

PebbleCreek Hiking Club (PCHC) Standard Operating Procedures  
(Amended 10/18/21)

1. Club Purpose:

To provide Pebble Creek residents with the opportunity to enjoy recreational hiking in an organized, safe, and social environment. The Club schedules hikes year around. During the regular season, starting the Monday after the Fall PCHC meeting and ending the first Friday in May, the club schedules hikes Monday through Friday and some Saturdays. During the summer season, the club offers exploratory hikes at several levels. These are usually more rigorous than those during the regular season due to the summer heat, and may require a higher level of hiker fitness.

2. Club Structure:

a. Officers: Elections shall take place at the March business meeting for President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Officers' respective terms are for two years and shall be limited to two consecutive terms. The Executive Committee is composed of the officers.

b. Committees (with President's Oversight):

- Nominations Committee shall be appointed by the President prior to and announced at the January meeting. It shall consist of at least three active members, of which only one shall be a current officer. The slate of candidates shall be announced by the Nominating Committee at the February meeting. A final request for nominations will be announced at the meeting. If there is more than one candidate for a given office, then a secret ballot will be taken.
- Picnic Committee shall plan refreshments and schedule all social events, including the Annual Meeting.
- Presentations Committee will plan and co-ordinate programs of interest to the club.
- Smug Mug committee will maintain the club's online photo gallery.
- Safety Committee will develop and implement safety protocols to improve the safety of all hikers participating in club hikes.

- Hike Leadership Committee will develop and implement a plan to increase the number of and improve the quality of hike leaders and sweeps.

### 3. Functions and Tasks:

The board will be responsible for making sure the following functions and tasks are accomplished:

- a. New hikes will be researched and tested to determine if they are appropriate for the club.
- b. A Word document will be maintained containing a description of all club hikes.
- c. A Word document providing driving directions to all club hikes shall be maintained.
- d. Hike Coordinators will develop a hike schedule for the upcoming season for the appropriate level of hike. Distribute the schedule to the membership in Word format, and distribute monthly the hike descriptions of the next month's hikes in Word format. They will also provide at club meetings additional information on the next month's hikes, solicit other members to serve as hike leaders and sweeps for each hike, and maintain club assets assigned to that level of hike. All e-mail communications between the Hike Coordinators and club members will be done using the club's group e-mail address ([pchikers@groups.io](mailto:pchikers@groups.io)). Hike Coordinators will be chosen by a consensus of the Hike Coordinators and the executive board. Should it become necessary to remove a Coordinator, a majority of the Hike Coordinators and executive board must agree to such a decision. Reasons for dismissal shall be explained in writing.
- e. Hike sign up sheets will be prepared for each hike.
- f. Driver donations will be calculated and distributed to the membership.
- g. Mileage statistics will be maintained for all club sponsored hikes. At each club meeting various hiking milestones may be presented. Annual mileage awards may also be presented at the final meeting of the season.
- h. An "Introductory Team" will assist potential new hiking members in advance of hiking with the PCHC. The process will help determine a hiker's ability and skill level, so the hiker may hike safely once he/she begins to participate in regularly scheduled hikes with the PCHC at their ability level. Introductory hikes are scheduled in advance of regular hikes. The leader will cover Planning, Health, Equipment, and Weather (PHEW!).
- i. An emergency Locator system will be maintained.
- j. A club website will be maintained at [pchikers.org](http://pchikers.org).
- k. Purchase of club apparel will be coordinated by a club member.
- l. Business meetings will be held once a month during the months of

September to April on the third Thursday at 7:00 PM unless otherwise noted. The Annual General Meeting shall be held in March each year for the purpose of electing officers, setting dues, and such other business as may come up. The meeting day and time can be changed by a vote of the members in good standing present at a regularly scheduled meeting at which a quorum is present.

#### 4. Rules of Order:

Roberts Rules of Order will apply when motions are made which involves the expenditure of money, election of officers and other official business. Minutes of official business will be kept.

