

**WILMINGTON TRAIL CLUB  
HANDBOOK**

**1997**

Wilmington Trail Club  
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# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	3
<b>Whence and Whither the Trail Club</b>	4
<b>Responsibilities of Event Participants</b>	
General Responsibilities	5
<b>Hiking</b>	
Responsibilities of Leaders	
Day Hikes	6
Overnight Trips	6
Responsibilities of Participants	7
Courtesy	7
<b>Safety Tips</b>	
Basic Clothing and Gear	8
Traffic	8
Getting Lost	8
Trail Hazards	9
<b>Cross-Country Skiing</b>	
Responsibilities of Leaders	10
Responsibilities of Participants	10
Courtesy	10
<b>Kayaking/Canoeing</b>	
Responsibilities of Coordinators	11
Skill Requirements	12
Responsibilities of Participants	13
<b>The American Canoe Association</b>	
Classification System	14
<b>Wilmington Trail Club Constitution</b>	15
<b>Wilmington Trail Club Council Policy Decisions</b>	19

## **PREFACE**

We are pleased to note that although much has happened in the wide world since the 1988 revision, only minor changes had to be made to update the handbook. The 1988 Introduction still serves quite well and is repeated below. This constancy is a tribute to the club's strong structure and culture, built by nearly three generations of skilled and dedicated volunteer Leaders and members.

*Joan Campbell, Bill Hardam, Lorena Meunier, Chris Stranahan  
October, 1997*

## **INTRODUCTION (1988 Edition)**

Along with our other institutions, the Wilmington Trail Club continues to evolve. Since the last handbook revision in 1976, membership has continued strong with many new faces and fresh ideas. With the Club's 50th anniversary approaching in 1989, the emergence of kayaking and cross-country skiing as activities, advances in outdoor sports technology, and the knowledge that our skills in handbook writing have not yet reached perfection, the Council decided it was time for another update. We also wanted to restate and reaffirm those principles that have provided enjoyable outdoor experiences for all members--a key incentive for attracting a broad base of participants for Club activities. These principles have worked well in the past and should continue to do so in the future. To us, they seem to offer the best means for perpetuating an active Club.

In this handbook you will find some suggestions, some guidelines and, yes, some rules that we feel will help achieve our goals. You will find, in other words, the rights and responsibilities of participants in Trail Club activities. The handbook has separate sections on Club history, major types of activities with a focus on safety, and governance. We hope that all members will take the opportunity to carefully read the new edition, current members to catch up on important new items, and new members to learn about your Club.      Enjoy!

*The Handbook Committee,  
Grace Beggs, Bill Hardam, Paul Hirseman, Lorena Meunier*

## **WHENCE and WHITHER the TRAIL CLUB**

This short history of the Wilmington Trail Club (WTC) illustrates why it continues to attract new members as well as keep those whose names have appeared on its roster for decades. More detailed information is available in the Club's tenth anniversary yearbook, *OLD TRAILS AND NEW*, published in 1950,

Imagine if you will a small introverted city of 100,000, unusual for its number of corporate headquarters and its facilities for the construction and major repair of railroad cars, ships, and textile machinery, so stable that the "Great Depression" barely touched it. This was Wilmington in the 1930s.

During that period, corporate administrative and research functions were consolidated in the Wilmington area, causing an influx of newcomers, many with cultivated tastes in the arts as well as outdoor activities. By and large, the self-sufficient native Wilmingtonians made them feel like displaced persons. Minimal recreational activities left the streets barren after dusk. "Blue Laws" curtailed what little recreation the city offered, and even made Sunday eating a choice between bankruptcy and indigestion. Many were driven to traveling back home to Cleveland, New York, Baltimore, and elsewhere for weekend survival.

The newcomers were an irrepressible breed and gradually, joined by kindred souls among the Wilmington natives; they reinforced or created such organizations as the Wilmington Symphony, The Brandywiners, and the Drama League. For the outdoor minded, 1937 saw the start of the Wilmington Ski Club. Two years later, in 1939, the Wilmington Trail Club began as an affiliate of both the Wilmington Park Board and the YMCA. "Y" affiliation continued until 1946. (Today, it is amusing to note that because sponsoring a coed group created problems for the YMCA, co-sponsorship was solicited from the American Association of University Women. Also serious consideration was given to the legality of hiking as a Sabbath recreation.) In 1940, the Ski Club and Trail Club combined, remaining closely affiliated through the 1950s.

The earliest hikes were devoted to exploring the attractive local countryside. These jaunts were the sort of thing now done as midweek hikes. Hikers could bring food to cook outdoors, thus circumventing the Sabbath-closed restaurants.

WTC hiking might long have continued to be no more than daylong rambles were it not for the initiative of its early leaders and members coupled with their ability to inspire warm, personal relationships. This made possible the rapid expansion of the Club's activities. Outstanding among those who helped were:

**Clayt Hoff**, whose bird and flower walks added meaning to local trips and whose contact with Brandywine Valley landowners allowed work to begin on the Brandywine Trail during the Club's first year. A plot of land was purchased and donated to Brandywine Creek State Park in his memory several years after his 1986 death.

