Wilderness Stewardship Organizations

Covid Response Strategies

**Developing a Covid Response Plan**

Items to consider in a Covid Response Plan include:

* Board support for the Program of Work
  + Public Health needs to be highest priority in all stewardship activities
  + How proposed activities fit within local conditions
  + Support for proposed schedule of work and activities
* Recap of your local and state situation
  + What rules and requirements exist and how your group will respond
* How your organization will operate over time relative to differences between Volunteer only and Paid Staff and Volunteers, or Paid Staff Only
  + May engage paid staff earlier and easier
  + Have a health and safety plan in place for each category
* Contingency plans for reinfection/reemergence issues
  + Consider how to move people
  + Shelter / quarantine needs
  + Communication Plans for sharing what and why you are doing
* Assessment Period of work to be performed
* PPE Needs for the new environment
  + Require Masks in Social situations
    - Dehydration and Overheating issues are surfacing from long term mask wear
  + Stick with National Guidance
  + Thermometers
  + Bandana’s and other coverings
  + Sanitizers and Cleaners
  + Handi-wipes
* Assessment of medical facilities available
  + Discuss SAR needs with providers
  + Discuss with medical providers scope of work and needs
* Consider the demographics of the groups you are considering for your work projects
  + Immunities – preconditions
  + Local hires to avoid farther travel
* Waivers in place
  + Update Covid-19 language to include contact tracing
  + to include potential for infections
  + Must follow medical practices in place
  + Expanded volunteer commitment forms to follow safe practices
* What are the requirements under HIPA for asking people to self police.
  + Updating and strengthening Self Policing statements and requirements
* Business as usual v.s. Radically new operating norms
  + Disinfection protocols
    - Ability to procure disinfection materials
  + Social distancing operating principles
    - Washing stations
    - Tool assignments
      * Including storage locations to minimize infections
    - Camping arrangements
    - Project selection
      * Individual versus work teams
      * Number of people at one time
      * Distance from trailheads and medical facilities
      * Ability to implement while maintaining social distance
    - Meal preparation
      * Community meals versus individual meal preparation
    - Sanitation practices
    - Data entry practices
  + New training protocols to include medical practices and policies
    - Establish medical practice requirements
    - Training for employees to oversee and seek compliance
  + Changes to transportation of employees
  + Onboarding practices – follow state rules
    - Potential Self-quarantine for out of state volunteers – depends in state
    - Covid Testing based on availability
  + Age limitations 18+
  + Computer sharing or not
  + Off-time practices and reengagement policies for staff
    - Self-quarantine requirements if employee travels on vacation
  + Risk Assessment based on local/state infection rates and statistics
  + Pollical realities in some smaller rural communities that do not feel they can support outsiders
  + Timeframe for changes
  + Pivot field funding to education and outreach that can be done virtually
  + Adjustments in response plans for environmental hazard issues, like lightning storms, that may need to be changed to address social distancing
  + Field crew operating norms for workweeks and off-time
  + Medical response protocols for field crews for those that have or have not had Covid-19
    - Trigger list for medical conditions and responses
  + Immunity issues and how they may affect employee and participation
  + Point of Contact sheets updated including medical facilities and contact info
* Situational Awareness of Public responses to Changes in Service and availability of Resources
  + Develop standard responses
  + Prepare employees for likely situations
  + Assess conflict reduction strategies
* Successful Strategies for Managing Groups using Social Distancing
  + Group Events
  + Volunteer Field Days
  + Field Crews
  + Ranger Patrols
* What do we do if a crew member or volunteer exhibits signs of sickness?
  + Covif-19 vs common colds
  + How long would quarantines last?
  + How much isolation is required?
* What facilities are needed to quarantine staff?
  + Housing at base
  + At field locations
* What do we do if volunteers feel sick?
* Monitoring and After Action Reviews
  + Solicit feedback
  + Review application of procedures
  + Adjust as needed