

# **RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR WILLIAMS CANYON PROJECT TRUSTEES AND PARTICIPANTS**

**[The Williams Canyon Project of the National Speleological Society explores, studies, protects, and documents the caves and karst features of the Williams Canyon region of Colorado.]**

**The project goal is to provide the best cartographic and speleological information possible while protecting the underground resources of Williams Canyon. Information collected by this group will be used in the best interests of Cave of the Winds and the caving and scientific communities. No scientific data will be collected at the expense of the caves or cave environment. Participation in this project will be restricted to those willing to abide by the philosophy and guidelines of the project.**

# **Caving Safety and Emergency Cave Procedures.**

## **Trustee Qualifications**

All Trustee involved in leading the Williams Canyon Project (WCP) trips are chosen by the WCP board consisting of a representative from each grotto and a Cave of the Winds representative. All persons leading trips on Cave of the Winds property must have accomplished the following to become a trip leader:

- 1) Trustees must be a current member of the National Speleological Society
- 2) Must have 18 hours cave experience in each cave they have received permission to lead trips to.
- 3) The Trustee must successfully maneuver through all sections of the cave with full understanding of his/her location at all times and must be aware of the fastest and safest route out.
- 4) 18 hours of rope practice is mandatory if any rope work is established, this is to include rescue training on rope or projects requiring rope use.
- 5) Must have certification in CPR and also First Aid, which is to always be current.
- 6) Must have proper equipment (See Mandatory Equipment List).

Caving is not for persons who are pregnant, have respiratory problems, heart problems, etc. The Williams Canyon Project and its Trip Leaders reserve the right to cancel or refuse caving to any people for any reason, whether it is mental, physical, or social.

Helmet and headlight are required for caving and are required for each caver. Each trip will have up to a maximum of 5 persons plus one trip leader. Depending on the ages and sizes of the groups, the trip leader will decide whether to lead, follow, or monitor each group; usually a little bit of each.

The trails leading to caves can be strenuous and are often located in difficult terrain. Caves consist of small dirt passageways, which will involve both crawling and climbing. The caves consist of approximately 54°F in temperature. Caves vary in length, complexity, and difficulty. It is the Trip Leaders responsibility to determine if a person can or cannot complete a cave trip or a specific part of a cave.

## **Safety Overview**

Waivers (Both Hiking and Caving) are available on the website (<http://www.williamscanyon.org/>) under the forms tab and are also available at Cave of the Winds. Trip leaders are responsible for checking the completion of all waivers and signing as the witness.

## **Special considerations for leading inexperienced cavers**

Being a trip leader is a privilege and you must earn it!! Trip leaders are responsible for the safety of the people and the preservation of the cave. As you are leading a caving trip, point to specific objects as you talk about them so that they can see what you are talking about. Tell them exactly where you want them to stand, walk or crawl. It is important that you stress safety and keep control of your group. It is your job as a trip leader to make sure they understand everything that is going on. Take the time to answer questions and to keep them in tune with the rest of the group. Control is very important; make sure from the very beginning that they listen to your every instruction. Be sure participants understand what is expected of them while caving. Caving is not for everybody. Inherent dangers must be explained to all potential participants.

Hand lines, ladders, gates, and other manmade equipment are sometimes present; trip leaders must continually check equipment for safety and proper function. Only one person at a time is allowed on ladders and ropes.

Trip leaders should know where all cave rescue caches are located in each cave.

Guidelines: Here is a list of participant's guidelines including, but not limited to:

- 1) Age Limits are established for each cave. These limits are non-negotiable.
- 2) Participants should be in good health with no medical issues that would impact the safety of the individual or the group.
- 3) Some cave passages offer natural restrictions that may limit people from accessing them due to the individual's height, weight, and or chest size. Be observant of people's limitations.

WCP Trustees and Cave of the Winds management reserves the right to not take anyone caving for any reason (mental, physical, social).

Mandatory Equipment List for All Participants:

- 1) A Helmet with a mounted light and at least two other backup light sources.
- 2) Sturdy clothes appropriate for the cave environment; dress warm, the caves are cool & damp. (Temperature is approximately 54°F.)
- 3) Sturdy, ankle-high lace up leather boots or hiking shoes appropriate for the cave environment.
- 4) Gloves for warmth and to protect hands.
- 5) Elbow and kneepads. (recommended)
- 6) Water and food or snacks. (Snacks Optional)

Additional Mandatory Equipment List For Trip Leaders:

- 1) Two backup light sources, extra batteries.
- 2) A small high-energy snack for emergencies.
- 3) Watch.
- 4) Small First Aid Kit.
- 5) Urine waste containers. Gallon size "Ziploc" bags and fluid container, do not forget T.P. (Leave nothing but footprints.)

