letter of Agreement - There shall be a letter of agreement with each supervisory and guide staff member which includes a list of specific responsibilities (job description). This letter of agreement shall be signed by both a representative of Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. (employer) and the staff member (employee).

List of References – There shall be at least three (3) references about each staff member attesting to the individual’s character and suitability to work with adolescents. The written references shall be in the personnel file or there shall be an indication in the personnel file that a reference has been given by phone.

Current Health History – Each staff member must complete a current health history and must have been examined within the last 24 months by a licensed medical health care professional. A statement signed within 90 calendar days of the beginning of working at the camp and the health history completed by the staff member shall be maintained in the personnel file at the camp.

Written Instructions – Each staff member shall be trained and given written instructions as to camp policy when emergencies occur, such as fires, lost campers and injuries.

*Necessary Camp Personnel:*

On-site Staff – There shall be staff member, at least 21 years of age, at the base camp at all times. This person is responsible for coordinating the efforts of others in securing appropriate medical attention for a camper in the event of an emergency. This staff member should be accessible by phone or radio at all times for staff members on the trail with groups.

Staff on Trail – There shall be at least one supervisory staff and one staff member with each group of campers while they are 60 minutes hiking distance, or more, from the base camp. In the event of an accident requiring the evacuation of an individual one staff member must remain with the group and one staff members must go with the injured person, unless the injured person is a staff member. In this case staff members should use their best judgment.

*Necessary Staff Supervision:*

No Unsupervised Campers - At no time shall a camper (14 – 17 years of age) be left without qualified supervision.

Sleeping Areas - Sleeping areas for staff members shall be in close proximity to the sleeping areas of campers, but staff members are not to sleep in the same area (or tent) as campers (14 – 17 years of age). At no time are campers or staff members of the opposite sex to sleep in the same area.

Solo Times – Staff members may request campers to separate themselves from the campsite for a predetermined period of time for a special program activity, called Solo, as long as, campers are close enough to hear a staff member call them back to camp. Even during a Solo activity no camper shall be more than 100 yards from the group camp area. One staff member shall remain in camp at all times during the Solo period. Other staff members shall circulate during the Solo time to make sure campers are safe.

Emergency Plan on File – The Outfitter shall have a plan in writing for the following emergency situations:

- Accident on base camp property
- Accident at rappel site
- Accident on the trail or in a backcountry area
- Accident on a public roadway
- Camper lost at base camp
- Camper lost in backcountry areas

The staff shall receive a copy of this plan. The staff shall be trained to implement this plan, prior to the beginning of the first camp session.

Emergency Report – The Outfitter shall provide each staff member with the proper form(s) for reporting injuries, fatalities and lost campers. The Outfitter shall be responsible to report all emergencies according to the following protocols:

Minor injury - staff member reports the injury to the supervisory staff member representative within 12 hours – staff member completes a written report within 72 hours of the incident in a written report to the Outfitter or his appointed representative.

Major injury or illness of a camper or staff member (any injury which requires a camper/staff member to be removed from the backcountry and taken to a hospital or clinic for emergency medical treatment) – staff member reports the injury to the Outfitter as soon as possible – staff member completes a written and submits it to the Outfitter within 12 hours of the accident – Outfitter notifies the local hospital (and local law enforcement/search and rescue, if required) - Outfitter contacts the Executive Director within 24 hours of the accident - Executive Director contacts Board Members within 24 hours, if deemed necessary

Fatality (injury resulting in the death of a camper or staff member) – staff member reports the incident immediately to the Outfitter – staff member completes a written report and submits to Outfitter within 6 hours of the incident– Outfitter contacts hospital and local law enforcement/search and rescue - Outfitter contacts the Executive Director as soon as possible – Executive Directors contacts Board Members as soon as possible

Lost/Runaway Camper – staff member reports the incident immediately to the Outfitter – staff members completes a written report and submits to the Outfitter within 6 hours of the time the camper went missing – Outfitter Coordinates the search by staff and reports to local law enforcement/search and rescue when efforts by staff have failed - Outfitter contacts the Executive Director as soon as possible – Executive Director contacts Board Members within 24 hours, if deemed necessary.

*Special Activities:*

Rappelling – Staff members may strongly encourage campers to participate in rappelling, but should not coerce or intimidate an individual who refuses to rappel. Staff members shall be trained to properly set up, supervise and take down a group rappel. The following guidelines shall be followed:

- Only top-rope rappels with a separate belay system shall be used
- Only rappels at sites approved by the Outfitter are to be used
- Campers must be supervised by at least two staff member at all times when rappelling
- Only staff members are allowed to set up the rappel and belay those who rappel
- Those rappelling must wear a helmet at all times
- Those supervising the bottom of the rappel must wear a helmet at all times
- All anchors must be backed up
- The rappel line and the belay line shall have separate backup anchors and may not share the same backup anchor

- Staff members should check each other's anchors and knots before allowing the rappel to be used
- Rappels should not be conducted when weather conditions make the activity hazardous (i.e. raining, lightening, high winds, etc.)
- Participants waiting to rappel (and those who have completed their rappel) must be at least 50 feet away of the top edge of the rappel and at least 75 feet away from the bottom of the rappel
- A staff member before each rappel shall visually and physically inspect ropes and other equipment. Damaged rope and equipment are to be replaced immediately and are not to be used at any time.
- A first aid kit should be available at all times

