



## FRIENDS OF THE TONTO NF FIELD PROJECT SAFETY ANALYSIS

### **Plan ahead, avoid getting lost.**

Study maps and know where you are going and how you intend to get there.

Tell someone where you are going, the route you intend to take and when you expect to return. If traveling alone carry an Emergency Satellite transmitter.

If you are using a smart phone with a mapping program for navigation, bring an external power source, as navigation apps tend to draw batteries down rapidly.

Bring a map and compass, and know how to use them, in case of smart phone failure.

### **Check the weather forecast before you leave home.**

Take extra food and water, matches or lighter, hat, sunglasses, rain poncho, flashlight, first aid kit, etc. Dress in layers. Know the signs of, treatment for and how to avoid heat stress and hypothermia.

### **Adverse Weather Conditions**

#### **Thunderstorms:**

**Being struck by lightning:** If lightning is striking around you, get away from water tanks, ponds, streams. Your best protection is a cave, ditch, tunnel, canyon, or head-high clumps of trees in open forest areas. Avoid tall objects such as lone trees. The best protection is to make yourself as small a target as possible. Drop to your knees, bend forward with your hands resting on your knees. Keep away from wire fences, telephone lines, and conductive objects. Avoid the tops of ridges, hilltops, wide-open spaces, ledges, out-crops of rocks, and shelters in exposed locations. Avoid grouping people together.

#### **Heat:**

Stay hydrated! Take more water than you think you will need. Drink plenty of water, often. Increase fluid intake on hotter days or during extremely strenuous activity, upwards of a liter an hour. Observe team members for signs of dehydration.

Remember to eat! Maintain blood sugar and electrolyte balance by eating regularly.

Start early in the A.M. during cooler temperatures.

Wear cool, protective clothing that provides UVA/UVB protection, including long-sleeved shirt, long pants, full brimmed hat/helmet, and sunglasses. Use sunscreen and lip balm.

#### **Cold:**

Always be prepared for cold weather by having a blanket in your vehicle.

Wear layers of clothing so you can put on more clothes if it gets cold.

Lightweight "heat blankets" are available in stores, that you can carry in a backpack.

### **Driving:**

Take the appropriate vehicle for where you are going. Be familiar with the roads, or ask someone who is.

Always carry at least 1 spare tire that you have checked and is aired up, a lug wrench and jack.

Check fluid levels the night before you go. Always start your trip with a tank full of gas.

Stay to the right, and slow down on blind curves. Yield to faster moving vehicles.

When travelling in a group of vehicles, if possible use some type of radio communication within the group, e.g. CB radio between vehicles. Always make sure that the driver behind you sees you turn. Leaders should announce the turns, e.g. turning right onto NF-58. Be aware of on-coming traffic and announce the presence of on-coming traffic to others behind you. If you feel uncomfortable with the road conditions, e.g. steep or off-camber grades, let the group leader know so that accommodations can be made.

**Don't cross flooded washes.** Often if you wait a short while, the water level will go down and you can safely cross.

### **Walking and working in the field.**

Always watch your footing. Slow down and use extra caution around logs, rocks, and animal holes. Extremely steep slopes (>50%) can be hazardous under wet or dry conditions; consider an alternate route or walk in switchback patterns across a steep slope. Closed toe shoes are required and sturdy hiking boots recommended.

Watch where you walk, especially around trees and brush with limbs sticking out. Wear eye protection.

Ultraviolet light from the sun can be damaging to the eyes; look for sunglasses that specify significant protection from UV-A and UV-B radiation.

### **Use of hand tools:**

Always wear leather gloves when using hand tools.

Carry a long-handled tool at your side, on the downhill side, with the pointed end facing down. Never carry a tool on your shoulder.

When working or walking in a group, always maintain a distance of at least 10 feet between people.

When using a hand tool, ensure secure footing, a firm grip on the handle, and keep legs and feet in the clear when swinging.

Watch for rocks or objects that will cause the tool to glance, rebound, or create excessive flying material.

Remove all overhead obstructions the tool might strike.

Wear sunglasses or protective eyewear.

If using a hand tool for extended periods of time, perform stretching exercises before work to maintain flexibility of back and neck muscles.

**Avoid back injury.**

Use proper lifting techniques; lift with the legs, hold objects as close to your body as practical, lift slowly and smoothly, do not jerk, keep your body straight, do not twist while lifting. Do not attempt to lift objects that could be too heavy to be moved safely. Ask for assistance.

**Animal encounters.**

**Rattlesnakes:** Step carefully over obstructions and on narrow trails in heavy brush. Use a walking stick or digging tool to make noise in front of you and before digging in bunch grass. You can protect your lower legs by wearing snake gaiters.

If you are bitten by a rattlesnake, **DO NOT DELAY**, get to a hospital for treatment immediately.

**Rabies:** Avoid any animal behaving in an odd or unexpected manner.

**Bears, Mountain Lions:** Safety in numbers: take someone with you. Be aware of your surroundings. Make noise when approaching thickets etc. If approached, turn immediately and face the animal. Do not lose eye contact and remain standing. Don't run away. Give the animal room so it can avoid you. Make noise, use your jacket etc. to make yourself look larger, throw rocks etc. Avoid bending over, squatting or bending down. If you are attacked, **FIGHT BACK!!**

**Insects:** Bees: Listen for bee activity and avoid beehives. If you see a hive on the route you planned to take, take another route, or don't go there. If you are chased, run away immediately. Bees generally back off after 1/4th mile. If you can't run, crouch down and cover your face with your hands and clothing.

Ticks and mosquitos: Wear long sleeve shirts. Tuck pants into socks/boots. Visually check each other for ticks while in the field and check yourself carefully at the end of the day.

Chiggers: Avoid sitting in areas with lots of grass, and don't sit on logs or other dead vegetative material. Use bug spray around your ankles.

**Illegal activities:**

**Marijuana:**

Growing of illegal substances such as marijuana is still encountered on NFS lands and is usually associated with wet areas. Indications of such activity are irrigation pipe, human trash, well worn trails, etc. in areas where they would normally not be expected. Upon encountering a suspect situation, watch for possible booby traps, suspend the survey, leave the area immediately and contact law enforcement after you are safely away from the area.

**Other illegal substances:**

If you see unlabeled drums, do not touch them or attempt to look inside. They could contain toxic substances. Make note of their location, and report them to law enforcement.