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Dallas Regional Group of the Lone Star Chapter

Annual Big Bend National Park Bus Trip

Wednesday, November 25 - Monday, November 30, 2009

Trip Coordinator: Arthur Kuehne 214-902-9260 h
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Area Description: Big Bend National Park is located in the Trans-Pecos region of Southwest Texas along the Mexican border, in a bend of the Rio Grande River that gives the park its name. The Park preserves a vast section of the Chihuahuan Desert larger than the state of Rhode Island, with over 1,106 square miles of area. Elevations within the park range from a high point of 7825 feet at Emory Peak in the Chisos Mountains, to a low point of 1680 feet on the Rio Grande at the east end of the park. There are a number of mountain ranges within the Park, but the majority of the land lies between 3000 feet and 4000 feet in elevation. This high desert country, which at first seems featureless against the backdrop of the mountains, has been carved by wind and water into a varied landscape of mesas, spires, pour-offs and drainages.

The most dominant of the Park's mountain ranges is the Chisos Mountains, which take in the highest peaks at the center of Big Bend. The Basin, which is a bowl-shaped valley ringed by mountains, is the center of activity in the Chisos, and the starting point for three of this year's trips. The South Rim of the Chisos offers spectacular views of the desert 2000 feet below its edge. Trails descend from the Chisos high country down several canyons, including Juniper Canyon and Blue Creek Canyon, offering a view of the succession of plant life at the lower elevations. Circling below the South Rim is the Dodson Trail, which traverses the foothills of the Chisos, passing the remains of several ranch outposts dating back to the 1800's.

The Rio Grande River has carved three deep canyons along the Park's southern boundary: Santa Elena, Mariscal and Boquillas. Santa Elena Canyon, at the western end of the park, is formed by the river's penetration of the Mesa De Anguila. Trip 3 will visit the entrance to Santa Elena canyon and an overlook of the canyon's biggest rapid, The Rockslide.

Climate and vegetation vary with elevations in the Park. Remnants of once-larger forests of ponderosa pine, douglas fir, quaking aspens, maples and oaks are found at the higher elevations above 6000 feet. Life zones change quickly as elevations decrease, with the sparse forests changing first to Junipers, and then to desert plant communities with agaves, yucca, sotol, ocotillo, mesquite, creosote and, of course, cactus. Fauna within the park include mountain lions, coyotes, fox, bobcat, bear, peccaries (javelina), mule deer, white tail deer, as well as 55 species of reptiles and 400 species of birds. For more information about Big Bend National Park, visit <http://www.nps.gov/bibe/home.htm>.

Departure: Our chartered sleeper bus departs on Wednesday, November 25, 2009, 6:30 pm, from the Wal-Mart store parking lot located on the northwest corner of the intersection of LBJ expressway (I-635) and Midway Road. Look for the bus in the Wal-Mart parking lot behind the La-Z-Boy store. Plan on arriving at the bus by 6:00 pm to load and get settled in. The bus will leave promptly at 6:30 pm. The bus will not wait for late arrivals. You may want to have someone drop you off and pick you up. If you do leave your car at Wal-Mart, be sure to hide all valuables from view. The Sierra Club, its leaders and Wal-Mart are not responsible for the security of your car or its contents.

Plan on eating dinner before boarding the bus. We will make a seat-to-bunk conversion stop at a fast food restaurant or truck stop near Abilene at about 10:30 pm.

Return: The bus will begin picking up Trip 3 and 4 participants on Sunday, November 29 at about 2:00 pm. Participants of Trip 3 and 4 can shower and eat lunch at Lajitas. The other trips will be picked up between 3:00 pm and 3:45 pm (see trip descriptions). There will be a dinner meal stop in Fort Stockton. One or two other short stops will be made on the way back to Dallas. We should arrive back at the Wal-Mart parking lot between 4:00 and 6:00 am on Monday, November 30th.

If you are not an American citizen, be sure to bring appropriate documents proving legal residency, as the bus will go through at least one U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement border patrol checkpoint station.

Cost and Sign Up Instructions: If you send your check and forms on or before October 31, the cost is \$195 for Sierra Club members, \$220 for non-members. If you send your check and forms after October 31, the cost is \$220 for Sierra Club members and \$245 for non-members. (Note that the cost difference between Sierra Club members and non-members is the same as the cost of an

introductory membership to the Sierra Club. To become a member, visit www.DallasSierraClub.org and click on the icon below the menu.)

Make checks payable to Dallas Sierra Club. You are not signed up for the trip until your check, your participant preference form, your medical form and your liability waiver form are received, and they have been reviewed, and you have been accepted by the trip leaders.

IMPORTANT: On or before October 31, send your check and forms to Liz Wheelan, 6800 Del Norte Ln Apt 204, Dallas TX 75225-2557. After October 31, send your check and forms to Arthur Kuehne, 3363 Darbyshire Dr, Dallas TX 75229-5912.

