

Montreat Wilderness and Hiking Trail System

Rules and Regulations

The Mountain Retreat Association Wilderness and Hiking Trail System is a hike-at-your-own-risk facility. These rules and regulations are posted for your safety and enjoyment.

Safety Rules

- Plan your trip carefully.
- All hikers should inform someone of their hiking time and route.
- It is suggested to always hike with a partner.
- Have a meeting time and place in case someone gets hurt or separated from your group.
- Consider distance and elevation changes before beginning.
- Carry a map.
- Stay only on the marked or “blazed” trails.
- Check weather reports before you leave.
- Dress appropriately for the outdoors and changes in weather conditions.
- Bring plenty of water and snacks.
- Be aware of your surroundings and never approach wild animals.
- Exercise extreme caution around open rock faces, streams, and waterfalls.
- Please keep pets under control at all times.
- Firearms and air-powered guns are not permitted within Mountain Retreat Association Wilderness.

Wilderness Conservation Regulations

- To preserve all wilderness areas, please respect the natural environment.
- Treat our natural heritage with respect. Leave all plants, wildlife, rocks, and historical artifacts undisturbed and in their place.
- Hunting or collecting wildlife, including picking or removing any vegetation is not allowed. Picking of Galax leaves is prohibited.
- Follow only marked or “blazed” trails and do not cut switchbacks.
- Carry out all that is carried in.
- These wilderness trails are for FOOT TRAVEL ONLY. (Bicycles and horses are not allowed, in order to protect trail conditions and safety, fragile soil, and water breaks.)
- Open fires are restricted.

- Establishing new trails or camping areas or any other activity that is detrimental to the well-being of the wilderness environment is prohibited.

What to do in case of an emergency

If these rules and regulations are not followed, it is possible to get lost or injured. Here are a few tips that will help you survive.

- If you do get lost or separated from your group, don't wander around or leave the marked trail. Find an open area on the trail and stay there.
- Remain calm.
- Put on extra clothes to keep warm.
- If someone in your group is missing, notify the local authorities.
- In case of injury, stop immediately.
- If trained, administer First Aid and make the victim comfortable.
- If possible, leave at least one person with the victim while you go for help.
- If the injured person must be left alone, leave them food, water, and protection from the elements. Leave a note on the injured person describing their injury and your plan for help.

To report lost or injured hikers, contact: Black Mountain Fire Department, 828.669.9117

Please consider keeping your survival gear with you at all times, even when you may only be planning for a day hike, your pack should contain these items:

- Personal First Aid Kit
- Map of the area
- Signal whistle
- Compass
- Rain gear
- Cold weather clothing (warm hat, sweater)
- Water bottle and purification treatment system
- High energy snack food
- Waterproof matches and a candle
- Flashlight
- Whether or not you feel a cell phone belongs on a wilderness experience, bringing one may make all the difference. However, be aware that there are many areas in the Montreat Wilderness where a cell phone cannot transmit or receive calls.