



# SIERRA CLUB

## Boot Up!

for the Dallas Sierra Club's

## Big Bend National Park Bus Trip

**Wednesday Evening, February 27 – Monday Morning, March 4, 2019**

Bus Trip Leader: Mark Stein, [Mark@SteinPlanning.com](mailto:Mark@SteinPlanning.com), 214-526-3733

You'll need to schedule two days of vacation, but we think you'll find it well worth that to visit this amazing place. Sign up **NOW!** Last year's Big Bend trip sold out in early January.

**Area Description:** Big Bend National Park is in southwest Texas, on the Mexican border, in a bend of the Rio Grande River that gives the park its name. The Park preserves a vast section of the Chihuahuan Desert larger than Rhode Island, with more than 1,100 square miles. Elevations range from a high of 7,825 feet at Emory Peak in the Chisos Mountains, to a low of 1,680 feet on the Rio Grande. There are mountain ranges within the Park, but most of the land lies at elevations between 3,000 feet and 4,000 feet. This high desert, which seems at first featureless against the backdrop of the mountains, has been carved by wind and water into a varied landscape of mesas, spires, pour-offs and drainages.



The most dominant of the Park's mountain ranges is the Chisos Mountains, which includes the highest peaks at the center of Big Bend. The Basin, which is a bowl-shaped valley ringed by mountains, is the center of activity in the Chisos, and the starting point for three of this year's hike options. The South Rim of the Chisos offers spectacular views of the desert 2,000 feet below its edge. Trails descend from the Chisos high country, displaying the succession of plant life at the lower elevations. Circling below the South Rim is the Dodson Trail, which traverses the foothills of the Chisos, passing the remains of several ranch outposts dating back to the 1800's. The Rio Grande River has carved three deep canyons along the Park's southern boundary: Santa Elena, Mariscal and Boquillas. Santa Elena Canyon, at the western end of the park, is formed by the river's penetration of the Mesa De Anguila.

Climate and vegetation vary with elevations in the Park. Remnants of once-larger forests of ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, quaking aspens, maples and oaks are found at the higher elevations above 6,000 feet. Life zones change quickly as elevations decrease, with the sparse forests changing first to Junipers, and then to desert plant communities with agaves, yucca, sotol, ocotillo, mesquite, creosote and, of course, cactus. Fauna within the park include mountain lions, coyotes, fox, bobcat, bear, peccaries (javelina), mule deer, white tail deer, as well as 55 species of reptiles and 400 species of birds. For more information about Big Bend National Park, visit <http://www.nps.gov/bibe>

**Departure:** Our chartered bus departs at **9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 27, 2019** from the Walmart store parking lot located on the southwest corner of LBJ Expressway (I-635) and Midway Road. Look for the bus in the parking lot on the west end of the Walmart, between the Walmart store and the Sam's Club store. Plan to arrive at the bus by 8:30 p.m. to load your gear and settle in. The bus will not wait for late arrivals. Unlike past years when we've used a sleeper bus, our bus will have 56 seats. The trip is limited to 28 passengers, with two seats for each person to make sleeping on the bus as comfortable as possible. If you leave your car at Walmart,

hide valuables from view. The Sierra Club, its leaders and Walmart are not responsible for the security of your car or its contents.

**Return:** This year's schedule allows a full day for hiking and exploration on Sunday, leaving the park in late afternoon. There will be a dinner stop at a restaurant in Fort Stockton, Texas. We should arrive at the Walmart parking lot **between 4:30 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. on Monday, March 4.**

**WARNING: IF YOU ARE NOT A UNITED STATES CITIZEN** you must bring appropriate documents proving legal residency. The bus will go through at least one U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement border patrol checkpoint.

**Cost: The trip cost is \$295. We recommend sending your reservation as soon as possible because this trip has sold out very quickly in recent years.** Also, the Club has a deadline to prepay the bus cost and we need to know early that there will be enough participants to cover transportation costs. You will need extra cash for snacks, breakfast when you arrive in the park (unless you bring your own), dinner in Fort Stockton on the return trip, and for snacks or souvenirs you may want. Cash is preferred over credit cards; it speeds up payment at restaurants. Trip fees collected in excess of actual trip expenses go to pay Dallas Sierra Club expenses such as leader training and conservation work.