**Jim Frorer**, a local geologist, who introduced new hiking areas in Delaware and adjacent states.

**Henry Woolman**, who through his valuable suggestions and hospitality was a prime mover in establishing the Horseshoe Trail; he also proposed the trail route to link Wilmington

with the Horseshoe Trail, which later became the Brandywine Trail.

**W. W. "Chick" Laird**, who initiated canoe activities by putting the Trail Club into canoes--his own--then feeding the paddlers when they finally found their way back to his boathouse. In addition, Chick was among the first landowners to allow the Brandywine Trail to cross their property, and he also helped obtain permission from other landowners. The Brandywine Trail now extends 37 miles from the Hagley Museum to the Horseshoe Trail at Ludwig's corner, Pennsylvania.

Various Boy and Girl Scout Councils, YW- and YMCAs also helped by making camp facilities available for weekend trips. With this sort of backing, it is not surprising that most of the WTC's current activities came into existence within two years of its founding.

There have been some changes because, if anything, the WTC is dynamic and quickly responsive to current needs. Perhaps this is because no officers have held control overly long. Instead, it is the tendency for new and competent members to move rapidly to Council responsibilities.

What started as a refuge for singles now also attracts couples and some families. Indoor programs (parties, playgoing, bridge, volleyball, square dancing) once vital when Wilmington "rolled up its sidewalks at 10 p.m." evolved to evening programs in the 1970's and 1980's where members showed slides, videos, or movies of their high adventure vacation trips. During the 1990's, evening programs faded away; the annual banquet in March, with a feature speaker, remains as the sole regular evening event. The need for annual group vacations no longer exists so they are no longer scheduled. Three different midweek daytime hikes have been added attracting many retirees, and short Wednesday evening hikes are lively social events, often culminating in dinner at a nearby bistro.

In spite of these changes, certain basics remain. *Activity* is still more important than *organization*. It's still a challenge to find enough trip leaders. Most of all, the individual's urge to challenge muscles, skill, and endurance while enjoying the woods, streams, hills, and open countryside remains the same.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES of EVENT PARTICIPANTS**

### **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

There are risks involved in hiking, paddling, and cross-country skiing. If you participate in an event, you accept all risks and release the Wilmington Trail Club from all responsibility.

Wilmington Trail Club trip leaders are not paid professionals. They are amateurs, like yourself, who are taking their turn and handling the administrative details of trips for the benefit of all. Your decision to participate and, at every point, to continue to participate, is yours alone. The trip leader will help you with arrangements to carry out your decision, consistent with the resources and welfare of the group.

By signing up for a trip, you indicate you believe you have the skills needed to participate in the event safely. If at the onset of the event you find conditions more difficult than you were prepared for, arrange with the trip leader to drop out.

## **HIKING**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEADERS**

The success of an activity depends on the leader. Through his/her conscientious planning and guidance, the friendly companionship of our Club can be preserved. Here are a few tips for new leaders and reminders for the more experienced. A detailed guide to leading trips is available from the Hiking Committee Chair.

#### **Day Hikes**

- Scout the hike shortly before the scheduled trip to be familiar with current conditions. Know where parking is available and ask permission when necessary.
- Prepare clear and concise driving directions with maps for the drivers. Be sure to include shuttle directions. Trail maps and directions for the hikers can also be helpful, but are not necessary if the trail is well marked. Use your discretion.
- Carry a first-aid kit, flashlight, and whistle in your pack for emergencies.
- Be at the meeting place a few minutes early to greet participants. Have them introduce themselves in the traditional circle.
- Make sure everyone reads and signs the liability release. Collect non member fees.
- Help coordinate the formation of car pools if the participants request your assistance. Remind everyone of the optional dinner stop, if any. Advise newcomers of the Club's carpooling policy.
- Request a volunteer "sweep" to stay at the end of the group.
- Remind hikers of safety rules when necessary.
- Set a reasonable pace and allow some time for admiring the scenery. Point out places of interest. If strong hikers want to go ahead, remind them to stay together and make sure they know the route to the destination.
- Stick to announced mileage and stop for occasional rest and "people breaks" (men ahead and women behind).
- After the hike, invite newcomers to return.
- Be sure drivers know the way to the optional dinner stop and home.
- Complete and mail the trip report; if it is a new hike, enclose the driving and hike directions and maps.

#### **Overnight Trips**

- Require a deposit to cover the cost of food and deposit for lodging. Include the amount in the Bulletin write-up.
- Plan the entire trip: hikes, meals, lodging, provisions, etc. You can split large groups into smaller cooking units, each responsible for their own planning and buying.

