

## **Hiker Etiquette**

Revised 8 November 2017

Ouachita Mountain Hikers exists for the fun, friendship, health and fitness of its members. In order to assure all hikers enjoy these benefits of being a club member, please abide by the following rules of etiquette.

**Read the Hike Flash and follow instructions** regarding start times and what to bring. The hike leader has the authority to refuse a hiker the opportunity to hike if they do not bring sufficient water or are not otherwise equipped for that particular hike.

**Always let the hike leader know** you will be joining on his/her hike. This is a courtesy to the leader but also important in order that:

- Leaders can plan ahead when carpools or shuttle driving is involved.
- Leader can inform you if there are changes in the hike plan due to weather or other circumstances.
- Leader knows if all hikers have arrived at the meeting point or trail head and leaves no one behind.

### **Guests & New Members**

Always inform the hike leader ahead of time if you are a club member and will be bringing a guest on the hike, or if you are a new member. Provide the leader with a summary of the guest's, or as a new member your, recent hiking experience and fitness level. Hiking with our club is frequently more challenging than people realize, and all too often we have guests or new members who are unable to keep up with the group or simply cannot complete a hike. This creates difficulties for the hike leader and interferes with the enjoyment of the hike by other hikers.

### **Perfume and Scents**

Please limit the use of perfume or scents, or preferably not use them at all when joining on a hike. We may not be our freshest during or after a hike and some hikers may believe they are being considerate of others by using perfume or other scents. However, many folks are allergic to these products and others find them annoying when riding in a vehicle or walking behind those who use such products.

**Follow the Leader and stay with the group.** We are a club and we hike as a group with the leader in front. This is again a courtesy to the leader, but also important to assure that no one becomes lost and anyone who experiences an injury or problem can be helped. Please do not join a hike if you suspect you will be unable to keep up with or finish with the group. Do not take a different route than the rest of the group unless you have reviewed your plans with the hike leader ahead of time and have his/her approval to do so. Do not hike in front of the leader unless he or she gives you approval, or asks you to lead a faster "rabbit" group of hikers.