

## Santa Clara Valley Chapter California Native Plant Society Out of Area Field Trip Guidelines

Out of area events require a more formal structure than local events. By their nature, out of area trips are less subject to control and predictability and are, therefore, potentially more hazardous. The objective is to provide a reasonable amount of structure to help counterbalance the increased uncertainty in such situations.

Each segment of an out of area trip should be approached with the same preparation as a local event. Given the inability to have the same level of knowledge of a distant location as a local one, the uncertainties involved with any out of area activity are significantly greater. This information should regularly be communicated to event participants and participants should acknowledge and be prepared for significantly greater uncertainty regarding conditions and possible outcomes.

As a result of the increased levels of uncertainty and the preparation required, out of area events are much more likely to be subject to restrictions on how event information is disseminated, who may attend, and what activities and behaviors will be permitted. Out of area events will not be as widely advertised as local events.

As with local events, communication is the primary factor in adequately preparing potential participants for the conditions they may encounter. During the trip, all participants must abide by all rules imposed by the trip leader in order to maximize the safety of the group. At the discretion of the leader, persons not deemed adequately prepared or appropriately equipped may be asked not to participate in the activity or to cease participation at any time.

The leader **MUST** be advised in advance of everyone who will attend an out of area event. In order to achieve this objective, all out of area events will be by reservation only. At least one member of each party anticipating attending an out of area event will be required to contact the leader to inform him of all persons who will be attending and provide as much information about those individuals as the leader deems necessary.

At the discretion of the leader, out of area events should be preceded by a pre-trip meeting at which the attendance of at least one member of each party is required or by distribution of a packet of pre-trip materials. All basic information concerning the trip should be covered during the meeting or in the packet materials, much as the information for a local field trip is covered at the trailhead. The materials will include the date, time, and location of the initial meeting at the event. Trip participants are not obligated to wait for anyone not on time for the start of any event segment. Anyone not at the initial meeting place at the designated time will be deemed to have elected not to participate in that segment of the event and will be responsible for obtaining the information necessary to arrive at any subsequent meeting place(s) on time and appropriately prepared to participate in that event segment.

Out of area events frequently involve large groups of individuals gathered together for extended periods of time in close proximity to one another. Everyone will be expected to put the needs of the group ahead of their individual needs and to use common courtesy when in the presence of the group.