- Divide the costs for the entire trip equally among all trip participants and make sure all participants share the weekend chores.
- Distribute (or auction) leftover food among the trip participants.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS**

- Be punctual. Trips are scheduled for a definite departure time. You may be left behind if you are late.
- Prepare for the weather conditions by bringing appropriate clothing. The Trail Club hikes in all kinds of weather.
- If you must drop out of an overnight trip, notify the leader as soon as possible and be prepared to forfeit the deposit if you or the leader cannot find a substitute.
- If you ride with a volunteer driver, you will be expected to share costs. (Refer to "TRANSPORTATION" in the policy section.)
- Follow the leader's instructions and observe the safety rules found in "SAFETY TIPS" on the following page.
- Children are the responsibility of those who bring them and should not be an annoyance to others.
- Dogs must be on a leash and can be brought only with the hike leader's permission.
- Cooperate with the leader when asked to perform special duties.

## **COURTESY**

- Remember to chat with newcomers and let them know they are welcome.
- Don't smoke while actually hiking. Be careful to extinguish ashes and butts of lunch time cigarettes. Take all butts home. Be considerate of nonsmokers.
- Don't pick wildflowers. Let others enjoy them too.
- Respect others' property: leave gates and fences as you found them. Crawl under fences whenever possible. If necessary to go over, climb near the posts. Observe "No Trespassing" signs.
- Carry out trash, even that left by others.
- Don't leave a campsite until all fires have been extinguished. Don't use water on rock fireplaces because it will crack the rocks.
- Avoid washing in streams. Instead, fill a container in the stream and wash at least 100 feet from it.
- Don't take "people breaks" within 100 feet of any stream or 20 feet of the trail. Before leaving site, cover up.

## **Basic Clothing and Gear**

- Layered clothing (pack extra in cold weather to keep warm at lunch breaks);
- Do not wear cotton clothing in cold weather;
- Sturdy boots that are well broken-in;
- Two pairs of socks (thin liners made of polypropylene, for example, and wool socks);
- Rain gear;
- Gloves and hat in cold months;
- Lunch and high-energy snacks;
- A flashlight in winter; and
- Plenty of water, especially on hot days.

You may want to keep a change of clothing in the car for the trip home.

## **Traffic**

The most dangerous part of a hiking trip is the drive to and from the area, so drive carefully. Observe speed limits and seat belt laws. Don't drink and drive. If sleepy after an event or dinner, have someone else drive. Avoid riding with someone you consider a reckless driver.

When hiking on a roadway, walk on the left shoulder, facing traffic. Warn others of traffic by shouting "CAR UP!" or "CAR BACK!" to signify a vehicle approaching from ahead or behind, respectively.

## **Getting Lost**

Getting lost can ruin the trip for everyone--you and those who must wait or search for you. It can also endanger your life.

Remember to follow the leader and don't start the hike without the leader's instructions.

Always stay with the group. If you must stop, notify the leader. Don't lag behind or stop without letting the leader know. Don't turn back or forge ahead without asking for the leader's permission and directions.

Most problems arise when the group gets separated. Maintain contact with the person behind you. If you lose contact, call ahead to stop the group.

Following a marked trail is simple if you remember a single blaze means the trail continues straight ahead and a double blaze indicates a sharp change in direction. Some trails have the double blazes offset; the upper blaze offset in the turn direction. Look carefully for the next blaze to confirm the new direction. Make sure the hiker behind you knows the way.

If you get lost, keep calm and whistle for help (see the following paragraph on distress signals). If no one responds, return to the last place on the trail where you saw the group. Someone will backtrack to find you.

Know the distress signals. They are simple but valuable, not only in real emergencies, but



also in locating separated parties. The signals are:

One whistle: "I'm lost" *or*  
"Where are you?" *or*  
"I'm here."

Two whistles: "All right" *or*  
"I'm coming to you."

Three whistles (distress signal):  
"First aid needed" *or* "Call for help."

## **Trail Hazards**

Falls are the most common mishap in hiking. Most of us have a healthy respect for cliffs, but tend to underestimate lesser hazards that can often result in a fall and injury.

Watch your footing. Learn to respect slippery surfaces--wet, mossy rocks, tree roots, wet leaves and grass, ice, logs, or sticks. Step on them cautiously. Watch for loose stones or gravel on a hard rock surface. Watch for tripping hazards. Avoid leaping to one-foot landings. Don't run when footing is insecure.

Notify the hikers behind you of hazards, such as dangerous holes, poison ivy, and so on.

Don't walk too close to the hiker ahead of you. If you have to worry about swinging branches, you're too close.

In the event of a falling rock, warn others by shouting "ROCK!" If someone above you shouts it, hug the slope and protect your head.

When in snake country, watch where you step and don't put your hand in a place you can't see. Be wary of sunny rock ledges where snakes may bask on a cool day.

Learn to recognize and avoid poison ivy, oak, and sumac. Be sure berries are edible. Watch for ticks on yourself and others and remove them promptly. Lyme disease has become so prevalent that you should consider wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into socks during Spring and Summer hikes.

Avoid drinking from streams. If absolutely necessary, you must treat the water before drinking it:

- boil it for three minutes; *or*
- add one tetraglycine hydroperiodide tablet to each eight ounces and let stand 30 minutes before drinking it. These tablets will eliminate most waterborne pathogens and giardia and are available commercially as: Potable Aqua, Coughlan's, and Globaline.
- filter with any of the commercial water purifiers.