**Cave Injury & Rescue**

Despite all possible precautions it is possible for someone to get hurt on a caving trip. If a person is hurt or trapped and he/she needs emergency assistance then you may need to initiate a cave rescue. The following procedures and materials are designed to provide you direction and assistance in such affairs.

\*\*\*Once an emergency has been identified and cave rescue is imminent it is imperative to begin First Aid using the nearest Cave Rescue Cache. Once the patient is stabilized as much as possible leave one person with the patient if the patient is immobile. Begin self-rescue if circumstances permit. Use the Yellow Flagging Tape with Black Dots to mark a trail from the patient to the entrance and leave the cave. Use the following call down list and procedures to initiate a cave rescue. All cave keys have emergency procedures attached to them. As well, each person is encouraged to carry this form with them at all times.

## **Emergency Call List**

Please refer to the Williams Canyon Project Rescue Call Out Card.

## **In Cave Rescue Caches**

**ONLY TO BE USED FOR EMERGENCIES:** cache boxes are placed throughout each cave to provide emergency equipment until rescue teams arrive to begin the cave rescue process.

Ten total caches are placed in the major caves. Each cache contains the following items. All items are kept in a hard plastic military ammo box.

Itemized List:

<b><u>1) First Aid Portion</u></b> a) Sam Splint (1) b) Note Pad and Pencil with Patient Assessment Form (1 of each) c) Disposable Face Shield (1) d) Lg. Roll Kerlix / rolled gauze (1) e) Surgical Gloves (2 pair Med. & 2 pair Lg.) f) 5x9 Surgical Dressing Pads (2) g) Compressed Muslin Bandage (1) h) Ace Bandage (1) i) Shears (1) j) 4x4 Gauze Pads (6) k) Lg. Safety Pins (2)	<b><u>2) Additional Equipment</u></b> a) Emergency Blanket with Hood (1) b) Duct Tape (1 small roll) c) Plastic Sheeting for Shelter (3'x10') d) Trash Bags for Heat Tent (2) e) 22 Hour Emergency Candle (1) f) Balaclava / Hat for Heat (1) g) Nylon Webbing (23') h) Cordage (50') i) Cylume Sticks (2) j) Yellow Flagging Tape with Black Dots (1 roll) k) Electric Tape (1 roll) l) Water Proof Matches (2 boxes) m) Lighter (1)
--	--

## **Caving Practices and Guidelines**

It is the goal of the project to gather as much quality information as possible while minimizing our impact on the cave and the cave environment. To achieve this goal, we have the following guidelines:

- 1) Cave trips will have a minimum of THREE people. At no time should the ratio of five trip members to one trip leader be exceeded. See Standard Operating Procedures for Individual Caves for maximum trip participants.
- 2) Age limits are defined based on the general difficulty of each cave. See Standard Operating Procedures for Individual Caves for limitations. Trip participants who are under the age of eighteen years old must have a waiver completed by a legal parent or guardian.
- 3) Trip participants will not damage any formations. This includes, but is not limited to, touching, breaking, muddying, or modifying the cave environment to the detriment of the formation. Formations will be defined as any natural feature of potential visual, speleological, mineralogical, paleontological, biological, geological or other scientific interest.
- 4) Trip participants will not damage or interfere with any on-going scientific or cartographic work in the cave. This includes, but is not limited to, sediments, paleontological deposits, historical or archaeological sites, survey stations, and biological study locations.

- 5) Any and all digging on COW property must conform to the requirements listed under “New Projects and Dig Proposals”. Approval by the Dig Committee and the Project Board in no way states that a dig is safe. Safety is the responsibility of the trustee and the participating dig members.

Trip participants will minimize their impacts on the cave and the cave environment. This includes, but is not limited to:

- 1) Obeying taped trails, signs and markers. See Standard Operating Procedures on individual caves for more information.
- 2) Keeping dirt and other materials off cave walls and formations.  
This includes no drawing in the mud on walls, floor, or ceiling.
- 3) Removal of all solid and liquid human waste.
- 4) Reducing the amount of foreign material such as lint and crumbs brought into the cave. Studies have shown that nylon-type clothing produces less lint and carries less dirt from other caves.
- 5) Keeping packs compact and small.
- 6) Using non-marking boots or aqua-socks if the trail crosses flowstone.
- 7) Not spreading out or off of the trail during rest stops.
- 8) Not making significant changes in passages that could change airflow patterns.
- 9) Trip participants will not leave any permanent marks in the cave except those deemed necessary by the Project.
- 10) Trip participants will not remove any natural, biological or historic materials from any of the caves. Exceptions may be made in the case of special scientific work. Any discoveries of this type should be noted in the trip log and approved by Cave of the Winds management prior to removing the item off of the property.
- 11) No one is allowed to participate while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Participants will not make use of drugs or alcoholic beverages before or during any trip or at any time while on the Cave of the Winds property.
- 12) There will be no use of chewing tobacco or smoking of any material in any of the caves or where smoke could enter the cave environment.
- 13) No animals or pets of any kind will be allowed in any cave within the canyon.
- 14) No firearms, campfires or camping by Project cavers are permitted on Cave of the Winds property.
- 15) No use of drones without written permission from Cave of the Winds.
- 16) No entrance, exit, or gate photos allowed to be posted on social media.
- 17) No videos or pictures to be posted on social media.]
- 18) Follow WCP White Nose Decontamination Guidelines. If you have caved outside the canyon you must follow the decontamination guidelines for your gear and clothing prior to entering the property. <http://whitenosesyndrome.org/resource/revise-decontamination-protocol-june-25-2012>