Receipt of payment does not constitute acceptance on the trip until both the bus coordinator and individual trip leader have reviewed the submitted sign-up form and medical information, and conducted any follow-up interviews to determine suitability. The bus coordinator and individual trip leaders reserve the right to determine whether a particular trip is suitable for a prospective participant, based on their experience, health, equipment or other factors. If the trip is not deemed suitable for the prospective participant, the check will be returned.

You will need extra cash for snack in Abilene, breakfast when you arrive in the park (unless you bring your own), dinner in Fort Stockton on the return trip, and for any snacks and souvenirs you may want.

CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California. (California has a law called the California "Seller of Travel" Law. Since Sierra Club is a California non-profit corporation, we are required to post this notice.)

Experience and Conditioning Required: If you have never been backpacking before, this trip is probably not appropriate for you. Participants should have some backpacking experience and they should be in good physical condition. While the elevations in the park moderate, the trails are rocky and rugged. Please discuss your abilities with the bus leader or one of the trip leaders if you have any question about your experience or physical abilities.

Cancellation Policy: There is a \$25 fee for all cancellations, regardless of date or if replacements are found. After November 15, the balance of the trip fee will be refunded **only** if a replacement is found. There will be no refunds for no-shows. Traffic jams that prevent you from making the bus are not an excuse. With the threat of H1N1 flu being widespread this winter, you might want to consider purchasing trip insurance.

Transportation: We ride in a forty-passenger chartered sleeper bus with professional drivers. Seat assignments are based on the order that checks are received. The sooner your check is received, the further forward in the bus you sit (unless you request otherwise). Please indicate your seating preference – window or aisle, top or bottom bunk, front or back of bus – on the enclosed reply form. Also note if you want to sit with someone else on the trip.

Unlike the older bus models we have used in the past, the day-seating all faces forward. Seats will be converted by the driver and bus leaders (not passengers) into bunks during a 30-minute rest stop at about 10:30 pm. Quiet hours (including use of music players with ear buds) will be enforced after 10:30 pm. Please respect your fellow passengers need for sleep.

The bus is equipped with a DVD player and six small TV screens. Two or three movies are planned.

Space is limited on the bus. Please limit carry-on luggage to small (12" x 12" x 8" high) crushable bags that will fit under the seats or in the very-small overhead bins (12" deep by 8" high). Aisles must be kept clear. Only use overhead space immediately above your seat – don't take other's limited space. Because the seating arrangement is more like a plane without big overhead bins, you cannot carry on large bags. On bus sleeping bags, pillows and other bulky items can (and should) be kept under the bus. You will have access to this stuff when we convert the bus into bunks.

Smoking and glass containers are not permitted on the bus.

Bus Survival: The bus will be quite cool at night, so you must have a blanket or light sleeping bag or you will be very uncomfortable. You will find it easier to sleep if you also bring earplugs and a sleep mask. For the time when you are not sleeping, you may want to bring a few snacks, and/or some reading material. Have a jacket available on the bus no matter how warm it is when we leave Dallas. It is often near freezing when we arrive at the trailhead. Bottled water will be provided on the trip out to Big Bend. You are encouraged to stay well hydrated. In addition to water, beer and soda will be provided on the return trip.

Weather: While usually stable this time of year, almost anything could happen. The odds are in favor of 65 to 85 degrees during the day, 30 to 45 degrees at night and no rain. Past trips have experienced temperatures as low as 16 degrees and as high as 90+ degrees, as well as fog, rain, snow, sleet and blistering sun, though not all necessarily on the same trip. You should plan on bringing clothing on the bus for the full range of conditions. You can leave what you don't need in the bus, based on the forecast that we get in the park.

Water: Water is scarce in the park but should be available at the locations noted in the trip descriptions that follow. Have leak-free containers to carry water in the quantities specified for the trip that you are on. **Do not fill your water containers in Dallas.** They could leak en route and get someone's equipment wet. You can plan on filling your containers at a tap in the Park while the trip leaders get trail permits. On trips utilizing natural water sources, treat water with treatment tablets, filtration or boiling before

drinking. Note that there are no guarantees that we will find water everywhere we plan to. It is a good idea to carry more than the minimum, just in case. See the trip descriptions for additional information about water.

Gear: Each person is responsible for his or her own equipment and food. The following list includes equipment, which is considered mandatory:

Clothing: Long pants (even if the weather is warm) for cactus protection; hat and long sleeve shirt with collar for sun protection; rain jacket and pants (a poncho is not acceptable as it will be in shreds after only a short amount of hiking in Big Bend); jacket; long underwear and/or sweaters good in combination down to 25 degrees; well broken in hiking boots; outer and inner socks. Optional: Short pants, short sleeve shirt (T-shirt). These may require an extra supply of sunscreen and band-aids. It is said that everything in the desert stings, sticks or stinks.