Know the symptoms of hypothermia, heat stroke, and heat prostration and seek relief for yourself or another before the situation becomes dangerous.

If an accident occurs, notify the leader at once. The leader can call a rest stop, keep the group together, and administer first aid.

## **CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING**

Here is a summary of responsibilities and procedures. A complete guide is available from the Cross-Country Skiing Chair.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEADERS**

- Be familiar with the trail, its difficulty and hazards.
- Consider the weather when planning the ski tour.
- Have participants sign the liability release and collect nonmember fees.
- Make an effort to know the abilities of your group participants and plan the trip accordingly.
- Group skiers of similar abilities.
- Be alert for signs of hypothermia.
- Carry a first-aid kit, extra ski tip, knife, and screwdriver.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS**

Cross-country skiing is an enjoyable recreation as well as an all-around conditioner that can contribute to your general health and fitness. It is one of the best aerobic exercises and calorie burners. The following are suggestions to consider prior to trip participation:

- Follow the general guidelines listed in the HIKING section.
- Make an effort to get yourself in condition. Hiking, bicycling, swimming, and rope jumping are excellent conditioners.
- Know your limitations. Check with the trip leader for the required skill level for a designated trip.
- Have ski equipment in good condition.
- Wear warm socks, layered clothing, hat, warm gloves, and windbreaker.
- Carry rain gear, extra socks, extra insulating clothing for breaks, sunglasses, sunscreen, high-energy foods, and water.
- Ski under control, and stay with the group.
- If you are a beginner or unsure of your skills, walk down narrow, dangerous trails.

### **COURTESY**

- Take turns breaking track.
- When approaching another skier headon, move to the right and continue, or wait, whichever is appropriate.
- When skiing uphill, yield to the skier coming downhill.
- When following a skier downhill, yield to the skier in front of you.

- When overtaking skiers, shout the warning "TRACK!" Overtaken skiers should move to the right and give right of way.
- If you fall, fill in your sitzmarks.

## **KAYAKING/CANOEING**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES of COORDINATORS**

Prior to the trip, be familiar with the river, its difficulty and any hazards. Know the put-in and take-out. If the trip is a scouting trip, tell those signing up. Accept sign-ups. You have the very important responsibility of screening out unqualified paddlers.

Consider the expected weather in assessing difficulty. A swim in cold water may have more severe consequences than the same swim in warm weather. If you have doubts or are unfamiliar with the paddler, contact the paddling chairperson or co-chairperson for guidance. Similarly, if someone you turned down tries to "argue" his or her way on the trip, be firm and refer them to the paddling chairperson. A group may be strong enough to accept only a few (or no) marginal paddlers. You might consider setting beforehand an upper river level limit or portaging certain rapids with weak paddlers. Make sure all people signing up have required equipment, flotation, helmets, and wet or dry suits if appropriate. Minors must have written parental permission if unaccompanied by parent.

Help coordinate the formation of car pools if the participants request your assistance. Remind everyone of the optional dinner stop, if any. Advise newcomers of the Club's carpooling policy.

Obtain gauge readings if available. Know the safe level for the river. Cancel or switch to an easier stream if you feel that the group is not strong enough for the scheduled stream or its conditions. Three boats is a minimum number to hold a trip. If weather conditions are severe, cancel trip if necessary. Arrange with your group ahead of time for such contingencies. Arrange for throw ropes and first-aid kits to be spread among participants.

At the put-in, if river level is too high or weather too severe, either cancel trip or switch to an easier stream. If conditions are more difficult than anticipated, and the trip still stands, restrict participants to those qualified and equipped to handle more difficult conditions. Be cautious if temperatures are 40° or below. Cold makes the consequences of any mishap more severe.

Have all participants sign the liability release after they read the participation safety information. This is particularly important for nonmembers, but all should do this. Collect the nonmember fee. Check that all participants have required equipment:

- Properly fitting PFD.
- Helmet for all closed boaters and open boaters on above Class II white water.
- Adequate flotation, secured to the boat for open boats on Class III and above (laced in air bags or foam blocks; NO inner tubes).
- A boat suitable for white water.
- A wet or dry suit if mandated by the coordinator.

**NOTE: There are no exceptions to these requirements.**

If a paddler is unfamiliar with the river, ask if he/she would like someone to guide him/her. Outline with the entire group any particular hazards, portages, etc. You may wish to assign specific stronger paddlers with weaker ones. Keep a tight group and know where everyone is at all times.

Assign lead and sweep boats with strong, responsible paddlers familiar with the river. Consider splitting large groups into subgroups if possible. Each group should be strong enough to stand on its own. Determine pace and lunch stop, and stress the importance of staying between lead and sweep. Each craft should keep the one behind in sight and the one in front at a reasonable distance so as not to crowd. If "players" wish to lag behind, trip co-coordinator should organize a formal split (lead, sweep contingency plan in case of river emergency and need to take out early).