**Violation of any of these guidelines may result in the loss of Trustee status and/or access privileges to caves within the canyon. Cave of the Winds management reserves the right to take legal action for illegal behavior.**

## **Trip Leadership and Responsibilities**

Trip Leaders who are allowed to lead various caving trips are referred to as Trustees There will be a set list of a maximum of 30 Trustees to accomplish the mission of the Project. Not all of the positions are required to be filled at any one time.

The responsibilities of the Trustee are as follows:

- 1) The Trustee has received, read, and fully understands the “Rules and Regulations for Williams Canyon Project Trustees and Participants
- 2) The Trustee is responsible for providing proof that he/she is First Aid and CPR certified and that he/she will remain certified for the duration of the Trustee agreement.
- 3) The Trustee fully understands the “Emergency Cave Procedures” and is aware of his/her role in such emergency situations.
- 4) The Trustee is responsible for notifying Cave of the Winds of the trip. Presently, this must be done at least 48 hours in advance. The Trustee will also be responsible for notifying the Cave of the Winds if the trip has to be canceled or if the destination has changed prior to arrival at the cave.
- 5) The Trustee is responsible for seeing that a trip report form is filled out prior to entering a cave and is completed before leaving the property. The Trustee is also responsible for making sure that every member of the trip understands the rules and procedures for caving in the caves of Williams Canyon and has completed both of the Cave of the Winds liability waivers (Hiking Waiver and Caving Waiver) before entering any cave. The Trustee will verify that each participant has all required equipment needed for caving. The Trustee is also responsible for ensuring that all keys have been returned to the manager on duty before leaving the property (or that arrangements have been made for their prompt return). Trustees may not make personal copies of any key — to do so is a violation of the Trustee agreement and may result in expulsion from the Project and may result in legal action.
- 6) The Trustee is responsible for ensuring that every person on a trip is properly equipped. (See Mandatory Equipment List). Additional equipment may be deemed necessary at the discretion of the trip leader. This may include, but is not limited to, functional vertical gear, food, water, and changes of clothing to protect delicate cave areas or commercial cave routes.
- 7) The Trustee is responsible for the safety of everyone on the trip. The trip must be geared toward the weakest member of the team, even if it means changing the objectives. Remember, a tired caver is a danger to the cave, the team and to the individual.
- 8) The Trustee is responsible for all the information coming out of the cave. This includes, but is not limited to, survey notes and inventory notes. Trustees shall review all of these materials before turning them in to the pertinent project coordinator.
- 9) The Trustee is responsible for making certain that all gates are locked securely, during and after the trip. Any gate or lock damage must be noted in the trip report. Any lost keys will result in immediate replacement of the lock by Cave of the Winds at the Trustee’s expense.
- 10) The Trustee is responsible for the behavior of the team on Cave of the Winds property. The Trustee must ensure that every team member does not behave in such a way to damage or disgrace the image of the project or any of its members while on Cave of the Winds property. All team members must follow all of the rules laid out by the Cave of the Winds management while on the property.
- 11) Once approved the trustee must lead at least one trip throughout the year in order to retain their status. If the Trustee has not lead any trips, it will be up to the Project Board as to whether or not their status will be renewed another year.]

**Along with the responsibilities of leadership come specific rights as well.**

- 12) The Trustee has the right to call off any trip at any time if he/she feels it is not in the interests of the cave, the project, or any team member to continue.
- 13) The Trustee has the right to refuse participation to an individual who he/she deems unprepared, unfit, or irresponsible. Because it is the responsibility of the Trustee to ensure success, the leader will have the right to use his/her own judgment in the matter of trip participation.

## **New Projects and Dig Proposals**

All proposals will be submitted to the Williams Canyon Project (WCP) Board of Directors in writing for approval. You must submit dig proposals to both the board of directors and the Dig Committee Chair. In the case of scientific research, the science committee will review and approve/disapprove all proposals.