Hiking and Backpacking – All staff members who accompany groups in the backcountry shall be qualified according to the Wilderness Expeditions, Inc. Personnel Policy. They shall also meet the following criteria and adhere to the following procedures:

- Hold a current Red Cross First Aid and CPR certificate
- Have knowledge and experience in the symptoms and treatment of dehydration and hypothermia
- Shall continually observe campers on the trail and in camp for early diagnosis and treatment of dehydration and hypothermia
- Take into consideration the hikers' age(s), physical condition and experience in setting a pace and selecting terrain appropriate for the group
- Before participating in a Wilderness Trek™ trip, the campers shall receive a safety orientation led by a staff member. Campers should be instructed in at least the following:
  - Fundamental safety procedures on the trail
  - Procedures for a hiker if he/she becomes lost
  - Proper health procedures, including the need for drinking fluids and eating appropriate foods while in the backcountry
  - Sanitation procedures on the trail
  - Rules governing the land being hiked over
  - Potentially high-risk areas found on the route
  - Fire precautions, flash flooding, lightening danger, etc.
  - Procedures when encountering wild animals

*First Aid, Medications and Adequate Medical Facilities:*

A fully stocked first aid kit shall be available to all camp staff while groups are in base camp. A first aid kit shall be carried by at least one staff member while accompanying groups to rappel sites and backcountry areas. Camp staff members are not to administer medications of any kind to campers.

The Outfitter designated medical screener will check each camper's medical history form and highlight any medical concerns. These concerns will be communicated by the medical screener to the staff member prior to camper's departure for backcountry areas. The staff member is responsible for knowing which campers require medication and where medications are located in the camper's pack. In the event of a life-threatening emergency a staff member may assist an individual in taking an oral and/or nebulized medication dispensed by a licensed pharmacist. Camper's medical release forms should be available to all staff members at all times.

The Outfitter shall know the location of the closest medical facilities in all areas when Wilderness Trek activities occur. The Outfitter shall provide the locations of the medical facilities to all staff members as part of their employee handbook.

The Outfitter shall provide at their base camp an adequate facility for separating a sick (and possibly contagious) camper from other campers.

*Fire Safety:* Tents are to be at least thirty (30) feet away from any campfire or open flame. Fuel bottles are to be kept at least ten (10) feet away from stoves and campfires. A staff member should supervise the preparation and starting of all campfires and stoves. Fire extinguishers shall be present in all buildings used by Wilderness Trek campers.

*Bear Safety: Special* camping procedures shall be used to minimize a bear's access to campers in backcountry areas. These special procedures include:

1. Campers shall be instructed in the proper way of disposing food and waste (ie. use of a sump, burning food in fire or packing out in special containers)
2. Backcountry camps shall be arranged in a way that isolates food supplies and food odors away from campers and tent areas.
3. Staff members shall give campers instructions about how to prevent being isolated on the trail and en route to restroom areas so as to minimize the possibility of an individual being vulnerable to bear attacks.

All bear sightings shall be reported by the staff to the Outfitter within 48 hours, if in the judgement of the staff member, there is no immediate danger to campers or other staff. All bear sightings shall be reported immediately to the Outfitter if campers or staff members are at risk.

The Outfitter should determine the best way to deal with a bear that persistently threatens the safety of campers or staff. A "problem bear" should be reported to the Colorado Division of Wildlife within 24 hours of an incident involving a bear and a camper or staff member.

At no time shall a campers or staff member approach or antagonize a bear.

## Fatality, Injury or Accident Report

This form is to be completed and submitted to the Outfitter within 6 hours of the incident in which a camper or staff member is killed or injured or an accident occurred involving Wilderness Expedition employees, Wilderness Trek™ campers or both.

Name of the group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date reporting: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the Accident or Illness: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Report (check one):

- Fatality (someone died) – Submit within 6 hrs. of the incident
  - Major accident or illness (someone had to be evacuated and/or taken to hospital) – Submit within 12 hrs.
  - Minor accident or illness (didn't require treatment or needed only simple first aid) – Submit within 72 hrs
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Camper's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (ST) (Zip)

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Addresses (if different from the camper's)  
(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Full Description of Events Leading to Injury or Fatality or Diagnosis of Illness (use separate sheet if necessary)

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List Names, Addresses, and Phone Numbers of Each Witness to the Incident on the Back of this Form:

Full Description of First Aid and/or Medical Treatment Provided (use separate sheet if necessary)

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List Names and Addresses of Person Providing First Aid and/or Medical Treatment on the Back of this Form:

Name(s) and Address(es) of Law Enforcement or Public Health Officials Contacted:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

## Lost Camper Report

Submit this report to the Outfitter within 6 hours of the time the camper went missing

Check as many as apply:

- Outfitter notified – When? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Law Enforcement notified – When? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Group coordinator notified – When? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent's notified – When? Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Group Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Lost Camper: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Camper's Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address City ST Zip Phone

Name of Camper's Parent(s)/Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address(es) (if different from camper's)

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date Camper was first discovered lost: \_\_\_\_\_ Time camper last seen: \_\_\_\_\_

Location Camper Last Seen: \_\_\_\_\_

Fully described circumstances surrounding the camper's disappearance: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fully describe your efforts to locate the lost camper: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_