

NV REFERENCE BINDER – PART 8 – APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES - SPECIAL SITUATIONS & SAFETY PRECAUTIONS **FOR FIELD TRIP LEADERS**

Please be reminder that these guidelines are written for all field trips and not every item will apply to each field trip. However all trip leaders need to be aware of the full guidelines. Check with the Sections for any field trip policies and/or guidelines specific to that Section's trips.

Related policies: Part 3 – Field Trips
Part 3 – Appendix A – Trip Difficulty Rating
Part 8 – Field Trip Leaders' Policies
Part 10 – Release of Liability form

1. **Lightning**: Take the following precautionary measures when conditions indicate the possibility of lightning such as significant buildups of massive cumulonimbus clouds which are the main source of lightning.
 - Stay off high places and open slopes and avoid trees.
 - If exposed in a high risk area insulate yourself from the ground with anything available such as your pack. Alpine meadows can provide insulation underfoot and a dry talus slope with many air pockets can also provide insulation. Drop any metal items such as hiking poles and tripods.
 - If someone is struck by lightning, immediately assess them for injuries. Victims are not dangerous to touch.
 - If the victim has no pulse or is not breathing administer CPR right away.
 - Cardiac arrest is the main cause of death from lightning strikes. Other injuries can include vision and hearing loss, tinnitus (ears ringing), memory loss, confusion and cardiac arrhythmia. Serious burns are uncommon.
2. **Cougars**: Cougars generally stalk from behind and may target a hiker who gets separated from the group. If a cougar is spotted, all trip participants should be told immediately and the group should keep close so that no one is on their own.
3. **Bears**: All bears are potentially dangerous and their reaction to any given situation cannot be predicted. A bear will defend itself, its cubs or its territory if it feels threatened.

The following guidelines are based on the best information available when this policy was last revised.

To reduce your risk of a surprise encounter:

- Make noise. Talk, sing, clap or make some form of noise to announce your presence, especially where a bear might not otherwise smell, hear, or see you coming. Bear bells are not recommended.
- Travel in groups, on established trails and during daylight hours. Stay in the open whenever possible.
- Minimize odours by proper storage of food, garbage and toiletries. Limit your use of scented toiletries when hiking or backpacking.
- Be alert for fresh tracks, scat, diggings, claw marks on trees, and other signs of recent bear occupation. Also be cautious if you come across a large dead animal as a bear may be nearby.

If you see a bear:

- Tell all trip participants immediately and keep the group close together.
- Make a wide detour around the bear. Never approach a bear or its cubs.
- Stay calm.

It is extremely unlikely that you will be attacked by a bear. If you are charged by a bear, it is often just a bluff. Remain standing and back away slowly. Do not run or the bear will give chase. Do not drop down to the ground, as the bear may take that as a provocation and attack. Do not make any sudden noises or movements.

If a bear does attack:

- If it is a grizzly, drop to the ground and play dead, lie on your stomach with your hands on the back of your head and neck.
- If it is a black bear, fight by kicking and punching the bear, including hitting the bear on the face, nose and eyes.
- In the very rare case that a bear stalks you and then attacks, fight back and let the bear know you are not easy prey. This also applies to the very rare case of a bear attack at night when camping.

Bear spray lasts a few seconds but may do more harm than good. If a trip leader or participants carries bear spray, ensure they know how to use it and that the spray is not expired.