Equipment: Tent and ground cloth. (Your leader may require that you share a tent as some camp sites are small and will accommodate few tents); stove with fuel; pot; matches; sleeping bag rated down to 20 degrees; ground pad; backpack with hip belt; water containers and water treatment tablets (or filter); flashlight; compass; sunscreen; first-aid kit (including Moleskin or Spenco Second Skin for blisters); toilet paper, shovel and Zip Lock bags for used toilet paper; garbage bag; personal items. A note about ground pads: While self inflating ground pads, such as Therm-a-Rest pads, are very comfortable, they must be used very carefully in Big Bend. Thorns and stickers are everywhere. Your pad will be at great risk for puncture if carried lashed to the outside of your pack. Bring your repair kit or consider using a foam pad such as a Ridge Rest or a Z-Rest.

Food: Three breakfasts (Thursday morning breakfast will be in the Chisos Lodge restaurant or, if you don't want to eat in the Lodge, bring a fourth breakfast.), four lunches, three dinners, and snacks. (Trips 3 & 4 only needs three lunches.) Avoid meals that require excess water to cook or clean up after.

Packing and Preparation: Trip leaders will check to ensure that all trip participants are properly prepared before leaving the trailhead. Leaders reserve the right to leave the unprepared with the bus. Because campsites are assigned both by the number of people and the number of tents they can hold, leaders will strongly encourage (and perhaps insist) that tents be shared, particularly on trip 1 and 2. Be careful with the optional items - the weight adds up quickly and water will occupy a significant portion of your pack's capacity. Remember, water weighs 8 pounds per gallon.

Big Bend Rules: The following regulations apply to this trip and must be followed:

- No ground fires. You must use a backpacking stove for all cooking.
- Pack out all litter. Trash should be carried back to Dallas. Big Bend has very limited solid waste disposal facilities.
- Disturbing or collecting any natural or historical feature or object is prohibited.
- Do not bathe, swim, wash in or contaminate water sources.
- Bury human waste at least 6 inches deep well away from camp or water sources. **Big Bend National Park requires that you carry out all toilet paper.** Carry extra Ziploc bags for your used TP.
- Possession of firearms or other weapons is prohibited.

Bears: After a long absence, bears have returned to Big Bend. If you are going on Trips 1, 2, or 5, you will need to take bear precautions. The Park provides metal bear boxes at most campsites. The following are Park Service requirements:

- Only carry food that doesn't have strong aromas. Consider taking foods that requires no cooking, as they generate fewer dirty dishes and wastewater.
- Store all food, beverages, trash, toiletries, and dirty dishes inside the food storage box provided at your campsite. Secure the door with the latch. Do not store these items in your tent.
- Prepare your meals away from your sleeping area.
- Keep your campsite clean. Pick up food scraps and keep them in the storage box with your trash and unused food.
- Do not pour oils or grease used in cooking onto the ground. Carry out these residuals once they have congealed. Take care not to spill these liquids when cooking.
- Remove food scraps from cooking water and place them with your trash in the food storage box. Disperse the cooking water over a wide area away from camp.
- Carry out all garbage, left over food, and waste cooking oils and grease. **Do not bury your trash.**
- Proper food storage is strictly enforced.

Park rangers take these food storage requirements seriously. A few years ago, a bus trip participant was fined \$50 for improper food storage.

Trip Descriptions: Please read the trip descriptions carefully before making your selection. Contact the trip leader if you have any specific questions.

Trip One: Basin Dayhikes / Backpack

Rated: Moderate

For the adventurous dayhiker, this trip offers some of the most spectacular scenery in Texas.

Thursday: After breakfast at the lodge, backpack about 1 mile to a camp in Juniper Flat or Boulder Meadow (1 miles, 400' ascent). After making camp, dayhike to summit of Emory Peak, tallest mountain in Big Bend for 360 degree views of the Big Bend area (7 miles, 2000' ascent/decant).

Friday: Dayhike out and back to the Lost Mine Trail via the Pinnacles Trail and the road. Have breakfast at the lodge and dinner at the lodge on the way back. Return to camp with enough water for two days. Water available at the ranger station. (7 miles, 1500' ascent/decant)

Saturday: Long dayhike to the South Rim via the Pinnacles Trail, Boot Spring Trail and Boot Canyon Trail. Have lunch at the Southeast Rim. Alternate Hike – Laguna Meadow via Pinnacles Trail, Colima Trail and return to camp via the Laguna Meadow Trail and Basin Loop Trail. (various options, up to 12 miles, 2000' ascent/decant).