**How to Sign Up:** After carefully reading this complete trip write up, the trip descriptions, cautions and restrictions:

1. Complete the **Trip Participant Form** listing your first and second trip preferences. You will be contacted if, for some reason, your preferences can't be accommodated.
2. Complete the **Medical Information form**. Be sure to list any medical data such as drug allergies, medical conditions, etc., which could affect medical treatment in case of an accident or illness. **Participants agree to notify the Bus Trip Leader before the trip date if there are any changes to the information provided on their Medical Information Form.**
3. Read and sign the **Sierra Club Release of Liability**. You will not be allowed to participate on this trip unless you sign the liability release.
4. **Send the required forms and payment (check or money order payable to "Dallas Sierra Club") to Ande Johnston**, Trip Registration Coordinator, **3701 Turtle Creek Blvd., 11G, Dallas, TX 75219-5534**. You may contact Ande at [AAHinds62@gmail.com](mailto:AAHinds62@gmail.com) or call her at **214-914-3590**. You are not signed up for the trip until your check and all three forms are received and you have been accepted by the trip leaders. Forms must be mailed or hand-delivered and include original signatures. No copies, faxes or scans of the release of liability will be acceptable. (Our legal advisors are sticklers.) Please print the forms single-sided and don't alter, reduce or staple.

**Trip Acceptance / Questions:** If you have a question about whether your registration has been received or whether space on a preferred trip option is available, contact **Ande Johnston** at the address in the previous paragraph. If you have a question after reading this complete trip description about a particular hike option or preparation for the trip, contact the appropriate trip leader or Bus Trip Leader, **Mark Stein**, [Mark@SteinPlanning.com](mailto:Mark@SteinPlanning.com), **214-526-3733**. Trip leaders reserve the right to determine whether a particular trip is suitable for a prospective participant, based on experience, health, equipment or other factors. If the trip is deemed not suitable for the prospective participant, the trip fee will be refunded in full.

**Wait List:** If no space on the trip is available when a complete registration is received, the Trip Registration Coordinator will advise you. At your option, we will retain your check, depositing it if and when a place becomes available, or shred your check and forms. Wait list priority goes to the registrant with the earliest complete registration. There are typically some cancellations in the month before trip departure.

**Cancellation Policy:** Notify the bus trip coordinator if you must cancel. There is a \$60 fee for cancellations through January 31, 2019. There will be **no refunds for cancellations after January 31**. See the Travel Insurance paragraph below. On rare occasions the Dallas Sierra Club must cancel or change trips. If this occurs, our responsibility is limited to a refund of any trip fees you have already paid. The Dallas Sierra Club is not responsible for airfares or other payments or costs you incur that are a consequence of a trip cancellation or change.

**Travel Insurance:** We suggest travel insurance to cover non-refundable expenses. Travel insurance may also cover trip-related evacuation and medical expenses. The national Sierra Club recommends Travelex for travel insurance: <http://www.travelexinsurance.com/>. Optional coverage for this trip should cost less than \$50, depending on age.

**Transportation and Seat Assignments:** We ride in a chartered bus with professional drivers. The bus has a bathroom. Seat assignments are based on the order that forms (including checks) are received. The sooner your check is received, the better chance you'll get your seating preference. Please indicate your seating preference – front or back of bus – on your Participant Preference Form and note the name of anyone you want to sit near you on the bus.

**Bus Survival:** The bus may be cool at night, so bring a blanket or light sleeping bag. You may find it easier to sleep if you also bring earplugs and a sleep mask. Have a jacket available on the bus no matter how warm or dry it is when we leave Dallas. It is often near freezing when we arrive in the park. Bottled water will be provided on the bus for the outbound bus trip. You are encouraged to stay well hydrated. In addition to water, beer and soda will be provided on the return trip.

