

# Risk Management Plan

This risk management plan is established for the safe operation of the Nevada Natural Resource Education Council (NNREC) activities and programs.

Responsibility for risk management of NNREC programs, including participants, volunteers, independent contractors, and employees, rests with the Board of Directors, which delegates this responsibility to the Chair of the Board of Directors. The Executive Director or any other employee may be delegated this responsibility, however, independent contractors will not be delegated this responsibility. The Chair will make all reasonable effort to inform all participants in NNREC programs of the contents of the Risk Management Plan. Any action not consistent with this plan must be specifically OK'ed by the Chair, after appropriate risk management analysis. Any person may be removed from a program for knowing or willful violation of the plan. The Chair may delegate some or all of the activities in safety and risk management to the lead facilitator of a program activity.

## *Activities and Risk Areas*

The activities which NNREC undertakes are:

1. Professional development workshops and conferences. PD workshops are attended by classroom teachers and nonformal educators, and facilitated by volunteers or independent contractors. Most programs are one or two days (not overnight), and one program is a five-day program that includes overnight stays at a camp facility. All participants in such workshops are adults, 18 years of age and older.
2. Summer programs for high school students. The High Sierra Resource Workshop (HSRW) is facilitated by independent contractors arranged through NNREC. As of 2006-04-16, this program is not occurring in 2006 and other programs that may take its place are being led by Nevada Outdoor School. NNREC has made a tentative decision that it will not lead youth-serving programs but will work with other organizations such as Nevada Outdoor School to support such programs; therefore this activity is not addressed in this plan.
3. Meetings. NNREC holds an annual meeting to which all of our members and others interested in environmental education are invited. NNREC holds Board of Directors and Advisory Council meetings face-to-face and via conference call. Travel expenses for these meetings may be reimbursed by NNREC.
4. Communications: NNREC makes available to members and others information about environmental education materials and opportunities via newsletters, email and the website.

NNREC does not have an office, does not own property, does not own vehicles, and does not provide social services.

The risk elements in common to these activities, which are addressed in this plan are:

1. Field studies, workshops which occur outdoors in natural environments.
2. Overnight stays.
3. Meetings and workshops at facilities owned by others.
4. Provision of professional development instruction in environmental education.
5. Provision of environmental education information, including lesson plans, via newsletters, email, website and directly in workshops.
6. Co-sponsorship of events or activities with other organizations, agencies or businesses.

## ***Field Studies***

NNREC holds professional development workshops that are partially or entirely outdoors in natural environments, including one-day and multi-day workshops. In all cases, the outdoor environment is owned by land management agencies including but not limited to National Forests, Public Lands, State Parks, and county parks. All rules and guidelines presented here apply to both participants and to volunteers, employees and contractors who are facilitating the workshops. Every reference to participant refers to all persons present, no matter what their role.

### **Preparation**

Participants will be informed of the necessary clothing and outdoor equipment for the outdoor segment of a workshop, via a list of items to bring, available before the workshop. The list will include day packs, water bottles, sunscreen, layers of clothing, and rain gear, and may include other items. Participants will be reminded to drink water, dress appropriately for all activities, use sunscreen as needed, and go to the bathroom before each class and major activity.

### **Identified Risks**

Participants will be informed of any identified exposures of the natural environment present on the site being used. These may include but are not limited to: sun, rain, snow, hail, lightning, high winds, floods, snow avalanche, landslide, and earthquake; poisonous plants or animals; hazardous animals; insect bites including ticks and mosquitoes that may carry disease, and bee or wasp stings; natural and human-caused fire; trails with uneven footing and other steep or unstable surfaces; and creeks, rivers and lakes.

### **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited during the outdoor portion of any workshop. If safe areas such as designated campgrounds and picnic areas, or large paved surfaces, are available, and if smoking is not restricted in these areas seasonally or permanently by the land management agency, participants may smoke during breaks. Any person smoking in areas not permitted will be immediately asked to leave the program and site.