Preliminary digs are permitted by the Project in Williams Canyon caves on Cave of the Winds property. Preliminary digs are defined as exploratory digs allowing initial investigation and consideration of a potential dig site.

Dig proposal forms are available from the dig committee and on the WCP website.

<http://www.williamscanyon.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/WCP-Dig-Proposal-Form.pdf>

All proposals should include the following:

- 1) Scope of the project. Cave or caves to be studied/worked, passages to be used, etc. Include sketch, map and or detailed description of the area.
- 2) What information will be gathered and its contribution to the project and the overall knowledge of the caves, cave environment, or general caving knowledge.
- 3) Maximum duration of projects will be limited to one year. In the event that a study or dig has to be continued beyond that date, a written request for an extension and a justification must be submitted to the WCP.
- 4) Any special considerations concerning the proposed project. This includes closing areas for the duration of a scientific study, building of special apparatus to facilitate digging (i.e., chutes, shoring, etc.), and any other factors which could possibly impact the study or pose problems to normal use (caving trips) of the cave or caves.
- 5) Post-project remediation plans in the case of digs or other cave-disturbing activity. This includes, but is not limited to, re-seeding of disturbed surface areas, removal of spoil piles, and removal of digging or scientific apparatus.
- 6) At the end of each season (generally at the Spring Project meeting), a written progress report must be provided to both Project and the Cave of the Winds management. In addition, a copy of any scientific publication generated from Canyon projects shall be given to both the Project Board and the Cave of the Winds as a courtesy.
- 7) There will be NO preliminary digging allowed in Breezeway, Cave of the Winds, the Mammoth extension of Huccacove, sensitive areas, or possible new entrances into known caves without WCP Board and COW management approval.
- 8) A member of the Williams Canyon Project Dig Committee must first review, in person, all preliminary dig projects inside caves.
- 9) Following three days of preliminary digging, a formal Dig Project Application must be filed. The days for preliminary digging need not be consecutive but they are cumulative. A day is counted even if the digging is not for the full term of the day. A trip leader must note preliminary digging on their Trip Log. The Dig Committee must review a proposed dig within 21 days of a request.
- 10) The Dig Committee will provide to the Project Board a recommendation for approving or denying a request for a proposed dig. The board must review the dig proposal within 10 days and advise the applicant and the Cave of the Winds management of its decision. The board may accept or overrule the recommendation by the Dig Committee.
- 11) All digs are subject to reclamation which will be determined by COW management, Conservation committee, WCP board, and the trip leader. The person or persons that did the digging will be held responsible for the restoration.

In the event of a new discovery the following guidelines will apply:

- 1) The Trip Leader or Dig Project Coordinator may request the Project Board of Directors to apply a 30- day closure order restricting all other Project cavers from the discovery area. This closure order should be requested by written communication to the Board. A simple majority of the Board will apply the temporary closure order.
- 2) All cavers will be required to honor the closure order and will not be allowed to visit the area without either written approval of the Trip Leader or Project Coordinator. Written approval by the Cave of the Winds General Manager may overrule the closure order.
- 3) The 30-day closure order may be extended by another 30 days upon written request to the Board. After a maximum closure of 60 days, the closure order will expire.
- 4) The Project Board may determine that special considerations apply at any new discovery. In such cases, consultation with the Dig Project Coordinator or the discovery Trip Leader will determine the course of action.
- 5) In certain instances, temporary closure orders may be requested for a dig site prior to break through. This order must be requested by written communication by the Trip Leader or the Dig Coordinator to the Board and may apply for a designated period time. Such orders are not indefinite and are limited to the period of active excavation.
- 6) It is recommended that new discoveries in canyon caves include careful and comprehensive taping and flagging of significant geological, mineralogical, paleontological, biological and historical items.
- 7) Survey and inventory of cave discoveries is a priority. The Project Cartography Chair and Cartography Section will work closely with the discovery team to be certain that the Project Cartography standards are followed in the survey and inventory of a discovered area. All survey notes and documents are to be provided on a timely basis to the Cartography Director, usually within 30 days of the survey.

## **Guidelines for Discipline for a Project Participant**

All Project participants are expected to follow the rules and guidelines of the Williams Canyon Project, the National Speleological Society, and local, state and federal laws. If any participant violates any of these rules they are subject to disciplinary action, including reprimands, votes of censure, loss of Trustee status, suspension from project activities, expulsion from the Project, and legal action. Removal is by a written decision of the Cave of the Winds management or the following procedure.

