

Navigation Weekend – Risk Assessment

This Risk Assessment is prepared as a proactive safety measure in preparation for a navigation weekend, a 2 day walk in the Wollangambe Wilderness to learn map and compass skills.

Overview

Any hiking trip in a wilderness area incurs some risk. All participants in the 2 day navigation weekend do so voluntarily and accept all risks and will not hold the leader responsible or liable for any damages arising from this activity.

The below risks have been identified by the leader and are disclosed to each participant to assist them in their voluntary decision to attend the trip notwithstanding the risks, either stated or not stated in this document.

Snake Bite

Snakes are known to inhabit the area, though sightings are rare. The most common species of snake in the area are Red Bellied Black Snakes and Tigersnakes, though Brown Snakes, Death Adders and Copperhead snakes are also known to exist in the area. Snakes are not aggressive if not disturbed or provoked.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	UNLIKELY	RARE
Severity	SEVERE	HIGH

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- Compression bandage must be carried by all participants.
- Safety beacon carried to enable emergency evacuation.
- Avoid disturbing, provoking or cornering a snake in any way.

Bushfire

Bushfires are a part of the ecosystem in the area that we will be visiting. Recent wildfires in this area have been in October 2013 and December 2019.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	UNLIKELY	RARE
Severity	SEVERE	HIGH

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- RFS website will be checked prior to departure.
- Adhere to any fire bans.
- At the first sign of approaching fire, the area will be evacuated and trip terminated.

Unfenced Cliffs and Precipices

There are many small to medium sized cliffs, escarpments and precipices in the area, none of which are fenced.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	UNLIKELY	RARE
Severity	SEVERE	SEVERE

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- Keep well back from the edge of cliffs and precipices.

Steep and Unstable Ground, Rockfall/Landslide

Some of the terrain we will walk through is steep, loose and unstable. There is the risk of dislodging rocks or other debris, endangering yourself or others. There is the risk of slipping or falling, spraining an ankle or some other injury. Falling trees, falling rocks etc may happen through natural causes at any time. Some rock formations are delicate and fragile and may break unexpectedly if walked upon.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	MODERATE	UNLIKELY
Severity	MODERATE	MODERATE

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- Avoid unstable ground wherever possible
- Stay together, work as a team, and communicate when travelling over dangerous ground, do not walk beneath another member of the group when negotiating unstable ground.
- Walking or climbing on delicate and fragile sandstone formations is expressly disallowed at all times except when consent and permission of the trip leader is given.

Exposure to the Elements

Being a wilderness area, exposure to the elements is possible, and if not suitably managed can lead to exposure related conditions such as dehydration, heat stress, heat exhaustion, or hypothermia.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	MODERATE	LOW
Severity	HIGH	MODERATE

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- Gear list provided to all participants includes necessary clothing and shelter to protect against the elements.
- Weather outlook will be checked prior to departure and any necessary adjustments to the gear list will be made to suit the prevailing conditions.
- Time of year chosen for the trip is when conditions are typically milder than in the heat of summer or middle of winter.
- Drinking water will be carried at all times and good water is available en route.
- The camp site is in a sheltered location that is not exposed to the elements.

Burns

The use of campfires and stoves presents the risk of burns.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	LIKELY	MODERATE
Severity	MODERATE	LOW

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- Campfires only allowed in existing fireplaces.
- Campfires are not lit in summer, during fire bans, or at times of hot weather or extreme fire danger.
- Fuel stoves are preferred over campfires for cooking.
- Campfires are only ever used in cold or wet weather and only when safe.
- Campfires are never lit in river beds or in the presence of river rocks as these have been known to explode.
- If lit, campfires are kept small, are lit and managed only by the leader, are contained, and are utterly extinguished before leaving camp.

Trips and Falls

There are many natural objects, even on a path or trail, that can give rise to trips or falls. Eg: tree roots, sticks, rocks, tree stumps, uneven ground. A trip or fall can result in injury, even on level ground.

	Without Mitigation	With Mitigation
Likelihood	MODERATE	MODERATE
Severity	MODERATE	MODERATE

Measures to Mitigate this Risk

- Care taken at all times when walking.
- Keep an eye out for hazards when walking.
- Warn others of hazards when you see them.

Acknowledgement

I have read the risk assessment on this and the preceding 2 pages and understand and accept the risks.

Signature

Date

Print your name