Sunday: On the last day, pack up camp by 7 and have breakfast at the lodge. Head out the Window View Trail by 9 am. Stop at the Window for a view. A short section of this trail is somewhat exposed and can be slightly intimidating if you are afraid of heights. Hike to Oak Creek Spring follow Oak Creek Spring Rd to Castolon Highway where bus will pick up at 3:45 pm Sunday (6.5 miles, 1350' descent).

Carry three quarts of water each day, but have containers for an additional four quarts, as the camp will be dry. Water will be available at the ranger station in the Basin, which will be about one to two miles from the base camp. In addition to your backpack, you will need a daypack large enough for a day's worth of warm clothes, rain gear, water and lunch.

Leaders: Judy Cato, 972-238-5738, catojm@sbcglobal.net and Marcos Jorge, 972-394-2546, MJorge@ustmamiya.com

Trip Two: High Chisos/South Rim Backpack

Rated: Moderately Strenuous **NOTE: This trip is now full**

Thursday: Begin in the Basin and hike up the Pinnacles trail to a camp near Boot Spring (5 miles, ascend 1400 feet).

Friday & Saturday: We will camp on/near the South Rim on Friday and Saturday night (depending on campsite availability). The South Rim has some of the best sunsets and views in Texas.

We will dayhike most of the trails of the high Chisos, including the trail to the top of Emory Peak (7825 feet), the highest point in the park.

Sunday: We will leave the Chisos Mountains via the beautiful Blue Creek Trail (7 miles, descend 3000 feet). We will meet the bus at Blue Creek Ranch at 3:30 pm.

Total mileage for the trip is about 20 miles. Water should be available near Boot Springs, but not at the other campsites.. Bring enough containers for 5 or 6 liters. Our camps will be the highest in Big Bend. Be ready for temps in the low 30s to high 20s.

This is the hike I want to do. What we actually end up doing will be determined Thursday morning in the Park when I find out what permits are available. In recent years we've usually been able to get permits similar to what we want but please be flexible.

This trip is limited to 6 participants.

Leader: Bill Greer, billgreer@dallasierraclub.org

Trip Three: Mesa De Anguila Backpack / Dayhike

Rated: Moderately Strenuous

Spend four days on the most remote and isolated part of the Big Bend National Park. Mesa de Anguila is rarely visited by park visitors and offers backpackers opportunities for unsurpassed solitude, spectacular views and magnificent experience in the Chihuahuan desert. We will travel on primitive, infrequently maintained trails and occasionally on cross country routes.

Thursday: Starting in the town of Lajitas (elevation 2350'), hike southeast across the desert floor to the west end of Mesa de Anguila, and climb 800' to the middle bench of the Mesa, with views of the Rio Grande below. Continue ESE on a mostly flat trail to our base camp just east of Tinaja Rana (3250'), our water source. Total of 5.8 miles and 1000' ascent / 100' descent.

Friday: From our base camp, we will day hike on-trail ESE about 2.2 miles to the east end of Three Sisters Butte, then turn south towards the Rio Grande, following dry stream washes and game trails to a spectacular overlook of Santa Elena canyon, immediately above Rockslide rapid 1200' below. We will then hike cross-country NW off the Mesa to the banks of the Rio Grande at the entrance of Santa Elena Canyon. We will then hike 3.0 miles northward on-trail back to camp Total of 8.9 miles, 1600' ascent / descent.

Saturday: From our base camp, hike east and then north on-trail to the base of Canyon Flag. Take an optional 1.0 mile roundtrip, 350' ascent / descent day hike to the top of Canyon Flag, the highest point on the Mesa at 3883'. Continue north to Tinaja Lujan, a short slot canyon ending in a pour-off (dry waterfall). Continue hiking east in dry washes to the Sinkhole, a nearly vertical cave draining a basin at the east end of Three Sisters Butte. Bring a headlamp to explore the upper 150' of the cave. Return to camp on-trail, for a total of 7.2 miles, 1000' ascent / descent (including the climb to Canyon Flag).

Sunday: Break camp and return to Lajitas, for a total of 5.8 miles, 1000' descent / 100' ascent. We will have time to shower (\$5.00) at a private campground, and eat lunch at the Mexican Restaurant (\$12.00) in Lajitas, before boarding the bus for the return to Dallas at 2:00 pm.

Total backpack mileage is 11.2 miles, with 16.1 day hike miles. You should start the trip with a minimum of 4 liters of water, and have containers for a total of 6 liters. Bring a daypack large enough for a day's worth of extra clothes, water and lunch.

Note that the day hikes on this trip are partially on cross-country routes through patches of lechugilla, the meanest desert plant on Earth—full leather boots are recommended

Leaders: Kent Trulsson and Laura Kimberly, 972-307-8364; kimberlywalks@gmail.com

Trip Four: Mesa De Anguila Backpack / Dayhike

Rated: Strenuous

Our second trip to the magnificent, and rarely visited Mesa de Anguila will feature a hike to the very eastern tip of the mesa. We will travel on primitive, infrequently maintained trails and mostly on cross country routes.