#### 5. Finances:

A checking account shall be maintained by the PCHC. The President and Treasure shall have signature authority. All purchases require a receipt to be submitted for reimbursement. One signature is required on each check. Purchases up to and including \$100.00 may be approved by the Executive Committee. Purchases over \$100.00 shall be approved by the majority of members in good standing present at a regularly scheduled meeting.

#### 6. Membership Requirements:

a. Application: Membership is open to all PebbleCreek residents (owners and renters).

b. Guest Policy: A guest is a non-PebbleCreek resident, or a PebbleCreek resident who is considering joining the club. Guests will be permitted to hike only if they sign the waiver form. If a guest is less than 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must sign the release in advance of the hike. A non-resident guest of a PCHC member may attend as many hikes as they wish. Resident guests may attend up to two hikes (introductory and/or regularly scheduled hike) prior to joining the club. Guests must bring all items on the PCHC mandatory items list. PCHC members are responsible for any guests they sponsor. All guests must be sponsored by a club member.

c. Honorary membership: This membership is open to all PCHC members who have amassed at least 3,000 hiking miles with the club *and* have served at least three years as a 1) club officer, 2) a hiking coordinator, 3) leader of a committee or team or 4) coordinated 3 Spring/Fall multi-night away trips. The privileges afforded to this type of membership are a free club membership, and a club shirt with the words "Honorary" added to the embroidery.

d. All members of the PCHC shall familiarize themselves with and follow the By Laws and Standard Operating Procedures. Each member is encouraged to participate in the operation of the club. The PCHC does not practice, tolerate, or

condone discrimination or harassment of any type or nature. If you feel that you have been a victim of any type of discrimination or harassment from any participant on a hiking club event, it is your responsibility to immediately bring it to the attention of the hike leader or any of the club's officers, who will discuss it with you, taking down all of the details, and contact the individual involved.

e. Membership in the PCHC may be terminated and revoked at any time for just cause (including, but not limited to, violation and abuse of specific articles, sections, or paragraphs of the club's By Laws and Standard Operating Procedures), or reinstated by action of the club's Executive Committee.

f. The club membership list is confidential and members shall not make the list available to others.

7. Information to be provided to Each Member:

- a. Copy of Current Standard Operating Procedure.
- b. List of recommended hiking equipment.
- c. Schedule of hikes planned for the year.
- d. Hike Ratings:

SOP # 7 Update /9/4/21

| <u>Hike Level</u> | <u>Distance</u>       | <u>and/or</u> | <u>Total Ascent</u>   | <u>Overall Moving Pace</u> |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>D</u>          | <u>3.7-5.0 miles</u>  |               | <u>less than 600'</u> | <u>1.8-2.5 MPH</u>         |
| <u>C</u>          | <u>6.0-8.0 miles</u>  |               | <u>650' - 1500'</u>   | <u>2.0-2.8 MPH</u>         |
| <u>B</u>          | <u>Up to 12 miles</u> |               | <u>Up to 2400'</u>    | <u>2.5-3.0 MPH</u>         |
| <u>A</u>          | <u>Up to 16 miles</u> |               | <u>Up To 3200'</u>    | <u>2.5-3.0 MPH</u>         |

Please note above, the (and/or) is applicable for each hike; one hike can be shorter but have more elevation still qualifying it for rating. There is a larger range around A and B hikes because there is oftentimes more elevation, bushwhacking or treacherous surfaces to navigate.

Hike descriptions should include trail conditions such as well groomed, rocky, rough, rubble, bushwhacking, or gravelly wash type terrain or if a section of the trail has a steep ascent or descent. These are just examples of additional description to provide definition for a hike as to clarify a higher or easier hike. The intent should be to inform a hiker what they are encountering if they go. Note that the distances and elevations contained in the data base are not always accurate but are being improved as we get better information

What isn't specified here is the degree of bushwhacking. It is generally expected that there is virtually none on D hikes, no more than 10-20% on most C hikes, and up to 50% on any B or A hikes. There are a few A B & C that are entirely or almost entirely trail less. Pace can be variable depending on the terrain but these pace ranges are for overall moving pace of the hike. The overall moving pace above is used as a guide with the actual pace determined based on the slowest hiker in the group.