- 1) A written complaint may be made against a Project participant by any of the project leaders or participants to the project Chair. Upon receipt, the Chair will notify the Project Board of the complaint, and automatically place the accused participant on formal review. It is best, but not required, for the accuser to discuss the issue with the participant before registering the complaint with the Chair.
- 2) At the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Project, the complaint will be discussed and a vote taken in the open session. Under exceptional circumstances, the Project Chair may call a special meeting of the Board to review and determine the issue. The voting body will consist of the current Project Trustees and Honorary Partners present at the meeting. A two-thirds majority will decide the issue. Please note that a special meeting may consist of email communication and/or conference call with the entire Board. The Chair must contact all board members and apprise them of the situation and discuss options for a meeting.

- 3) Discipline will depend on the nature and severity of the rules infraction or legal violation. The discipline will use the following scale, from least severe to most severe:
  - a. Verbal reprimand.
  - b. Written reprimand.
  - c. Vote of censure.
  - d. Suspension of Trustee status for a specified period of time. This suspension may be for as little as one month or as much as one year.
  - e. Suspension from project trips and activities. This suspension may be for as little as one month or as much as one year.
  - f. Expulsion from the project. Generally, expulsion is for life, though the Board may reconsider participation by the individual after a period of two years upon formal petition.
- 4) If the above process suspends a Trustee from trip leading authority, he/she will not be eligible for consideration again for one calendar year. During this period, the suspended Trustee may participate in trips at the discretion of the individual Trustee leading a trip.
- 5) The vacant Trustee position will be held in probation for one year. If the removed Trustee is not reinstated at that time, the position will then become open for consideration of a new Trustee.
- 6) Any individual who receives suspension or expulsion will receive a letter of confirmation from the project secretary notifying them of the decision. This letter is to be sent no later than one week following the conclusion of the meeting.

## **Guidelines for Adding Trustees**

- 1) The candidate must completely fill out the "New Trustee Sponsor" form including signatures of recommendation from two currently active Trip Leaders (one is the sponsor) and the trustee application. The sponsoring Trustees will be held accountable for the candidate's behavior as a Trip Leader. Approval and signature by the candidate's Grotto President and WCP representative must also be noted on the application.
- 2) The applicant must be an active NSS member in good standing.
- 3) The application and sponsor form must be turned into your WCP rep 30 days prior to the annual September meeting.
- 4) The Trustee is responsible for providing proof that he/she is First Aid and CPR certified prior to leading any trips and that he/she will remain certified for the duration of the Trustee agreement. If a newly appointed Trustee fails to provide CPR certification in the 60 day period they may be removed from their status as a trustee of the project or until the Trustee can show re-certification to Cave of the Winds management.
- 5) The recommendations will be reviewed, discussed and voted upon by the Board members in a closed session at the officially designated autumn meeting of the Project. A simple majority will decide the issue.
- 6) If a candidate is not approved, he/she will not be eligible for Trustee status for one calendar year. The candidate will not be required to obtain another set of recommendations for reapplying unless one of the recommending Trip Leaders withdraws the endorsement or is removed from the Trip Leader list before the candidate is up for review again.
- 7) Once approved the trustee must be active throughout the year in order to retain their status. If the Trustee has not been active it will be up to the Project Board as to whether or not their status will be renewed another year.

**The responsibility for protecting caves must be assumed by those who study and enjoy them. Conservation must not be just a state of mind, but a way of life.**

## **Standard Operating Procedures for Individual Caves**

### **All Cave Trips**

- 1) Notify Cave of the Winds of the trip at least 48 hours prior to a trip. Trip leaders must have an active Trustee form on file with the Cave of the Winds at the time of scheduling. Trips are also limited to the number of keys available for particular areas of the cave; keys will be issued on a first-come basis.
- 2) Park in the lower section of the lower parking lot (leave the upper lot for customers and upper section of the lower lot for Cave of the Winds staff).
- 3) Complete a trip log by listing the trip leader, all participants (verify waivers), the destination, and the check-in time. Confirm each participant has mandatory equipment.
- 4) Pick up keys for gates from the group sales employee on duty. All keys must be signed out by the trip leader. Return keys to the group sales employee and complete the trip log, noting any activities during the trip. Please note the checkout time. Notify the group sales employee of any unusual occurrences or problems during the trip.
- 5) Do not use the public restrooms for clean-up. Use the sink basin downstairs.
- 6) All trips should be out of the cave no later than 5:00 p.m. Do not keep the Cave of the Winds personnel waiting.
- 7) Be certain all Cave Gates are securely closed and locked prior to leaving. Report any problems with the lock or gate to the manager on duty at the Cave of the Winds and also in the trip log.