Thursday: Lajitas to Tinaja Largo, taking the north trail. The first 4 miles are mostly backpacking through an overgrown wash. There are two steep saddles to cross. From the junction to Tinaja Lujan, we will continue on down a wash to Bruja Canyon and then cross-country walk to Tinaja Largo & Wax Camp for two nights camp. Approximate distance is 10 miles.

Friday: We will day hike Southeast to the edge of the mesa and the rim of Santa Elena Canyon. Here we will have one of the most spectacular views in the park, a 1500 ft deep narrow Santa Elena Canyon. We will continue along the jagged rim of the canyon to the confluence of Santa Elena Canyon with Fern Canyon and to hidden Tinaja De la Verga. Return to camp at Tinaja Largo, 14 miles round trip with many short steep ascents/descents.

Saturday: View of Bruja Canyon watershed and Tinaja Grande. Backpack to the Sink Hole and continue to Canyon Flag, the highest point on the Mesa or climb La Mariposa, somewhat exposed rock scramble. Continue to Tinaja Rana for water refill. Overnight possible at a dry camp, approximate distance 7.5 miles.

Sunday: From camp to Lajitas via the Saddle, 5 miles and 900 ft decent for shower, lunch and bus pickup at 2:00 pm.

Everybody should carry 3 to 4 liters of water and have containers for 5 to 6 liters. Bring a daypack large enough for a day's worth of extra clothes, water and lunch.

Note; this trip is a cross country trip for most of its part on rough terrain and some of the meanest cacti on earth, a pair of full leather sturdy shoes is recommended

Leader: Zeev Saggi 972-960-4411(w), 214-692-5907(h), zeev.saggi@hdrinc.com

Trip Five: Outer Mountain Loop / Backpack

Rated: Strenuous

This is considered one of the best hikes in the park. You will experience more of the different ecosystems in the park than any other trip we are offering.

Thursday: From the Basin trailhead, hike into the high Chisos Mountains via the Pinnacles Trail to Boot Springs. (Depending on the strength of the group, we may have time to hike out to the South Rim, adding about 3 miles to our first day.) From there hike the Juniper Canyon Trail to our campsite near Upper Juniper Springs. Total of 5.8 miles, 1800' ascent, 1700' descent.

Friday: Continue down the Juniper Canyon Trail to the Dodson Trail and then head west to a wet camp at Fresno Creek. Total of 8.4 miles, 1700' descent, 900' ascent.

Saturday: Continue west on the Dodson Trail and then head South on the Smokey Creek Trail to a dry camp. Total of 7.8 miles, 700' ascent, 1700' descent.

Sunday: Hike off trail over rough terrain for a mile or so and then pick up the Mule Ears/Smokey Creek Trail. After a stop at Mule Ears Spring, head west to our pickup point at the Mule Ears Overlook parking lot, where the bus pick-up is at 3:00 pm. Total of 5.5 miles, 300' ascent, 1000' descent.

The total backpacking mileage is between 27 and 31, depending on options. The last part of Day 3 and the first part of Day 4 may be modified to an easier route if needed. Due to the uncertainty of our water sources, you will need to bring containers for, and be able to carry, 6 liters of water. As the trip date approaches, we may have additional information on water sources.

Leader: Arthur Kuehne, 214-902-9260, arthur@dallassierraclub.com

NOTE: Trip itineraries are subject to change. The availability of water, changing weather, limited availability of required permits, and the leader's assessment of the group's strength may affect the trip. The leaders reserve the right to make changes to the above trip itineraries as necessary.

Maps: Topographic maps will be provided to all participants. If you would like to get your own map of the area, one of the best is the National Geographic Trails Illustrated Big Bend National Park map number 225.

Restrictions / Cautions:

If you are not an American citizen, be sure to bring appropriate documents showing legal residency or visitor status in the United States, as the bus will go through at least one Border Patrol station.

Participants should be in good health, with prior experience on backpacking trips of similar length and difficulty. If you have a question about your experience or physical ability, feel free to call the individual trip leaders. If you have any doubt about your physical condition, consult your physician before participating on any of these trips. As a rule of thumb, if you can walk around White Rock Lake (9 miles) with a light pack in under three hours in cool weather without being overly taxed, you should be in adequate shape for at least trips 1 and 2.

Minors may only participate when accompanied by their legal guardian at all times.

Low or no impact wilderness ethics are expected of all participants. All trash must be packed out; human wastes must be buried, and used toilet paper packed out (bring zip-lock bags for this purpose). Plan on cooking on a stove; campfires are not allowed in the Park. Pets, radios and firearms are not allowed. No smoking is allowed on this trip, both for safety reasons and in consideration of others.