In general, it is suggested that C and D hikes should not deviate in distance or elevation by more than about 10% of the weekly email and that A and B hikes should not deviate by more than 20%. For example, that means a D hike defined at 5 miles should not exceed 5.5 miles, a C hike of 8 miles should not exceed 8.8 miles, a B hike defined as 10 miles should not exceed 12 miles. This is an important safety measure that should be adopted unless there is strong consensus from all hikers on that particular hike to exceed the defined length or elevation. No hiker should be pressured to exceed their capabilities or what they signed up for. Unfortunately, we sometimes put hikers on the spot with changes on the fly and they are reluctant to speak up and say “no”. Once a hike is described to the membership, the hike leader should make every attempt to follow the description. Deviating from the hike description is generally where we tend to receive most negative criticism.

Some hikes do not fit in the above described hike level description for varying reasons. In this case the hike should be described as a challenge hike. The reason for the challenge should be described in the hike description. The deviation can include 100% bushwhacking, excessive distance or elevation or trail conditions.

Historically, the Garmin’s are more reliable at determining accurate distance and elevation and should be given the most consideration when updating or adding data for our hike descriptions. Additionally, if the hike description needs to be improved to be more accurate or better represent what hikers will encounter, any hike leader should forward these changes for inclusion on the one drive

## 8. Trail Etiquette:

- a. Stay on the trail
- b. Stay to the right; pass on the left.
- c. Hikers going uphill have the right of way.
- d. When meeting a horse, get off the trail on the downhill side.
- e. Pack it in; pack it out.
- f. Leave only footprints; take only pictures.
- g. Report vandalism.

## 9. Hike Leader and Sweep:

A hike leader and a sweep will be designated for each hike. Hikers must hike between the leader and the sweep. Breaks will be taken as dictated by the needs of the hikers and/or the difficulty of the trail. The leader and sweep retain the right to [deny participation because of group size limitation or](#) request a hiker sit out or step back from a hike if the hiker is deemed not physically capable or is lacking proper equipment or adequate water or food. Leaders should have a map of the trail and are responsible for the club's hiking equipment. Routes should not

be changed during the course of the hike unless agreed upon by the group.

10. Carpooling:

a. Hikers should, whenever possible, take turns driving to hike destinations. b. Driver Donation: It is the intent of the PCHC that the passengers shall pay the full cost of the gas and any entrance fees.

b. Many hikers have purchased passes to the Maricopa County Parks and National Parks. If you are riding in a vehicle in which no one has a pass, the riders should pay for entry or parking.

c. To compensate the drivers for the cost of gas, we have developed a chart listing suggested driver donations for miles driven. There is no “right” value for gas reimbursement. Gas prices vary and mileage among vehicles vary. Please use this as a guide.

**SUGGESTED DRIVER DONATION**

| <b><u>Miles</u></b> | <b><u>Donation</u></b> | <b><u>Miles</u></b> | <b><u>Donation</u></b> |
|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| <u>up to 30</u>     | <u>\$2.00</u>          | <u>216-230</u>      | <u>\$13.00</u>         |
| <u>31-50</u>        | <u>\$3.00</u>          | <u>231-245</u>      | <u>\$14.00</u>         |
| <u>51-70</u>        | <u>\$4.00</u>          | <u>246-260</u>      | <u>\$15.00</u>         |
| <u>71-85</u>        | <u>\$5.00</u>          | <u>261-275</u>      | <u>\$16.00</u>         |
| <u>86-100</u>       | <u>\$6.00</u>          | <u>276-290</u>      | <u>\$17.00</u>         |
| <u>101-115</u>      | <u>\$7.00</u>          | <u>291-310</u>      | <u>\$18.00</u>         |
| <u>116-135</u>      | <u>\$8.00</u>          | <u>311-325</u>      | <u>\$19.00</u>         |
| <u>136-155</u>      | <u>\$9.00</u>          | <u>326-345</u>      | <u>\$20.00</u>         |
| <u>156-170</u>      | <u>\$10.00</u>         | <u>346-360</u>      | <u>\$21.00</u>         |
| <u>171-190</u>      | <u>\$11.00</u>         | <u>361-375</u>      | <u>\$22.00</u>         |
| <u>191-215</u>      | <u>\$12.00</u>         | <u>376-395</u>      | <u>\$23.00</u>         |