While on the river, make sure safe paddling practices are observed. Pay particular attention to weaker paddlers. Notify participants of hazards prior to reaching them whenever possible. Encourage everyone, particularly those unfamiliar with the river, to stop and scan difficult rapids. Set an example in this regard. Leave the final decision of running or portaging a difficult rapid to the participant. You, as a trip coordinator, should point out hazards, best routes, suggestions for portage, etc. Never say to a person "You can do it" when you really don't know this.

If a problem arises and someone is in trouble, everyone should stop, pull over, and either wait or help effect rescue. Rescue people first, then boats and equipment. If injury is sustained and persons need to leave the river, make sure the contingency plan is effected before continuing down river.

After take-out, confirm that all paddlers have left the river, especially in the case of a split group. Make sure all participants have made arrangements to get home. Expedite shuttle arrangements if necessary. Complete and mail trip reports to Canoe Chairperson. Definitely notify Chairperson of any problems.

The following is a guide to the skills needed to safely paddle rivers of various difficulty.

## **Skill Requirements**

### **A. Class I - Beginner:**

Open Boat - Knows basic white water maneuvering strokes. Can handle canoe competently on both sides, bow and stern, in current. Can paddle a canoe with a partner in a straight line without changing sides, can move the canoe sideways, and can rotate the canoe in a circle.

Closed Boat - Is stable in the boat and knows how to escape if the boat is caught or overturned. Knows basic maneuvering strokes and can handle the boat competently in swift water. Can paddle in a straight line, back paddle, and turn both left and right. Can move boat sideways.

### **B. Class II - Novice:**

Open Boat - Can pick out and negotiate a general route through a simple rapid and can assess immediate obstacles. Can stop forward motion of canoe in current and can set (back-ferry) left and right with partner. Can do simple eddy turns and ferry maneuvers. Knows river procedures and basic safety principles, including self-rescue.

Closed Boat - Can pick out and negotiate a general route through a simple rapid and can assess immediate obstacles. Can stop forward motion in a current and set (back-ferry) right and left. Can do simple eddy turns and ferry maneuvers. Knows river procedures and basic safety principles, including self-rescue.

C. Class III - Intermediate:

Open Boat - Can pick out and negotiate a course through continuous rapids and can handle isolated stretches of heavy water. Can use bow upstream techniques effectively (eddy turns, ferrying, running backwards). Can do all of the above--bow, stern, and single. Can handle canoe with less competent partner in Class 11 water. Knows and applies principles of scouting lining, placing of safety boats and line throwers, and rescuing others.

Closed Boat - Can pick out and negotiate a course through continuous rapids and can handle isolated stretches of heavy water. Can do eddy turns, ferry, and run backwards skillfully in current. Has effective command of high and low braces and the duffel stroke. Has done at least one emergency roll in current. Knows and applies principles of scouting, placing of safety boats and line throwers, and rescuing others.

D. Class IV - Expert:

Open Boat - Can maneuver expertly solo in continuous heavy water through drops. Can stop or render assistance to others even in difficult rapids. Skills are second nature. Is fully competent in applying safety and rescue techniques applicable to all classes of boats.

Closed Boat - Can maneuver expertly through continuous heavy water through drops. Can stop or render assistance to others even in difficult rapids. Has a reliable roll and rolls regularly in Class IV current. Skills are second nature. Can use own boat to push or tow a stricken boat. Is fully competent in applying safety and rescue techniques applicable to all classes of boats.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPANTS**

All white water sport is inherently dangerous. Even mild white water has the potential to injure or kill. By participating in a trip, you accept all risks and release the Wilmington Trail Club from any liability. The following are some of the factors you should consider before participating in any river trip:

- The Wilmington Trail Club desires to conduct its river trips in a safe manner and expects your cooperation. Therefore, when paddling with the WTC, you must follow certain basic safety rules:
  - Wear a personal flotation device (PFD) at all times while on the river.
  - Comply with all reasonable directions of the trip leader.
  - Keep a safe distance from the boat in front of you.
  - Know and respect your limitations and paddle accordingly.
  - Know how to swim.
- By signing up for a trip, you indicate you believe you have the skills needed to paddle the trip safely. You should be familiar with basic river rescue techniques. You should ascertain the possible difficulty of the particular river as well as any possible hazards and probable water/weather conditions. If you find conditions at the put-in more difficult than you prepared for, arrange with the trip leader to drop out.

- You are responsible for suitably outfitting yourself for the trip. You must wear a PFD at all times while on the river. Make sure that your PFD is in good repair, fits properly, and has adequate buoyancy for your weight. Closed boaters must wear helmets at all times and open boaters on water above Class III. Pack a first-aid kit. Bring water and appropriate food. Open canoes must have adequate flotation (air bags Or foam blocks--NO inner tubes) secured to the boat when paddling rivers above Class II. Secure flotation in a manner that cannot entrap you in the event of a capsized.
- Hypothermia (loss of body heat) causes many white water fatalities. You must wear a wet or dry suit in cold weather or on cold water. Wool, pile, etc. are good linings but are not acceptable substitutes for a wet or dry suit. If conditions are more severe than you anticipated, do not go on the trip.
- If you are not familiar with the river, ask your leader about difficult rapids, portages, and other hazards. In such cases, you should ask more experienced paddlers to guide you. If you doubt that you can safely navigate a rapid, portage it. The decision to run any rapids is yours and yours alone.

