Responses to the Covid-19 Corona Virus Pandemic

Guidelines, Tips, and Suggestions for the Wilderness Stewardship Community

**As of 5.1.2020**

We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe, practicing social distancing, washing hands and implementing other steps to limit the spread of Covid-19 and avoid contracting the virus yourself.

This is a time of unparalleled uncertainty and disruption to our normal lives. Local, State and national directives are creating unforeseen constraints on planning for the upcoming field season, recruitment, and daily operations of wilderness stewardship organizations, employees and volunteers.

The following informational websites have been assembled from a variety of sources in the medical and environmental community. They contain guidelines, suggestions, and tips to incorporate into your lives. We hope that they may help you as you plan the next few months.

**National Medical Websites:**

Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

**Agency Websites:**

National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/aboutus/news/public-health-update.htm>

Bureau of Land Management: <https://www.blm.gov/alert/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-response>

Fish and Wildlife Service: <https://www.fws.gov/home/public-health-update.html>

US Forest Service: https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/covid19-updates

**Also check local office websites.**

**Outdoor Organization Websites:**

American Trails: <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/what-coronavirus-means-for-outdoor-recreation>

LNT <https://lnt.org/the-leave-no-trace-recommendations-for-getting-outside-amidst-covid-19/>

American Alpine Club: <https://americanalpineclub.org/news/2020/3/17/climbers-take-action-against-coronavirus>

The Partnership for the National Trails System: <https://default.salsalabs.org/Tbcae6ba6-86ca-4866-aeb5-3455cc2f0113/f303122d-8717-42d7-9688-abd2d1df8773>

Outdoor Industry Alliance Covid-19 Resource Hub: <https://outdoorindustry.org/covid-19-resources-outdoor-industry/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=covid19>

Public Land Alliance Resource Page: <https://www.publiclandsalliance.org/what-we-do/education/coronavirus>

**Personal Practices to Avoid Infection Spread:**

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| * Wash your hands often with soap and water | * Stay home, especially if sick |
| * Avoid touching your face | * Cover your cough with tissue or elbow |
| * Avoid close contact with sick people | * Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces often |
| * Practice social distancing of at least 6 ft | * Get immediate medical care if warranted |

**Practices for Wilderness Stewardship Organizations**

Local, State, and Federal governments are issuing orders to help prevent the spread of the corona virus. Many places are requesting or demanding shelter at home to keep the rate of new infections from growing beyond the capability of local medical resources to respond to critical needs. Wilderness Stewardship organizations need to do our part in this community wide effort to keep the public healthy and the pandemic contained.

Things Wilderness Stewardship Groups can do:

Public Facing:

* Be proactive with your volunteers and local community about the need to shelter at home, avoid unnecessary travel, avoid contact with others during this critical phase of virus containment.
* Cancel or postpone field events and activities until such time as gatherings of 10 or more people are allowed.
* Remind your community of the importance of stewardship for protecting public lands but that for the immediate future wilderness stewardship actions that are essential to maintain and provide current wilderness experiences are on hold. All users should practice appropriate Leave No Trace practices when outdoors, as well as maintain social distancing standards.
* Encourage outdoor recreation in “local backyard areas”, close to home where travel is limited
* Encourage outdoor skill building while people are confined, such as learning LNT, using map and compass, star gazing, and outdoor cooking in their backyards and patios.

Inward Facing:

The critical need is to contain and decrease the spread of COVID-19 while reducing it’s impact in your workplace. The leys are reducing transmission among employees, maintain healthy business operations, and maintain a healthy work environment.

* Allow employees flexibility to work from home, or stay home if sick.
* Keep sick employees at home and away from the workplace.
* Provide the ability for employees to care for sick family members.
* Identify potential points of infection in your workplace and take steps to prevent them.
* Educate all employees on the ways they can avoid infection and its spread
* Survey your workplace for potential virus incubators and clean and disinfect objects and surfaces.
* Practice social distancing in the workplace and avoid using other’s desks, equipment and phones.
* Avoid or cancel all travel.
* Avoid unnecessary contact in person with others outside your organization.
* Reduce the number of meetings and employee gatherings, and if such a gathering is necessary, practice social distancing by meeting outdoors with enough space between participants