11. PRE-HIKES

To receive mileage credit for a local pre-hike to be used on the weekly hike schedule, the following is required:

1. Approval by any member of the Executive Committee.
2. A minimum of 2 and a maximum of 4 current PCHC members must be on the hike.

3. If necessary, prepare a Map, Hike Description, and Driving Instructions for webmaster to be included on the website. The Hike Description should include highlights of the trail, length and total ascent, trail condition, park fee and restrooms.
4. Complete a Sign-In sheet with names of the pre-hike participants.

#### OVERNIGHT TRIP PLANNING HIKES

To receive credit for possible overnight trip hikes the following criteria is required:

1. Approval of the entire Executive Committee.
2. A minimum of 2 current PCHC current members must be on the hike.
3. A written statement on how and when the Overnight Hikes will be used for the benefit of the PebbleCreek Hiking Club including a general plan of action and time when this hike will occur.
4. Specific names of trails to be considered, hike levels, lodging and restaurant possibilities.
5. Complete a Sign-In sheet with names of participants on hikes to be used for Out of Town or Overnight Trips.

#### 12. . Advance Payments for Overnight Trips:

a. A few overnight hiking trips are planned each season. Often financial commitments (room rental, entrance fees, permits, transportation, etc.) are required to hold reservations and make the necessary plans for travel. No shows have the potential to cause those who go to absorb the cost of late cancellations, which is to be avoided if possible.

b. This requires that individual advance registration fees must be made during a sign up period and that there must be a cut off date for the sign up period, beyond which the advance registration fee should be at or near the full cost of the overnight hike.

c. The hike leader for an overnight trip shall work with the president and treasurer to set the advance registration fees and shall agree on a cut-off date, which shall be communicated to those who have expressed interest.

d. Hikers who cancel after the cut-off date may arrange for another member or guest to take their place and work out the financials with the substitute individual, provided this does not lead to added costs such as room sharing.

**13. Advance Ticket Sales for Catered Events:**

- a. Whenever the PCHC contracts with an organization/vendor to cater a picnic or special event for which a per attendee, up-front vendor payment is required, tickets must be sold in advance.
- b. The ticket cost as proposed by the President, Treasurer and Chairperson shall be presented to the members for approval before any contract is signed.
- c. The activity Chairperson along with the President and Treasurer shall agree on a cutoff date for ticket sales which will be prior to the payment deadline date agreed upon with the vendor.
- d. Cancellations after this cutoff date shall not be reimbursed by the PCHC and the ticket holder is on their own to find another interested party to purchase the tickets.

**14. Hiking Safety:**

- a. Hiking alone is strictly prohibited. If only one hiker shows up for a scheduled hike, the hike is automatically canceled.
- b. Hikers unable to complete a hike must be accompanied on an early return to the trailhead by an experienced hiker.
- c. Two-way radios (Walkie-Talkies) should be taken on all hikes.
- d. At least one emergency device (SPOT Emergency GPS) will be available on all hikes.
- e. The carrying of a firearm on a hike is discouraged.
- f. The following items are required to be either worn or carried on each hike: water (enough for the hike plus extra in case you get lost or delayed, electrolytes, hiking boots, hiking socks, sun protection, medical kit (bandages), File of Life information, food, whistle, compass, mirror, prescription medications, and map (one per group) For a FULL for list of Mandatory items see the website.
- g. The following items are some of the recommended items to take on the hike: hiking stick(s), hat, a dry shirt, and a change of shoes for after the hike. For a more complete list of recommended items, see the website.

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