### **Cave of the Winds**

#### **All Sections:**

- 1) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip
- 2) All participants should bring clean clothing and shoes with them into the cave to change into for the trip out. A plastic trash bag, duffel or other bag for the dirty caving clothes and boots should be also carried in and left with the clean clothes.
- 3) When traveling through the cave, care should be taken to stay out of the way of tours. When possible cavers should avoid tours by taking alternative routes. Cavers should be courteous to cave guides and tour participants, stopping to answer questions if asked.
- 4) No smoking in Cave of the Winds. No food or drink while on the commercial Discovery Tour route.
- 5) Prior to leaving for the entrance, look over the changing area to be certain all clothing, cave gear and trash are picked up.

### **Silent Splendor:**

- 1) Age Limit for this cave is 16 yrs or older.
- 2) **SPECIAL:** Only *five* persons plus the trip leader are allowed in Silent Splendor at any one time. Additional persons may wait in either the Breakdown Room or the Whale's Belly until space becomes available in Silent Splendor.
- 3) Be exceptionally careful of ALL decorations in Silent Splendor. Stay within the taped trail — do not lean over the tape in decorated areas. Do not place objects outside the taped trail.
- 4) Carbide lamps may not be used within Silent Splendor — leave them in the Whale's Belly.
- 5) No digging within Silent Splendor.
- 6) Within the chimney to the Whale's Belly, use caution in climbing or descending. It is recommended that one person at a time climb or descend between the bottom of the chimney and the wooden shoring. Do not use the shoring as a climbing aid.
- 7) Only one person at a time on the ladder and mud slope to the entrance of Silent Splendor. All Cavers should climb or descend slowly, being certain of footing and handholds at all times. A belay may be necessary for inexperienced cavers.
- 8) In the Whale's Belly, do not climb across the environmental gate to the north end of the chamber (this is a good place to place the gate plug when visiting).
- 9) The trip leader should be the last to leave Silent Splendor and the Whale's Belly. Carefully replace the gate plug in the Whale's Belly environmental gate, being certain it is properly placed.
- 10) Carefully seal [and lock] the Four Fingers environmental gate in the crawl way between the bottom of the chimney and the Breakdown Room.

### **Grand Caverns:**

- 1) Age Limit for this section is NOT DEFINED. Trip leader discretion is required.
- 2) Three passageways in the Grand Caverns are closed. Due to delicate formations, the crawl way leading north from the Horseshoe Tunnel is gated and closed. The Birth Canal squeeze near Horseshoe Tunnel is also closed, as is Snider's Hall. (It is open to scientific study groups only.)
- 3) An additional key is necessary for trips into Snider Hall and must be signed out by the trip leader. Trips into Snider Hall are limited to those for scientific study.
- 4) All cavers should be aware of scheduled lantern tours into the Grand Caverns. Please give tour groups plenty of space in passageways. Turn off electric lights in the presence of tour groups. Caver belongings such as clothing, packs, etc. may be left in the Adventure Room near the wooden stairway and causeway, out of sight of all tours.
- 5) Close the Grand Caverns gate behind you if you find it closed. Leave it open if you find it that way.
- 6) Two passageways require hand lines. Anchorage Pit in the Yukon Trail requires a hand line, as does the Well of Tears south of the Grand Concert Hall.
- 7) Use exceptional caution near the beaded helictites in Heavenly Hall.
- 8) Barrel gates to Heavenly Hall, Yukon Trail and Snider Hall must be securely closed following visits. Be certain gates are sealed — do not force. Report in the trip log if the caps need cleaning.
- 9) Use caution in passing through the large breakdown at the entrance to Grant's Tomb. The crawl leading to the Dirty Deed is very tight, muddy and not passable by larger cavers.
- 10) Do not climb the ladder leading to the Stalactite Organ in the Grand Concert Hall.

### **Cave of the Winds Discovery Tour Route:**

- 1) Age Limit for this section is NOT DEFINED. Trip leader discretion is required.
- 2) While on the Cave of the Winds Discovery Tour route please be aware of paying visitors. Answer questions if asked. Do not block pathways or delay tour groups — step aside or avoid groups by using alternative routes if at all possible.
- 3) Keep trails and hand railings free of mud and dirt. Be certain all work areas are clean when leaving and that dirt or mud is not left on trails to the entrance.
- 4) Be careful of electrical wiring and lights. Note that some stalactites and formations are wired together or propped in position and are exceptionally delicate!