The leaders are not medical professionals; all participants are encouraged to have first aid supplies and a basic knowledge of how to deal with medical emergencies. If any participant does have medical training, let the leader know so that they can rely on that expertise in an emergency. Inform the leaders if you have a medical condition that could require special treatment in an emergency, such as controlled diabetes, heart problems, allergic reactions, etc. Carry any necessary medications for these conditions on your person at all times while on the trip, and let the leader know where you are keeping it. If you are extremely allergic to bee stings, poison ivy or anything else that we are likely to encounter, ask your doctor if you should be carrying an antidote kit. If you are blind without your glasses, bring a spare. We will be hiking in a wilderness area, where rescue is difficult and time-consuming. The nearest hospital is over 100 miles away. Medical help could be days in arriving. Air evacuations are extremely expensive, and the injured party is responsible for payment of these costs. If you have a health condition that could require immediate medical treatment, you should not go on this trip. Each participant must complete and return the attached form with emergency information to the coordinator. This form will be provided to the leader of the trip that you select and may be provided to health care professionals if needed.

The trip leaders are in charge of each trip's itinerary, and reserve the right to change the planned route due to group capabilities, weather or safety concerns. It is important for group safety to follow the leaders' directions. By failing to obey the leader's instructions, you assume the risks of any consequences that result.

The group should stay together to minimize the chances of someone getting lost, or an injured person going unaided. If you want to leave the led group (the leader and those participants following the leader) to do separate day hiking, **you do so at your own risk**. If you choose to take that risk, please don't hike alone. Most deaths in the wilderness occur when a solo hiker becomes incapacitated, and dies of hypothermia or dehydration before being found. If you do leave the led group, you should hike in parties of at least three people, and tell the leader your planned route and time of return. If someone is injured while away from the led group, leave one person and all of the party's food and warm clothing with the injured person, and send all of the others for help, either at the trailhead or at the trip's base camp. **Participants who leave the led group are no longer part of the trip until they rejoin the group—don't expect the group or the leader to do more than notify the authorities if you do not return.** The leader's responsibility is to those that are following him or her, not to those who choose to follow a different route, and put themselves at risk.

If you do get lost, stop and wait to be found; don't wander aimlessly. **When day hiking, even for short trips, bring a jacket, raingear, warm hat, space blanket or space bag, food, water, map, compass, flashlight, first-aid kit, matches, and whistle.** If you twist an ankle or get lost, these essentials could save your life if you end up spending the night away from camp. Potential nighttime lows in the 20's make hypothermia a real threat.

Leaders are not allowed to search for missing persons at night, and cannot put others in the group at risk to look for a lost participant. When leaving camp even for a moment, especially at night, be careful to not get disoriented and lose your way back. This could create a life-threatening situation if the weather was bad or the person not dressed for the cold.

The biggest single danger on this trip is falling off of exposed ledges, due to clumsiness, not paying attention to where you are going, or loose and unstable rock. Many trails in the Park are poorly maintained, and the rock found in the park often crumbles easily. Walking with trekking poles (either one or two) can help maintain balance at steep slopes. Do not get too close to cliff edges, such as at the South Rim, on Emory Peak, or at the Windows Overlook. Some of the trips involve some non-technical (no rope protection) rock scrambling during the optional day hikes. If you are not comfortable being in exposed high locations, such as near the edge of a cliff, or are not coordinated enough to jump from rock to rock on a steep slope of a mountain, let the leader know of your limitations. Technical climbing is not allowed on these trips. Similarly, free climbing on rock should be limited to situations where you will not be seriously injured if you lose a hand or foothold and fall. Only you know your own abilities and limitations – don't take chances.

If the weather is hot, heat exhaustion or heat stroke is a risk. Drink plenty of fluids. Sunburn is also a potential problem. Remember, this is a desert environment with little shade; wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, a wide-brimmed hat and bandana, and use sunscreen if it is sunny. Watch where you walk and what you brush against. Almost all of the plants have spines or thorns.

There are mountain lions in the area, and if you are in the Chisos Mountains, you may have some contact with black (not grizzly) bears. All of the camps in the Chisos Mountains have bear-proof containers—use them. Don't keep food in your tent or pack while in camp, even outside the Chisos Mountains, unless you want holes chewed in them, or worse. Should you encounter a bear or mountain lion, group together, make lots of noise, waive your arms, and look mean. Don't run. Do not turn your back to a mountain lion – keep facing it directly. Give the animal an escape route, if you have accidentally cornered it. If you are between a bear and her cubs, slowly move laterally away from both while doing all of the above. If the weather is warm, there could be snakes along the trail or in camp. This includes rattlesnakes, so watch where you step.