### **The American Canoe Association Classification System**

**Class 1: Easy.** Fast moving water with riffles and small waves. Few obstructions, all obvious and easily missed with little training. Risk to swimmers is slight; self-rescue is easy.

**Class II: Novice.** Straightforward rapids with wide, clear channels that are evident without scouting. Occasional maneuvering may be required, but rocks and medium-sized waves are easily missed by trained paddlers. Swimmers are seldom injured and group assistance, while helpful, is seldom needed.

**Class III: Intermediate.** Rapids with moderate, irregular waves that may be difficult to avoid and that can swamp an open canoe. Complex maneuvers in fast current and good boat control in tight passages or around ledges are often required, large waves or strainers may be present but are easily avoided. Strong eddies and powerful current effects can be found, particularly on large-volume rivers. Scouting is advisable for inexperienced parties. Injuries while swimming are rare; self-rescue is usually easy but group assistance may be required to avoid long swims.

**Class IV: Advanced.** Intense, powerful but predictable rapids requiring precise boat handling in turbulent water. Depending on the character of the river, it may feature large, unavoidable waves and holes or constricted passages demanding fast maneuvers under pressure. A fast, reliable eddy turn may be needed to initiate maneuvers, scout rapids, or rest. Rapids may require "must" moves above dangerous hazards. Scouting is necessary the first time down. Risk of injury to swimmers is moderate to high, and water conditions may make self-rescue difficult. Group assistance for rescue is often essential but requires practiced skills. A strong eskimo roll is highly recommended.

**Class V: Expert.** Extremely long, obstructed, or very violent rapids that expose a paddler to above average endangerment. Drops may contain large, unavoidable waves and holes or steep, congested chutes with complex, demanding routes. Rapids may continue for long distances between pools, demanding a high level of fitness. What eddies exist may be

small, turbulent, or difficult to reach. At the high end of the scale, several of these factors may be combined. Scouting is mandatory but often difficult. Swims are dangerous, and rescue is difficult even for experts. A very reliable eskimo roll, proper equipment, extensive experience, and practiced rescue skills are essential for survival.

**Class VI: Extreme.** One grade more difficult than Class V. These runs often exemplify the extremes of difficulty, unpredictability, and danger. The consequences of errors are very severe and rescue may be impossible. For teams of experts only, at favorable water levels, after close personal inspection and taking all precautions. This class does not represent drops thought to be unrunnable, but may include rapids that are only occasionally run.

## Wilmington Trail Club CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I

#### Name

The name of this organization shall be Wilmington Trail Club, Incorporated.

### ARTICLE II

#### Purposes

The purposes of the Club shall be to promote and enjoy outdoor activities and to promote and support the protection and restoration of places of natural beauty and interest.

### ARTICLE III

#### Officers

The officers of the Club shall be:

President  
Vice-President  
Secretary  
Treasurer

The officers shall be elected by the membership at the annual meeting in March. They shall take office on May 1 and shall serve for one year. Election shall be by plurality vote of the members present at the annual meeting.

#### Duties

The major duties of the officers are listed below. Additional duties may be assumed or assigned by the President, subject to approval of the Council.

#### *President:*

- a. Preside at general and Council meetings.
- b. Appoint such temporary committees and Club representatives as are deemed necessary by the Council.

- c. Serve as ex officio member of all standing and temporary committees.

***Vice-President:***

- a. Assist the President in all duties.
- b. Assume the President's duties in the absence of the President.

***Secretary:***

- a. Take the minutes of general and Council meetings.
- b. Keep a record of Council policies and changes in policy.
- c. Report important actions of the Council in the Club bulletin.
- d. Collect and distribute Club mail.

***Treasurer:***

- a. Collect and disburse Club funds.
- b. Keep a record of receipts, disbursements, and Club funds.
- c. Prepare reports for the Council and general membership.

## **ARTICLE IV Council**

The governing body of the Club shall be the Council, composed of the Officers, the Chairperson and/or Co-Chairpersons of each standing committee named in Article V, and the past President.

The President shall call meetings of the Council. A meeting shall be called at the request of any three Council members. Council meetings shall be held at least every nine weeks. Nine members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of those present will carry a motion,

The President shall have the power to fill vacancies on the Council occurring during the President's term of office, subject to the approval of at least two of the other officers.

## **ARTICLE V Committees**

The eleven standing committees and their areas of responsibility are listed below. The Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons of each committee shall be appointed by the President, with the approval of the other officers. Other members of each committee shall be selected by the Committee Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons.

***1. Hiking Committee:***

- a. Plan all hiking activities except weekend overnight hiking activities.
- b. Recruit hike leaders.

***2. Paddling Committee:***

- a. Plan all paddling activities including training activities.
- b. Recruit paddling activity leaders.
- c. Take care of the Club's paddling equipment.



