

## Monday BWAGs 2019 Summer/Fall Hiking Schedule Introduction

Beginning on Memorial Day, May 27th we will have choices for 3 different hikes each week through the end of October. Plans for medium and long day hikes for some weeks in October are still to be determined.

### Be mindful each week of these important BWAG principles:

- ✚ **BWAGs do not leave anyone behind!**
- ✚ **Always stop at junctions** for everyone to catch up and ensure they go the correct way. This is critical for safety and for peace of mind! It's a little scary to come to a junction and not be sure of the route everyone else has taken.
- ✚ Suggested tactics to keep the group together:
  - Let the slowest person lead and set a pace that is tolerable for everyone.
  - Let a photographer or wildflower lover lead; their frequent stops will slow down the front of the group.
  - Take shorter, more frequent stops rather than a 5-10 minute, mosquito-inviting, impatience-creating stop.
  - **Everyone** needs to take responsibility for checking frequently to make sure the last person in line is still in your sight. If you can't see her, you don't know if she is in trouble.
- ✚ **Make sure you do a headcount before starting the hike and return with the same number of hikers.**
- ✚ It is important to try to create a carload of people who go at the same speed. Be honest about how fast or slow you hike and how far you can hike each week.
- ✚ It is always best for the whole group to stick together, but at a minimum, always stay with your carload. Three or 4 people are critical mass in case someone needs to go for help, plus, the entire carload can make a decision to turn around, if need be.
- ✚ If your carload decides to turn back before reaching the destination, be sure to let the other hikers know of your decision so that they aren't left wondering and waiting. If the main group is too far ahead to communicate a change, a note on a car windshield when you return to the trail head could solve the problem.
- ✚ **Please welcome and help newcomers find an appropriate group.**
- ✚ **Take time for introductions at the meeting site each week.**
- ✚ Limit group size to 10 to 15 in Wilderness areas.
- ✚ Bring money to pay your carpool driver.

**Short-day and medium-day hikers will meet at MOR** for all hikes during the summer and fall season. Short-day hikers park at the north end of the lot and medium-day hikers park towards the south end, making it easier to set up carpools.

**Long-day hikers** (a) **will again typically meet earlier** than the other groups and (b) **will rarely meet at MOR**. Pay attention to the meeting site and time. It is important to note that the meeting sites and times, change each week depending on the direction to be traveled, length of the drive and length of the hike.

**Be Prepared! What to bring each week:** Lots of water, snacks/lunch, hat, sunscreen, rain jacket, appropriate clothes for the weather, sturdy hiking shoes or boots with good tread on the soles, hiking poles, insect repellent, first aid kit, a map of the area or GPS, BEAR SPRAY that is current – check the expiration date!

**Meeting times change throughout the summer and fall.** Check the schedule each week. Look carefully to determine what will meet your needs each week, including the difficulty, length of time, and driving distance. Also check each week for emailed updates with new information or changes in times or destinations. We can't predict in April and May what might be the best place to hike in August or October. Conditions change!

Some excellent resources for hiking information are Robert Stone's book, "Day Hikes Around Bozeman Montana", Forest Service maps of the National Forests and the Beartooth Publishing maps that are available in bookstores and outdoor stores in Bozeman, and many good online websites and apps.

**Always Remember!**

**Eleven Essentials for Your Pack**

Navigation (maps/GPS)	Flashlight
Sun Protection	Fire starter
Bear Spray	Insulation
Emergency Shelter	Nutrition
First Aid Supplies	Hydration
Personal Emergency Contact and Medical Information Card	