The Dallas Sierra Club has run trips such as those described above for over 30 years without any serious injuries. If you are in reasonably good physical condition, have the necessary experience and skills, and select a trip matching those abilities (and of course, don't do anything stupid), these trips are reasonably safe. The above cautions and disclosures of risk are intended to give you the information necessary to make an informed decision on whether you should participate in any of these trips. Hopefully, they will also encourage those who do participate to be safe and careful; so we can all have a good time.

Return the Participant Preference Form, the Medical Information Form and the Liability Release:

After carefully reading the trip descriptions, cautions and restrictions, fill out and return the enclosed form listing your first and second trip preference. You will be contacted if, for some reason, your preferences can't be accommodated.

Fill out and return the Medical Information form. Be sure to list any medical data such as drug allergies, medical conditions, etc., which would affect medical treatment in case of accident or illness.

Also read, sign and return the Sierra Club liability release. You will not be allowed to participate in this trip unless you sign the liability release.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call the trip coordinator or any of the trip leaders.

Outing: Big Bend National Park Bus Trip	Date(s): November 25 - November 30, 2009
Leader: Arthur Kuehne	Additional Leaders: Judy Cato, Marcos Jorge, Bill Greer, Kent Trulsson, Ze'ev Saggi

Sign-In Sheet & Acknowledgment of Outing Member Responsibility, Express Assumption of Risk, and Release of Liability

I understand that during my participation in this Sierra Club Outing, I may be exposed to a variety of hazards and risks, foreseen or unforeseen, which are inherent in each Outing and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the Outing. These inherent risks include, but are not limited to, the dangers of serious personal injury, property damage, and death ("Injuries and Damages") from exposure to the hazards of travel and the Sierra Club has not tried to contradict or minimize my understanding of these risks. I know that Injuries and Damages can occur by natural causes or activities of other persons, animals, trip members, trip leaders and assistants or third parties, either as a result of negligence or because of other reasons. I understand that risks of such Injuries and Damages are involved in adventure travel such as Sierra Club Outings and I appreciate that I may have to exercise extra care for my own person and for others around me in the face of such hazards. I further understand that on this Outing there may not be rescue or medical facilities or expertise necessary to deal with the Injuries and Damages to which I may be exposed.

In consideration for my acceptance as a participant on this Outing, and the services and amenities to be provided by the Sierra Club in connection with the Outing, I confirm my understanding that:

- I have read any rules and conditions applicable to the Outing made available to me; I will pay any costs and fees for the Outing; and I acknowledge my participation is at the discretion of the leader.
- The Outing officially begins and ends at the location(s) designated by the Sierra Club. The Outing does not include carpooling, transportation, or transit to and from the Outing, and I am personally responsible for all risks associated with this travel. This does not apply to transportation provided by the Sierra Club during the Outing.
- If I decide to leave early and not to complete the Outing as planned, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to leave and waive all liability against the Sierra Club arising from that decision. Likewise, if the leader has concluded the Outing, and I decide to go forward without the leader, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to go forward and waive all liability against the Sierra Club arising from that decision.
- This Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law. If any provision or any part of any provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid or legally unenforceable for any reason, the remainder of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby and shall remain valid and fully enforceable.
- To the fullest extent allowed by law, I agree to **WAIVE, DISCHARGE CLAIMS, AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY** the Sierra Club, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders from **any and all liability** on account of, or in any way resulting from Injuries and Damages, even if caused by **negligence** of the Sierra Club its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders, in any way connected with this Outing. I further agree to **HOLD HARMLESS** the Sierra Club, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders from any claims, damages, injuries or losses caused by my own negligence while a participant on the outing. I understand and intend that this assumption of risk and release is binding upon my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, and includes any minors accompanying me on the Outing.
- I have read this document in its entirety and I freely and voluntarily assume all risks of such Injuries and Damages and notwithstanding such risks, I agree to participate in the Outing.

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

If you are a minor (under age 18), your parent or legal guardian must sign this Agreement on your behalf.

I hereby agree and consent to the foregoing Agreement on behalf of the minor below.

Print Name and Age of Minor: _____ Age: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Please complete this form and return it per instructions at top of page 2



SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS

Dallas Sierra Club Outings Medical Form

Please complete this form and return it promptly to your trip leader.

We ask for this information so that our leaders will know in advance of special medical conditions you may have, rather than learning about them in a crisis. Also, in the event of serious injury or illness, this form provides emergency medical personnel with a useful medical history. After reviewing this form, the leader may contact you to discuss whether the trip will be safe and enjoyable for you considering your medical history.

We will keep the information on this form confidential. It will be seen only by leaders, medical personnel, or others who know and understand its confidential nature. The form will be retained along with your liability waiver for a period of time following the trip, after which it will be destroyed. If you choose not to go on the trip, this form will be destroyed immediately.