**Carry-ons:** Space is limited on the bus, although less so than on the old sleeper bus. Please limit carry-ons to what will fit in or under your seats or in the small overhead racks. There's ample room for backpacks in the cargo holds beneath the bus floor.

**For your safety and as a courtesy to your fellow bus passengers:**

- No glass containers are allowed on the bus as they can break, causing a hazard and mess.
- No perfume or cologne – some people are highly sensitive to the scent.
- Smoking is not allowed in the bus or around the bus.
- Electronic, musical and game devices may be used on the bus only with earphones or muted so they cannot be heard by those around you.
- Please try to make any necessary calls during our rest stops. Make cell phone calls on the bus only when absolutely necessary. Phones must be turned off during quiet hours on the bus.
- If you have questions or requests during the trip please chat with the bus leader or a trip leader. We want the driver to concentrate on the drive and not deal with possible conflicting information or instructions.

**Minors:** Minors may only participate when accompanied by their legal guardian at all times.

**CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.** (California has a law called the California "Seller of Travel" Law. Because the Sierra Club is a California non-profit corporation and we sell travel, we are required to post this notice.)

## TRIP OPTION DESCRIPTIONS

Please read the following trip descriptions carefully before selecting preferences. Options are numbered in order of probable difficulty, with trip 1 arguably the least strenuous and trip 4 more strenuous. Trips 2 and 3 have less than a mile of backpacking into camp and are otherwise day hiking only, but the day hike miles on two days are 8 or 9 and the full hike from your camp to South Rim and back is 14 miles. See the suggestion about a pre-trip hike around White Rock Lake on page 5. Contact a trip leader if you have questions. The number of participants on each trip is limited. Early registrants will get priority of preferences.

**Sunday excursion to Santa Elena Canyon and more (trips 1, 2 and 3).** Three trips will board the bus with all



their gear at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center Sunday for a 9:00 a.m. bus departure to Santa Elena Canyon. The bus will not return to the Chisos Basin. Expect a full day of sightseeing and about 6 miles of relatively easy day hiking on trails not ordinarily included in our annual Big Bend outings. Start with a 1.6-mile round-trip hike into deep Santa Elena Canyon of the Rio Grande. Next comes a stop at the Castolon Visitor Center, where you can eat lunch on picnic

tables and visit the small museum. Time permitting, we'll make a stop of less than an hour for a short hike into steep-walled Tuff Canyon, carved by Blue Creek in cooled volcanic ash. A third hike will be a choice of an easy 4.8-mile round-trip hike to The Chimneys (a landmark with petroglyphs and artifacts) or a 4-mile round-trip to Mule Ears Spring (an oasis with cool, clear water, moss and tiny fish).

**All trip itineraries are subject to change. The availability of water, changing weather, limited availability of required permits, participant injury or sickness, and the leader's assessment of the group's strength may affect the trip. The leaders reserve the right to make changes to the trip itineraries as necessary.**

**Trip 1: Backpacking and day hiking in the Chisos Mountains, 11 mi. backpacking, 15 mi. day hiking**

**Thursday:** After breakfast at the lodge, backpack 4 to 5 miles to a camp in the Chisos Mountains via the Laguna or Pinnacles Trail. Exact camp locations and trails depend on availability on the morning of our arrival. Obtain water from Boot Spring or Boot Creek, **Friday:** Day hike to the South Rim, 5+/- miles. Take in the spectacular view of the Sierra Quemada beneath the rim, the Rio Grande and the mountains in Mexico. Anticipate a move to another campsite in the Chisos Mountains today. **Saturday:** Hike to Emory Peak, highest point in the Park, for a view of Santa Elena Canyon to the southwest, where the Rio Grande abruptly emerges from its deep walls onto the flatland by Terlingua Creek. Backpack to a new campsite at Juniper Flats or Boulder Meadow, not far from the Chisos Mountains Lodge via the Pinnacles Trail. The day will have 2 miles of day hiking round-trip to Emory Peak and 3 to 5 miles of backpacking. **Sunday:** Backpack 1 mile in the early morning to the Chisos Basin to board the 9:00 bus for Santa Elena Canyon and a day of multiple short hikes.

