

HIKING SIG



Objective: This is a fitness group on the move - out to enjoy nature and get some exercise with fellow members. There is no need to participate in every scheduled hike to be a member of this SIG. Come when you can! Just RSVP before hike day.

RSVP: Please RSVP to janette@bealsdesign.com if you plan to attend a hike. Participants are responsible for finding their way to the trailhead location listed on the announcement. Feel free to scope out the location prior to the hike date to avoid missing the start time. Carpooling is recommended whenever possible due to small parking lots.

Responsibility: Participants must be 18 years or older. All sporting activities come with the possibility of risk. Participants are responsible for their own safety and asked to assess their fitness level before committing to a hike. Participants will be asked to sign a waiver upon joining. We are all exploring together.

Hikes are usually an average of 4 miles but can be anywhere from 2-7 miles. The approximate distance and difficulty will be noted on the hike announcement. Hikes are rated as Easy, Moderate, or Difficult. An easy hike may contain flat surfaces to walk on, but it may still be 4 miles so consider the distance when assessing your ability to participate.

Sorry, No Pets. Personally, we prefer to hike with pups, but because park regulations vary, and to avoid conflicts and interruptions to pacing, we ask that you kindly leave your dog at home. We can always set up a special puppy hike in addition to the SIG.

Pace: Often, hikes will be scheduled after work hours for the convenience of members, so we try to keep a reasonably steady pace to get the group back to their cars before it gets too late. (Also, there are rarely restrooms available.) Looking for a group that stops to smell all the flowers and read the history along the way? This may not be the group for you.

Completion: We prefer that you stick with the group for safety reasons (we follow a pre-set route) but understand if you are familiar with the area and are comfortable hiking back solo at your own risk. A member who does not wish to complete a hike is responsible for finding their way back home. We recommend familiarizing yourself with the trail using AllTrails or a similar app, and visiting the trailhead prior to hike day to avoid getting lost. We usually complete local hikes within 2-3 hours and encourage the group to stay together.

Arrive Early: Please try to arrive 15 minutes early to allow yourself time to find the trailhead parking. We like to stretch, hydrate, network, or just relax as we give participants a chance to find us for the start time.

Be prepared: Bring plenty of water, a light snack, and dress in layers for changing weather. We sometimes hike rain or shine unless there is an electrical storm. (Hikes in the rain can be fun if you are dressed for it.) On hot summer days, bring electrolytes (like Gatorade) to stay sufficiently hydrated.

Gear: In winter, layers are a must along with hat, gloves, warm boots and anything you need to stay comfortable in changing body temperatures. Avoid cotton clothing, as it does not dry quickly. In general, wear hiking boots for ankle support and performance on rough terrain. It is easy to trip on roots and rocks so ankle support can save you from injury. In summer, bring bug spray and sunscreen. Long pants can offer protection from ticks. (Always check yourself for ticks upon completion of a hike.)

Trail Conditions can range from flat, paved sections to steep, slippery slopes, so be sure to have footwear suitable for unpredictable terrain. Invest in hiking boots or trail runners. We are not afraid of mud and often walk through it to avoid eroding the trail.

Trail Routes: The trail leader has usually mapped the course prior to the group hike. Please be sure to follow the pre-mapped route by downloading Janette's hikes on All-Trails, or simply following the hike leader. It can be tempting to take another path if you believe it is a faster way back to your car, but please follow the trail charted and advertised by the Hiking Sig.

Hike Leaders: The 2024 RWN Hiking SIG is lead by Janette Biehler and Liz Burtch. Participants are welcome to lead a hike if they are familiar with a route they would like to introduce to the group. Talk to Janette or Liz about leading a hike. We'd love to see your favorite places.

Leave No Trace: Anything you bring with you should be brought back out with you. Respect nature and be courteous to others. No music or excessive noise. Learn more about the LNT principles at <https://adk.org/leave-no-trace/>

We look forward to seeing you on the trail!