General Information

First Name: _____		Last Name: _____		Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F	
Address: _____					
City: _____		State: _____		Zip: _____	
Home Phone: _____		Work Phone: _____		Cell Phone: _____	
E-mail address: _____			Date of Birth: _____		
Height: _____	Weight: _____	Blood Pressure: _____		Resting Pulse: _____	

Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

If the above person is unavailable, please notify: _____ Relationship: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Medical Insurance Information

We strongly encourage you to have medical and evacuation insurance and to bring your insurance card or other documentation with you on the trip.

Company Name: _____ Policy Number: _____

Contact Phone Number (if applicable): _____

Allergies

Include medicines, foods, animals, insect bites and stings, and environment (dust, pollen, etc.). NONE

Allergy	Reaction	Medication Required (if any)

Continued on next page . . .

Medical History

Please list all prescription, over-the-counter, and natural medications you are taking. **Use a separate sheet if necessary.**

Medication Name	Dosage	Frequency	Side Effects (known & potential)	Reason for Taking

- Recent illness? _____
- Accidents, operations, hospitalizations?
- Recent exposure to infectious diseases?
- Do you have asthma? Yes No **If yes, please list any medications above.**
- Do you have diabetes? Yes No **If yes, please list any medications above.**
- Do you have a history of high blood pressure? Yes No **If yes, please explain on a separate sheet.**
- Do you have any problems with your eyes or vision? Yes No **If you wear prescription glasses or contacts, we recommend bringing a spare set.**
- Do you have any problems with your hearing? Yes No **If yes, please explain.**
- Are you pregnant? Yes No
- Do you have any bone, joint, or muscle problems? Yes No **If yes, please explain on a separate sheet.**
- Have you ever had a seizure? Yes No **If yes, please explain on a separate sheet.**
- Have you ever experienced altitude problems? Yes No **If yes, please explain on a separate sheet.**
- Do you have any other medical issues that might affect your participation in this trip? Yes No
If yes, please explain: _____

- The outing may require vigorous activity, extended climbing and hiking, and other physically and mentally demanding exertion in isolated areas without medical facilities, medical providers, or means of contacting rescue or medical personnel. Please state below all physical or mental limitations and restrictions of which you are aware:
If you have no such limitations, please initial here: _____

- **Tetanus:** It is strongly advised that you are inoculated against this fatal disease and you obtain a booster within every 10 years. The date of your most recent tetanus inoculation or booster: _____ / _____ / _____

Physical Examination

Date of most recent physical: _____ / _____ / _____ Physician's name: _____
 Address: _____ Phone Number: _____
 Physician's signature (if required): _____

❖ **Please notify your trip leader immediately if any information on this form changes.** ❖

Trip Name: <u>Big Bend National Park Bus Trip</u> Trip Dates: <u>November 25 – November 30, 2009</u> Signature (required): _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____ Print Name: _____

**Dallas Sierra Club
Big Bend National Park Bus Trip
November 25 - November 30, 2009**

PARTICIPANT PREFERENCE FORM

Please return this form, your check payable to Dallas Sierra Club, the Medical Form, and the Sierra Club Sign-In/Release of Liability. Mailing instructions are at the top of page 2.

PARTICIPANT NAME (please print): _____

Current Sierra Club member: Yes _____ No _____ Amount enclosed: _____

TRIP PREFERENCE

Trip number choice (indicate 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5): 1st choice: _____ 2nd choice: _____

BUS PREFERENCES:

Area of bus: Front _____ Middle _____ Back _____ No preference _____

Seat: Aisle _____ Window _____ No preference _____

Bunk: Upper _____ Lower _____ No preference _____

Sit / bunk together with (name): _____

Movie suggestions: _____

In addition to water, on the return trip I will most likely drink: Soda _____ Beer _____ Both _____ Neither _____

Soda preference, if any (brand, reg. or diet, w/wo caffeine): _____

GENERAL INFORMATION:

How did you learn about this trip? _____

Have you hiked at high altitudes before? If yes, how high _____

Have you ever backpacked before? Yes _____ No _____

Have you gone on any other Dallas Sierra Club bus trips? Yes _____ No _____

If YES, to where (and about when, if recent), if NO, describe you backpacking experience: _____

By signing below, I certify that I have read the attached trip descriptions, restrictions and cautions, and understand the described difficulties and risks associated with the trip(s) that I have selected above. I certify that I have no known health problems that would require me to need immediate medical attention, and that I am in sufficient physical condition to participate in the trip I have selected. I understand that immediate medical assistance will not be available if I become ill or injured while on this trip, that evacuation could take several days if I do become ill or injured, and that I am responsible for any evacuation and medical costs that may be incurred should I need medical attention. I understand that should I miss the bus returning to Dallas, that I am responsible for the arrangement of, and the cost of, my return to Dallas.

SIGNATURE of Participant (Adult) _____ Date _____

Signature of Legal Guardian if Participant is a Minor: _____ Date _____