**Leader: Jake Trousdale, [Jake.Trousdale@gmail.com](mailto:Jake.Trousdale@gmail.com), 214-244-4887**

**Trip 2: Day hikes to Lost Mine, Hot Springs and South Rim, 1 mi. backpacking, 36 mi. day hiking**

**Thursday:** After breakfast at the lodge, set a three-night base camp at the Chisos Basin Campground, elevation 5,100 feet and 0.6 mile from the bus. The campground has potable water, flush toilets, tables, grills and bear boxes. After setting camp, hike through pinon pines, oaks and junipers on the Lost Mine Trail, 8.4 miles round-trip from camp and an elevation gain of 1,600 feet. View Juniper Canyon, the East Rim and Mexico's Sierra del Carmen from the trail. **Friday:** Bus 45 minutes to Rio Grande Village on the east side of the park. Hike the Rio Grande canyon rim from the old fields and groves at Daniels Ranch to Langford Hot Springs to soak in 105-degree water by the Rio Grande. Explore the old motel and post office built by J. O. Langford in the 1900s for his health spa. Eat lunch from your day pack. Return to the bus after your 6-mile round-trip hike and 600 feet of altitude gain/loss. Ride 5 minutes to the RGV store for a cold drink. Walk 0.7 mile to the RGV Nature Trail, a 0.75-mile loop through diverse ecosystems and views of the Ojo Caliente and Boquillas communities on the Mexican side of the river. Return to the bus, collect Trip 3 and return to your Chisos Basin campsite by approximately 5:00. **Saturday:** Hike the Laguna Trail to the South Rim, then on to Boot Spring and home to camp via the Pinnacles Trail. This is perhaps the most classic hike in all Texas, worth all 14 miles. **Sunday:** Pack up camp and hike 0.6 mile to the bus at the Chisos Basin Visitor Center for the 9:00 departure with trips 1 and 3 for Santa Elena Canyon and a day of multiple short hikes.

**Leader: Lynn Marple, [lmrmarple@gmail.com](mailto:lmrmarple@gmail.com), 972-644-7266**

**Trip 3: Day hikes to Hot Springs, Ore Terminal and South Rim, 2 mi. backpacking, 37 mi. day hiking**

**Thursday:** Re-board the bus after breakfast for Rio Grande Village Campground. Backpack 0.2 mile to reserved sites in the campground, pitch tents and stow gear not needed for a day hike to Langford Hot Springs, then walk 0.7 mile to the RGV store and a 5-minute ride through Daniels Ranch to the Hot Springs Canyon Rim Trailhead. Hike 2.5 miles to Langford Hot Springs and a soak in the warm water beside the Rio Grande. Continue upriver on the trail 0.5 mile to the motel and post office buildings, eat lunch and return 4.5 miles to your camp and a 0.75-mile loop hike on the RGV Nature Trail to view a wetland created by a beaver dam and the communities of Ojo Caliente and Boquillas across the river. **Friday:** Break camp and load gear onto the bus at 10:00 for a short ride and a hike into Boquillas Canyon. The bus will drop us at another trailhead by



11:30 for a 4-mile out-an-back hike to the Ore Terminal where buckets of silver, zinc and lead ore were delivered by cables from a mine in Mexico for shipment north. Meet the bus at 4:00 for a ride to the Chisos Basin group campsite, your new base for two nights. **Saturday:** Today's your day for the loop hike to South Rim, maybe the quintessential hike in all Texas. Hike clockwise, up the Pinnacles Trail, down the Laguna Trail. The Chisos Basin is forested country and the view from the South Rim is superb. This hike's worth all 14 miles. **Sunday:** Today's hikes are relatively short and easy, about six miles and different from what you've seen on previous days. Pack all your gear and meet the bus at 9:00 by the Chisos Basin Visitor Center to head for Santa Elena Canyon.