### **Health Inventory Form**

For any NNREC program which includes overnight stays or field studies which take place more than two hours from definitive medical care, participants will complete a Health Inventory form provided by NNREC (see appendix). These forms will be kept with the group at all times in the field, and at the site overnight. The privacy of the information will be respected and used only in emergencies. At the end of the program, the forms will be retained by NNREC for three years. If a participant arrives without a completed medical form, they may not participate in any activities until the form is complete, and will be asked to leave the program if the form is not complete within 12 hours.

## **Medications**

Medications, whether prescription or over-the-counter, will be the sole responsibility of the participant. A person in possession of and prescribed an epi-pen will be responsible for its use in an emergency situation with anaphylactic shock.

## **Accident/Injury/Illness Reporting**

Accidents, injuries, and illness possibly resulting from participation in an NNREC program will be recorded on the NNREC Report of Accident/Injury form (see appendix) within 12 hours of occurrence. All forms will be retained by NNREC for three years. Other forms will be used for any individual covered by Workers Compensation insurance.

## **Near Miss Reporting**

A near miss, an incident that could have resulted in significant accident, injury, illness, or death, but did not, will be recorded on the NNREC Report of Near Miss form (see appendix) within one week. The forms will be used to determine patterns of accident, injury, illness and near miss that can be used to create a safer program. All forms will be retained by NNREC for three years.

## **Missing Person**

In the event of a known or suspected missing person, the Report of Missing Person form will immediately be filled out. The missing person will be reported to the county Sheriffs Department within four hours, or within two hours if indicated by inclement weather or darkness. No search and rescue will occur except under the direction of the county Sheriffs Department, or other law enforcement agency with authority for the land being used for the field study.

## **First Aid Services & Supplies**

A simple first aid kit will be available at all times, under the control of the program lead. The kit will include CPR mask and gloves for protection from blood-borne pathogens.

## **Emergency Contact Information**

Before start of the program, the closest location of a pay phone or other accessible phone, or a location with cell phone service will be determined. If no pay phone or other accessible phone is available within 30 minutes of the location, then a cell phone will be used to provide contact. The cell phone will be tested beforehand to determine what areas of the site or nearby localities have service.

## **Emergency Transportation**

Emergency transportation, in situations requiring immediate medical attention or life-threatening, will be provided by the Emergency Medical System (EMS) which will be activated by a call to 9-1-1. Injured or ill persons will be transported in other vehicles only if a person with Wilderness First Aid or Advanced First Aid, or higher, training has determined that the injured or ill person can be safely transported and must be transported, and that EMS transportation is not available within two hours.

## **Water Safety**

NNREC professional development workshops and conferences may include instructional time at creeks, rivers and lakes to monitor water quality and to study the riparian area. Participants may be permitted to enter the water up to knee deep, in order to complete studies, if the water is slow moving, if there are no hazards or water deeper than knee deep downstream, and if the footing is secure. Participants will not enter the water or cross creeks on rocks if the water is muddy, colder than 40 degrees Fahrenheit, fast moving, or water downstream is deeper than knee deep.

This risk management plan does not cover any activities in which participants are in a vessel on water, including rafts, kayaks, and commercial watercraft. Such activities will require a separate supplement that documents and analyzes risks.

## **Water Test Kits**

Water test kits are used during water studies. These kits contain moderately hazardous chemicals. A list of such chemicals and their hazards will be maintained, as well as MSDS sheets where available. Each facilitator will be familiar with the list, and will be trained in proper use.

## **Night and Astronomy Hikes**

Any trail activity occurring at night (night hike and astronomy hike) will have a minimum of two leaders. The hike leader must hike the night hike or astronomy trail during daylight hours before taking a participant group on the trail at night. Each leader on the hike will have a working flashlight available for emergencies. Participants may be prohibited from bringing flashlights on night activities due to the hazard resulting from loss of night vision when flashlights are used inappropriately.