### **Lower Cave/Southern Extension/Cliffhanger:**

- 1) Age Limit for this cave is 13 yrs or older.
- 2) Keep Canopy Hall gate closed and locked while within. The trip leader must sign out the gate key. Place clothing, duffel bags and other personal items out of sight of tours in the changing room. Be quiet and stay out of sight in the changing room if tours pass by.
- 3) One person at a time on the vertical section of the steel ladder in Cascade Hall and on the handling dropping into Thieves' Canyon.
- 4) Ropes and vertical gear are required for trips into Gateway Pit. Hand lines are suggested for the short, overhanging chimney into Natural Bridges Hall, the chimney into Cross's Well and the drop into the northern end of Thieves' Canyon.
- 5) Use caution while passing through the breakdown between Thieves' Canyon and Southern Exposure. Loose breakdown may also be present in All Shook Up and in the entrance regions of Cliffhanger.
- 6) Be certain the natural entrance gate is securely shut prior to leaving.
- 7) No rappelling into or from the entrance of Cliffhanger Cave without permission of the Cave of the Winds.

### **Huccacove Cave**

#### **All Sections:**

- 1) The age limit for this cave is 13 yrs or older.
- 2) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip.

#### **Historic Section:**

- 1) One person at a time on the Angel Falls ladder.
- 2) Novice cavers should not be brought along the funnel pit ledge or down the pit at Steve Tried and Died. The Buffalo Room should also be considered off limits for novice trips.
- 3) Be cautious of loose breakdown along the route to the Ledges section.
- 4) Watch for broken glass throughout the historic section.

#### **Mammoth Extension:**

- 1) Be cautious of loose breakdown throughout this extension. Particular regions to be aware of possible loose materials are the Blowing Chimney, the Hub and God's Country.
- 2) Care should be taken in the Lower Hub — novice cavers should not be taken on the exposed Lechuguillian Traverse, but on the alternative chimney route.
- 3) Only one person at a time on the hand-line climb in Huccy's Secret leading to God's Country. Be careful of slippery footing.
- 4) Follow taped trails wherever found.
- 5) The Overlook Drop into God's Country is closed. No unauthorized rappelling in Huccacove Cave.
- 6) The Promised Land Climb and Twins Passage are closed unless the Cave of the Winds or the Project has granted special authorization prior to the trip.
- 7) While visiting the Mammoth Extension, be aware that many upper level passages connect to lower levels. Dropped materials and rocks may be a hazard to others below you.
- 8) Be certain the jack gate in the crawl between the Blowing Chimney and the T-Junction is secure and locked prior to leaving the cave. Do not lock the jack gate lock backwards!

### **Enchanted Canyon:**

- 1) Exceptional care must be taken within this section of the cave.
- 2) Trips into the Enchanted Canyon section are limited to those that are work-related. These trips include meaningful exploration (digging included), surveying, scientific study, maintenance and restoration, cave inventory and photography.
- 3) You must go with a WCP trip leader who has been to the area before and knows the changing routine. This includes trips to Hall of the Mountain King.
- 4) Vertical ascending and rappelling gear is needed for trips to the upper level. All participants must be proficient in the use of their gear. The minimum requirements include 18 hours of vertical training.
- 5) You must remove your dirty outer layer of clothes and enter the area in clean clothes and aqua socks.
- 6) The changing area is small with a tight entry squeeze. You must dress and undress in a very confined space. The canyon itself has room for a maximum of 3 cavers and the trip leader. Due to these factors and the amount of time it takes to change, small trips with experienced cavers only should travel here. Please do not take beginner cave trips to this area.
- 7) Trips to Hall of the Mountain King should be avoided unless you have a real purpose to go there and is restricted to vertically qualified cavers only. It requires you to get on and off rope in a very exposed and confined area. It is unavoidable to drop dirt and debris into Enchanted Canyon below. Please use your best judgment and discretion if you are planning a trip here.

### **Manitou Cave**

- 1) Age limit is NOT DEFINED. Trip leader discretion is required.
- 2) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip.

### **Narrows Cave**

- 1) The age limit for this cave is 13 yrs or older. Special discretion is needed for some parts of this cave due to rope work and other difficult terrain.
- 2) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip.
- 3) Use caution along the trail to the cave and at the cave's entrance. Vertical exposure may make this uncomfortable for some participants.
- 4) Vertical ascending and rappelling gear is needed for trips to the cave's upper level. All participants must be proficient in the use of their gear.
- 5) Follow taped trails where found.
- 6) Be aware of potentially loose breakdown throughout the "Dead" section of the cave. Use caution in squeezing through tight passageways.

### **Cave of the Swirling Mists**

- 1) The age limit for this cave is 13 yrs or older.
- 2) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip.

### **Breezeway Cave**

- 1) Trip leader access to Breezeway will only be granted by Cave of the Winds management. These Trustees must meet the minimum Breezeway trip leader requirements in order to request and receive trip leader status
- 2) The age limit for this cave is 16 yrs or older.
- 3) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip.