**3. *Weekend Activities Committee:***

- a. Plan all weekend backpacking, cross-country skiing, and weekend overnight hiking activities of the Club.
- b. Recruit trip leaders.

**4. *Scouting Committee:***

- a. Assist the Hiking and Weekend Activities Committees by obtaining information about new trails or places to hike or ski.
- b. Maintain a file of maps and other information for trip leaders.

**5. *Trails Committee:***

- Lay out and maintain Club-sponsored trails.

**6. *Environmental Activities Committee:***

- Investigate and recommend actions that the Club can take to promote and support the protection and restoration of places of natural beauty and interest.

**7. *Safety Committee:***

- Investigate and recommend procedures, programs, and publicity to enhance the safety of Club activities.

**8. *Indoor Program Committee:***

- Plan and make arrangements for all indoor programs, including the annual meeting in March.

**9. *Membership Committee:***

- a. Administer all matters pertaining to membership and to subscription to the Club bulletin, subject to Council approval.
- b. Maintain the official membership list.
- c. Arrange to have an annual directory of members and subscribers published and distributed to members and subscribers.

**10. *Bulletin Committee:***

- Edit, compose, and arrange for the publication and distribution of the Club Bulletin.

**11. *Publicity Committee:***

- Plan, prepare, and arrange for Club publicity.

**ARTICLE VI**  
**Meetings of General Membership**

There shall be an annual meeting of the Club in March of each year. A majority vote of the members present at the meeting shall be sufficient to transact any business, unless otherwise provided for herein.

## **ARTICLE VII Membership**

There shall be three kinds of membership in the Club: Active, Inactive, and Honorary.

**Active:** Active Members are those who have formally joined the Club, are in good standing, and will assist in Club work when called upon.

**Inactive:** Members who wish to continue Club affiliation while residing away from the Wilmington area, or those no longer able to meet the requirements of active membership, may become Inactive Members. Inactive memberships shall be subject to approval by the Council.

**Honorary:** Members who have rendered important services, of a distinctive and special nature, to the Club but who are no longer able to participate actively may be elected Honorary Members by the Council.

**Resignation and Removal:** Members who wish to resign may do so by not renewing their memberships. The Council shall have the right to terminate any membership.

**Reinstatement:** Ex-members may renew membership by paying the current year's dues.

## **ARTICLE VIII Dues and Fees**

**Dues:** When changes in annual membership dues are deemed necessary by the Council, such changes shall be recommended by the Council and submitted to the membership for approval at the annual meeting in March. If approved, the changes shall become effective in March of the following year.

The dues of new members who join the Club during the year shall be prorated according to a schedule prepared by the Membership Chairperson. The dues of ex-members who rejoin the Club during the year shall also be prorated, provided that they have been ex-members for at least a full year. Fees paid by subscribers to the Club bulletin shall be credited to membership dues when membership requirements are met.

Annual dues are due and payable to the Treasurer on March 15 of each year.

**Initiation Fee:** An initiation fee to cover the cost of membership materials shall be approved by the Council.

**Nonmember Fees:** Nonmembers participating in Club activities may be charged a fee in excess of that paid by members. The amount of such fee shall be determined by the Council.

## **ARTICLE IX Amendments**

This Constitution can be amended at any general meeting of the Club, provided that the proposed amendment(s) has been published in the Club bulletin that includes the notice of the meeting.

## **Effective Date**

This Constitution as amended shall supersede any previous Constitution.

## **ARTICLE XI Council Policies**

The Council shall adopt such policies as are necessary to implement the purposes and provisions of the Constitution.

## **WTC Council Policy Decisions (To October 1,1997)**

### **FINANCE**

**Approval of Expenditures:** Council reserves the right to approve all expenditures.

Elected officers and committee chairpersons may make minor expenditures and be reimbursed by the Treasurer without seeking prior permission.

The Treasurer is to consult the President for payments over \$500.00 and for questionable and unusual payments.

**Activity Financing:** With the exception of the annual banquet, each activity will be self-supporting.

Advancement of money for activities may be authorized by the President or the Treasurer. Approval by one of these officers will constitute approval by the Council.

**Special Fees:** Nonmembers, except children under 12, will be charged a fee for participation in Club activities. The amount of this fee will be decided by the Council and published in the Bulletin.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

For conservation and economy, participants may voluntarily form car pools and share costs. A fair share of the costs, based on average costs and occupancy, is 5 cents per mile per passenger plus a share of any tolls. If participants request their assistance, trip leaders will help coordinate the forming of car pools. Carpooling is for the convenience of the participants and is not mandatory; participants are not obliged to ride with anyone or to accept riders. Drivers who accept riders should recognize that they may be liable for injuries to their passengers in the event of an accident.

### **LIABILITY, SAFETY, AND INSURANCE**

Members and guests are individually responsible for their actions while engaged in Club activities.

Minors under 18 years going on paddling trips without a responsible adult must present a written release from parent or guardian.

Paddling chairpersons will obtain American Canoe Association insurance for white water training events.

Dogs must be leashed if taken on WTC events. Owners must contact the event leader ahead of time to seek approval (4/16/96).

