

CONTRA COSTA HILLS CLUB

HIKE SCHEDULER WORK FLOW

Background:

The CCHC Hiking Schedule is published quarterly to provide hike information to club members. The details of CCHC's Thursday and Sunday hikes are communicated to members in two ways: via the CCHC website and via the printed quarterly hike schedule.

In order to produce this schedule two "Hike Schedulers" are utilized, one for Thursday Hikes and the other for Sunday Hikes. In the broadest of terms, it is the responsibility of the Hike Schedulers to solicit volunteers to lead hikes on all available dates, for the schedulers to keep a master schedule of filled and unfilled hikes and to provide a quarterly hiking schedule for publication.

In order to assist current and future Hike Schedulers with these duties, the following "work flow" for the Hike Scheduler job is provided.

Work Flow Details:

The following narrative provides a "suggested" work flow needed to publish a hike schedule. It is recognized that many variables can be used to accomplish this task, and that final decisions as to work flow are in the hands of the current Schedulers.

1. Recruit CCHC members to lead hikes in the upcoming quarter. People who have been with the club for a while will usually volunteer. Newcomers should be encouraged to act as co-leader for an experienced leader. Ask the leaders to tell you the title of their hike and the date. Encourage them to send you the full description in a timely fashion. On all the hikes you attend, announce to fellow hikers the dates for which you still need hikes.
2. Maintain the "Upcoming Hikes" section of the CCHC website in spreadsheet form, showing dates, leaders, and destinations of proposed hikes. Update this section of the website when you receive new information. When a potential hike leader asks for open hike dates, it's a lot easier to refer people to the webpage rather than listing the dates in a return e-mail. The leader can also see what other hike titles have already been submitted and if the hike s/he is considering leading is too similar to a hike already scheduled. Print out a version of this site and circulate it among your fellow hikers during hikes.
3. If you feel it appropriate, set up a dedicated email address for communications about hikes. As soon as you receive titles, dates, and full hike descriptions from leaders, open a Word document, and either copy and paste from e-mails or type these details into a list organized by date. Make sure all the descriptions end up in Arial font and point size 9. Look at previous quarters' printed schedules as a model. Do any editing you feel is necessary and be certain to communicate with hike leaders about proposed changes. Alternatively, you can maintain hike details on the 'Upcoming Hikes' spreadsheet until the time comes to reformat and paste into the quarterly hike schedule.
4. Bear in mind the due dates for the various stages of production of the quarterly printed hike schedule. Generally hike descriptions should be received two months before the quarter to be published, in order for the hike schedule to be published one month before the referenced quarter.

5. In order for the margins of the printed schedule to be correct, the text is copied and pasted into a Master Schedule template, as agreed to by the two Schedulers..
6. When it comes time to combine Thursday and Sunday hike descriptions, either Thursday hike scheduler or the Sunday hike scheduler should take the lead. She/he should receive hike descriptions from the other scheduler and copy and paste them in to the Master Schedule template to create the combined schedule.
7. Always save and title the file with the year and months of the schedule plus the current date, i.e., 2017JUL-AUG-SEP. Keep the Master Schedule clean and save it to use next quarter.
8. Once the header, the hike descriptions, and the footer have been copied into the Master Schedule template, check to see how many pages your document is. It needs to be no longer than four pages. (Your finished document will end up being printed out in two columns on both sides of a single sheet of paper with the page setup in landscape.)
9. The goal of the scheduler is for hike descriptions to fit neatly on each side of the 8.5x11 sheet of paper. Ideally none of the hike descriptions should be divided between one column and the next. Modify hike descriptions in a variety of ways to make the contents fit neatly on a page. Avoid splitting any descriptions at the page break. Make sure everything fits into four pages. You have to use your judgment on whether or not a description should be moved down to the next page or if you can modify the current page enough to fit the last description on the current page. This will make sense once you see what you are working with. Each quarter is different and yet the same.

Tips for modifying the descriptions to make them fit into four pages:

If the first page is too long, change the header (Selected Guidelines, etc.) to a smaller point size (from 9 to 8). Then look for descriptions that can easily be shortened and/or use abbreviations. Next look at the second page and do the same. If there is just one word on a line, shorten something to save the line. You can also use 8 point for the footer (about membership) if necessary for space. And if close space wise, change the line between descriptions to 8 point. Try to keep the LEADERS 'line' to one line by putting cell numbers on the line just prior in the body, etc. or change point size from 9 to 8.

10. Once you have checked the resulting four-page document, have the other Scheduler look it over.
11. Once it looks good to both of you, send the document to the Editor for review, currently, Noël Siver, noelsiver2@yahoo.co.uk. Noël will return it with corrections or suggestions, if she has any.
12. **Optional**, ask hike leaders to confirm that their final (possibly modified) descriptions suit them. Do this as a group email IF there is time for confirmation. It all depends on how long everything takes. IF you are running behind schedule, you can skip it. The Thursday scheduler can send to just Thursday leaders and the Sunday scheduler to Sunday leaders, or one of you can send to all the hike leaders, but send the entire completed document so you aren't 'playing' with it after editing.

NOTE: One quarter everyone agrees and then the next time several leaders have changes. You can ask yourself if by sending it out, does it lend itself to a second chance and cause changes. It's up to the two schedulers to decide.

SAMPLE EMAIL ASKING FOR LEADERS TO CONFIRM THEIR DESCRIPTIONS:

Subject: CC Hills Club: 3Q17 Schedule - Please Confirm Hike Description

Hello hike leaders,

The 3Q17 schedule has been combined (Thursday & Sunday hikes) and been edited/reviewed. Due to space limitations, some hike descriptions had to be shortened or words abbreviated, etc. I'm sorry that this has to be done since all of your hike descriptions are good and make the hikes very inviting.

Leaders (only), would you please confirm that your hike description(s) is (are) accurate and ready for print? ***Please reply to sender only.*** Thank you for taking this extra step. This will avoid some corrections on the website. Thank you for leading hikes. You are great and that is what makes our club especially great.

13. Once everyone is satisfied that the schedule looks 'perfect,' send the final copy to the Printer, currently, Fred Mock fredmock@sbcglobal.net and to the Email Coordinator for distribution, currently Silvia Akinaga sakinec@aol.com.

Revision 6/2019