- 4) Use caution on the canyon trails leading to the cave. The traditional route from the south involves an exposed traverse along a ledge. The new direct route from the floor of Williams Canyon includes a very exposed climb – some participants may feel more comfortable using a hand-line for this move. Participants must also use care to not knock large rocks into the canyon.
- 5) Breezeway is not a novice cave. All trip participants must be physically fit and able to traverse safely and carefully through delicate cave passages. The cave contains much crawling, shimmying, and climbing.
- 6) Trips into Breezeway are limited at this time to those that are work-related. These trips include meaningful exploration (digging included), surveying, scientific study, maintenance and restoration, cave inventory and photography.
- 7) Trustees are limited to one caver new to Breezeway Cave per trip leader. The management of the Cave of the Winds may grant exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis.
- 8) Projects within Breezeway Cave are subject to prior approval by the Williams Canyon Project Board of Directors and the Cave of the Winds management.
- 9) Exceptional care must be taken within many sections of this cave. The sections are too numerous to note but include the major formation rooms (Holy Waters, Celestial City, the Elkhorn Chambers, Heaven's Gate, Stone River and Velvet Underground) and trade route passages such as the Enchanted Forest. Always follow all taped trails. Be careful not to track mud through the cave.
- 10) Participants must remove their boots when climbing up and down the ladder at Hallowed Ground (replacing the Upside-Down Staircase Climb). Outer clothing and gloves must be removed for the ladder climb. Bring clean washcloths to wipe down muddied ladders and bridges upon exiting the cave.
- 11) Some passages are generally closed to visitation, except by special permission by the Cave of the Winds. These include High Plains, Vanity Fair, the Watering Hole and Box Canyon, and the north end of Stone River. Additionally, the pool at the southern end of Stone River should not be crossed.
- 12) In many areas of Breezeway Cave, muddy clothing, gloves and/or footwear must be removed prior to passing. Clean clothing; aqua socks or non-marking boat shoes are required for visiting some flowstone floored areas, such as the Velvet Underground.
- 13) Loose, dangerous breakdown may be present throughout the cave, including the entrance series between the gate and Cowboy Heaven. Use caution.
- 14) Trips beyond the Elkhorn Chambers must pass through the Coronary Bypass crawl and the Toilet Bowl, an awkward, tight chimney with a 90-degree turn at the top. Trips to the lower level of Breezeway must pass through the Sidewinder Squeeze, a difficult and twisting tube. Some participants may not be able to negotiate these passageways.
- 15) Vertical gear is necessary for all trips beyond Rattlesnake Canyon and to High Plains above Stone River. All participants on such trips must be proficient with their own gear
- 16) You must remove your helmet while in the crawl next to the Tesla Coil.

### **Other Canyon Caves**

- 1) Age limits are 13 yrs or older unless otherwise noted. Special discretion will be necessary for some caves.
- 2) Cave trips are limited to two trip leaders each leading up to five other participants. There is a minimum of three people per trip.
- 3) Keys are necessary for trips to Hot Diggity Dog Pit and must be signed out by the trip leader.
- 4) You must notify COW management if hiking or caving on the back ridge.
- 5) No camping on the property or in the caves.

### **Summer Season**

Cave of the Winds is closed to caver visitation during the summer season (Approx. May 1 - September 30)

# Williams Canyon Project Basic Information

## Project Management

Following seven years of informal work in the caves of the canyon by members of the grottos of Colorado, the Williams Canyon Project, an official project of the National Speleological Society, was organized in 1989. Currently, the project is managed by an eight person Board of Directors who meets three times yearly (in September, January and April). The meetings of the Board of Directors are open to all members of the society. The board is split between elected directors and appointed directors. The member grottos of the Project are -- the Colorado Grotto in Denver, the Front Range Grotto in Northglenn, the Northern Colorado Grotto in Fort Collins and the Southern Colorado Mountain Grotto in Colorado Springs – elect four directors biannually. The management of the Cave of the Winds appoints the remaining two directors, who serve three-year terms. A staff member of the Cave of the Winds fills an seventh board position. Additional National Speleological Society chartered society grottos may petition the board for formal admittance into the project.

The Board of Directors currently oversees caver activities in the canyon's caves for the Cave of the Winds. These activities include, but are not limited to, exploration, digging, surveying, conservation activities, scientific studies, and recreational trips by society and grotto cavers on the property. To assist the Cave of the Winds in managing these activities, the Board will also grant and periodically review Trustee (trip leader) authority for the caves of the canyon, active and proposed projects and cave access.

## Current Projects

Participation in projects in the privately owned caves of Williams Canyon are open to all members of the National Speleological Society and to all members of the active grottos of the society. A listing of current projects and coordinators may be obtained from any Board member or from the project's website [www.williamscanyon.org](http://www.williamscanyon.org) **For additional Williams Canyon Project information, please see the Project Charter\***