## **USE OF THE BRANDYWINE TRAIL**

The Brandywine Trail is open only to Wilmington Trail Club members and their guests; its existence should not be published.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

**Procedure:** To become a member, an applicant must complete a membership application, and pay the initiation fee and dues indicated on the application form.

The Membership Chairperson will send the Bulletin Chairperson the new member's name, address, and phone number(s).

Membership questions are subject to review by the Council.

**Mailing Lists:** Mailing lists will not be released without the approval of the Council.

## **NOMINATIONS**

The President, with the approval of the Council, will appoint a Nominating Committee to select candidates to serve as officers for the coming year. The Committee will obtain permission from the candidates whose names are submitted before presenting such names for Council approval.

The names of the candidates for officers will be publicized to members in advance of the annual meeting in March, at which the election will take place.

Nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting, provided permission has been previously obtained from the persons nominated.

## **PROCEDURE FOR TRIPS**

Reservations for weekend trips will be made in the order in which deposits are received. Reservations for nonmembers, except immediate family of members, will not be final until two weeks before the event.

The following guideline for ski trips will be observed: deposits for reservations will be required and are nonrefundable unless a replacement is found. Trips will not be cancelled for lack of appropriate weather conditions; participants will hike instead.

Hike leaders will send the liability releases (sign-up sheets) with the nonmember fees to the Treasurer who will verify the correctness of the nonmember fees.

A notice can be placed in the Bulletin informing participants that if they would like to arrange an alternative meeting place, they should contact the trip leader to make other arrangements.

If the hike leader cannot meet the group at the local meeting place, he/she must arrange for someone to meet the group and direct them to the leader.

The leader has the authority to deny participation in an event if it is not in that person's best interest to participate.

## **THE BULLETIN**

The Bulletin will be issued monthly. The hike write-ups will include mileage but not transportation costs.

The following guidelines pertaining to the publicizing of non-WTC events in the Bulletin are suggested: draw a line between profit (no) and nonprofit (yes) organizations and consider space availability.

There is no limit to the number of Bulletins one may receive if the person continues to pay the established fee for each Bulletin.

WTC will not accept commercial advertising in the Bulletin (4/11/90).

## **THE ANNUAL DIRECTORY**

The Annual Directory will include addresses, phone numbers, and activity interests of members and addresses of subscribers. Names of Council members should be listed.

The Directory will be mailed only to members renewing by May 1.

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

The Club will retain memberships in the Keystone Trails Association, Mason-Dixon Trail System, American Canoe Association, and the American White Water Association. The Club will contribute annually to the Appalachian Trail Conference.

## **AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

The Don Brown hiking trophy will be awarded each year to the first member to finish walking the entire distance of the Brandywine Trail End-to-End hike.

Awards can be given to event participants who achieve a certain number of miles per year. When compiling the reporting total mileage, there should be separate counts for hiking, paddling, and cross-country skiing.

Patches that identify paddling instructors will be awarded to qualifying members.

Various incentives will be used to encourage hike leadership, such as a raffle at the annual meeting and mileage reimbursement for scouting trips. This mileage reimbursement request should be submitted with the trip report.

The club will reimburse drivers for Appalachian & Horseshoe Trail work hike mileage (4/15/97).

### **DUTIES OF COUNCIL MEMBERS (in addition to those listed In the Constitution)**

**President:** At the end of each fiscal year, the President will appoint a qualified member of the Club to (1) examine the financial records of the Club and (2) report to the Council on the condition of these records. The President will serve as the WTC representative to the Keystone Trails Association (KTA).

**Vice-President:** Act as alternative representative to the KTA. He/she will distribute the trip materials to hike leaders when the activity is announced in the Bulletin.

**Secretary:** Keep a file of all Council meeting minutes.

**Hiking Chairperson:** With the aid of the Scouting Chairperson and other necessary assistants, develop new activities and supply leaders with information concerning routes, lodging, and other pertinent details.

**Paddling Chairperson:** The Paddling Committee will have two co-chairpersons, each serving a two-year term; one co-chairperson will be appointed each year. With the aid of other assistants, they will describe paddling activities for the Bulletin, handle administration, maintain paddling section file, and conduct white water training activities.

**Membership Chairperson:** Along with delegated assistants, maintains the Bulletin mailing list and individual mileage records, which are obtained from liability release/sign-up sheets. He/she will maintain other hiking clubs on the Bulletin mailing list as directed by the Council.

**Bulletin Chairperson:** Keep a file of past Bulletins.

**Trails Chairperson:** Responsible for trail maintenance equipment and maps of the Club trails. The Club maintains a section of the Brandywine Trail as well as sections of the AT, Horseshoe Trail, and the nearby Mason-Dixon Trail.

### **TERMS OF APPOINTED OFFICERS**

Like elected officers, appointed officers will serve until May 1. This means that outgoing hiking chairpersons will prepare the May schedule.

### **ADDRESS CHANGES**

Address changes and phone number changes should be sent to the Membership Chairperson for publication in the next Bulletin.