

## Guide for Event Leaders and Participants

### Introduction

This guide is mainly for hikes and backpacking trips, but can be helpful for many other outdoor activities, such as mountain bike trips, cross-country ski trips and kayak trips, where participants will be relatively exposed to the elements for long periods of time.

### The objectives of this guide are twofold:

- 1) To increase the number of event leaders. Because OCJ is totally a volunteer operation, no leaders equals no events. This makes leaders one of the most valuable assets of OCJ. Sometimes people think they lack the knowledge or experience to lead an event and so never try. Providing this guide as a basic recipe for organizing events will hopefully remove this one obstacle from those members who are interested in planning an event, but who are unsure how to start.
- 2) To clarify who is responsible for what. Leaders organize and lead trips, but it is the responsibility of everyone on a trip to ensure that the trip goes smoothly. Remember that OCJ event organizers are all laymen with no professional training as guides. Participants are responsible for their own safety and for looking out for the welfare of other participants too. Everyone must make sure they have the proper knowledge, skills, and equipment required for an event.

### Leaders

If you find yourself saying something like, "I wish OCJ had more day hikes," or "Why doesn't someone plan another kayaking trip," then it's time to plan an event yourself! Leading a trip may seem like a hassle, but is also surprisingly fun and rewarding. If you are unconfident in your ability to lead a particular trip, ask for help. The management can introduce you to people to help co-organize your event. Many people have had great success by working in a team, where people share the organization and leader roles of an event. You can also ask for help on the BBS.

1. Familiarize yourself with the route by talking with people who have taken the same trip before, especially at the same time of year as you are planning. You should strongly consider a practice run with someone experienced before making it a club trip. Make sure to plan escape routes in case things go wrong.
2. Gather information that you will need to tell the participants of the trip, including: Your contact information - phone number, e-mail address. Other contact information - taxis, cabins (or other lodging), nearby hospitals. Map number and route so participants can buy the map and check out the route before they go. Include escape routes. Meeting times and places, transportation- Think of several meeting points along the way and also the final destination to make it easier for people to join

up. (See about JR English Information (03-3423-0111) in "Resources" below.) Costs - transportation, lodging, meals, onsen. Possibility of cancellation fees Requirements for people to join the trip

Equipment - In general, participants are responsible for determining what equipment they will need to bring, but the leader needs to specify what equipment people cannot participate without, for example, a helmet for a mountain bike trip or proper footwear for a hike.

Ability level- Ability includes both stamina and technical ability. The OCJ star system mixes both: include enough in your description so people will understand why you chose the number of stars you did.

Insurance - OCJ strongly recommends participants get insurance before joining events. It is up to participants to determine the level of coverage they need.

Food and water - Find out whether there will be food and water available along the route, or whether people will have to bring all of their own.

Weather limits - Decide under what weather conditions you will cancel the trip (for example, because of rain, strong wind, or snow) and how you will communicate this if questionable (e-mail, phone).

3. Announce your event. - Your initial announcement can be quite brief, but eventually provide all the information described above in "Gather information" to people going on your trip. There are five ways to announce an event

1) Event Calendar on the OCJ website

You can put your event information in the event calendar in the Events

List in the OCJ's website.

2) Mailing List

You can send an event notice to the Mailing List at [events@outdoorclubjapan.com](mailto:events@outdoorclubjapan.com) by e-mail.

Please identify the type of activity in the subject line. This mailing list is available only among OCJ members. The list has become the primary way of announcing events on short notice.

Please remember that this mailing list will send your message to over 250 members, therefore, we are limiting the use of the mailing list to only event notices and general club announcements. Classified ads, general questions about outdoor sports or personal event notices can be posted in the OCJ's BBS

4) Club Meeting

Upcoming events are also announced at the OCJ's monthly meeting. Events which were already posted on the website or by email.