## **Roads and Traffic**

Any group crossing a road will stop before crossing. The leader will cross the road first, listen and look for traffic, and then signal for the group to cross when it is safe. Road crossings with poor visibility in one or both directions may require the use of additional adults to listen and look and to supervise the crossing. For groups walking along any road, the group will walk single file (double is possible if there is a wide shoulder), facing traffic. The group will stop while traffic in either direction passes, unless the shoulder is wide enough to provide three feet of clearance from the travel lane. Roads that are gated so as to not be accessible to the public can be considered trails rather than roads.

## ***Overnight Stays***

Some NNREC professional development workshops include overnight stays at facilities which are rented or leased by NNREC, but not owned or operated by NNREC. The Lamoille Institute for Educators (LIFE), operated at the Lions Camp Lamoille Organizational Camp, is one such program. Since risk management for programs at such sites is very specific to the individual site, separate risk management supplements will be developed for each program that operates overnight. Such programs may not be operated until the risk management plan supplement is completed and reviewed by the Chair of the Board of Directors.

## *Meetings and Workshops at Facilities Owned by Others*

Meetings and workshops held at facilities which are owned by other organizations, agencies or businesses do not constitute any unusual risks, except for field studies and overnight stays which are covered above. The facilitator of any such meeting or workshop will determine ahead of time what sort of insurance coverage is held by the facility owner, and the location of the nearest available phone or cell phone coverage for contacting Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in case of an emergency.

Workshops which require or invite participants to climb, fall, or leave the ground will require supplemental risk management analysis. High risk activities will only be provided by third parties which are trained and insured to provide such activities, and all participants will be made aware that this activity is provided by a third party rather than NNREC.

## *Provision of professional development instruction in environmental education*

NNREC provides professional development workshops for classroom teachers and nonformal educators. To ensure the quality of instruction provided in workshops, all facilitators will be at least one of the following: 1) a licensed teacher in the State of Nevada, or an equivalently certified person from another state; 2) formally trained in the curriculum being presented, with a certificate of completion or other proof of training; 3) holding a degree in environmental education or closely related field; 4) provided as a trainer by the organization which developed the curriculum; or 5) working under the direct supervision of a person with at least one of the preceding qualifications.

NNREC facilitators need not refrain in workshops from addressing controversial issues, concepts or data in environmental education and environmental protection, and will encourage open discussion of issues, but will not advocate for particular solutions to environmental issues.

## *Provision of environmental education information*

NNREC provides environmental education information via newsletters, email, the website, and in public forums. This information may include lesson plans developed internally or provided by others, references, links, information about, and information provided by other organizations, agencies and businesses which provide environmental education or are active in environmental issues. NNREC will make reasonable efforts to ensure the accuracy and utility of all such information, which may include knowledge of the reputation of the source, and cross-checking other sources.

The website, newsletters and email will be designed in such a way so that it is clear when a hyperlink takes the user to a website not under the control of NNREC, and that such links are provided with the understanding that NNREC does not review and does not necessarily agree with the information provided by external sites.

No person may speak in a public forum on behalf of NNREC without prior authorization from the Board of Directors of NNREC.

## *Co-Sponsorship*

NNREC may co-sponsor events or activities with other organizations, agencies or businesses. If the NNREC name or logo is used to advertise an event or activity, or at the event or activity itself, the Board of Directors must make prior authorization. Each event or activity must clearly identify the lead sponsor who carries the primary risk and insurance to cover this risk. If appropriate, NNREC will request proof of insurance from the lead sponsor. For complex events or activity, or any event or activity that requires sharing of expenses and income, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be developed, and adopted by the Board of Directors prior to the event or activity.

## *Insurance*

NNREC will obtain insurance as appropriate to help it manage risk. NNREC will carry basic Commercial General Liability insurance at all times. NNREC will provide basic accident insurance for participants in field studies and overnight stays, either year-round or on an event basis. NNREC will carry Directors and Officers Liability insurance when the annual budget allows. Other insurance may be obtained as necessary when so directed by the Board of Directors.

The Treasurer of the Board of Directors will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate insurance coverage is obtained, that premiums are paid in a timely manner, and that claims are made in a timely manner.