**Leader: Mark Stein, [Mark@SteinPlanning.com](mailto:Mark@SteinPlanning.com), 214-526-3733**



**Trip 4: Backpacking from the Chisos Basin to Mule Ears Overlook, 31 mi. backpacking**

This trip follows the classic "Outer Mountain Loop" route for 2½ days, then turns south on the Smoky Creek Trail and a short-cut variant of it. It's a great backpacking adventure that few people know! Gaiters are recommended for the short off-trail segments on Sunday. Participants should be prepared to carry at least four liters of water each morning. **Thursday:** Hike into the Chisos Mountains, collecting water at Boot Spring or Boot Creek. Leave the Chisos Mountains via the Juniper Canyon Trail, camping short of Upper Juniper Spring. 8 miles, 2,000+' elevation gain, 1,700' loss. **Friday:**

Gradually descend to the Dodson Trail, turning right (west) and beyond the remains of the Dodson house to camp at Fresno Creek, a reliable water source. Your camp is 2,500 feet below the South Rim that looms to the north. 9 miles, 1,900' elevation loss, 700' of gain. **Saturday:** Head west on the Dodson Trail, over hills to a left (south) turn at the Smoky Creek Trail. The Smoky Creek Trail alternates between washes, canyons and higher ground. About 6 miles into the day, trip 4 leaves the Smoky Creek Trail for an unnamed trail following Smoky Creek tributary washes where you'll likely find water. Approximately two miles beyond the turn, have a look at the 30-foot pour-off, then backtrack upstream to make camp in a dry wash. 8 miles, 800' elevation gain, 1,800' loss. **Sunday:** Returning to the pour-off, follow the ledge on its left, slightly uphill, then carefully down to the wash again and continue downstream. After Mule Ears Peak comes into view, exit the wash right to intercept the Mule Ears Spring Trail, pausing to enjoy this tiny oasis before the final two miles to the bus at Mule Ears Overlook. 6 miles, 800' elevation loss, 400' gain.

**Leader: Pat Johnston, [PatM.Johnston@hotmail.com](mailto:PatM.Johnston@hotmail.com), 214-450-1342**

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

**Experience and Conditioning:** Participants on all trips should have some backpacking experience and they should be in good physical condition. While the elevations in the park are moderate, the trails are rocky and rugged in places and some of the trips will be covering a lot of miles. Please contact the bus leader or one of the trip leaders if you have any question about your experience or physical abilities. As a rule of thumb, if you can walk around White Rock Lake (9 miles) with a light pack in under 3 1/2 hours (excluding reasonable breaks) in cool weather without being overly taxed, you should be in adequate shape for at least trips 1, 2 and 3. A much better test of your conditioning is to walk around White Rock Lake (or the equivalent) two or three days in a row. Trip 4 is harder and more remote, requiring a greater level of experience, conditioning and confidence in your abilities.

**Weather:** Normal late-February temperatures range from 65 to 75 degrees during the day and 35 to 45 degrees at night. February and March are the driest months in the park, so you can usually expect no rain. Past trips have experienced temperatures as low as 16 degrees and as high of 90+ degrees, rain and snow. You should pack clothing for the full range of possibilities. You can leave what you won't need on the bus, based on the forecast that we get in the park.

**Gear:** Each person is responsible for his or her own equipment and food. The following list includes equipment considered mandatory:

**Clothing:** Long pants (even if the weather is warm) for cactus protection; hat and long-sleeve shirt with collar for sun protection; rain jacket and pants (a poncho is not acceptable as it will be in shreds after only a short

amount of hiking in Big Bend); jacket; long underwear and/or sweaters good in combination down to 25 degrees; well broken-in hiking boots; outer and inner socks. Optional: Short pants, short sleeve shirt (T-shirt). These may require an extra supply of sunscreen and bandages.

**Equipment:** Tent and ground cloth. (Small is good. Some campsites are small and will accommodate fewer tents than usual.) Sleeping bag rated to 20 degrees; ground pad; backpack with hip belt (trips 1,2,3,4); daypack (trips 1,2,3); water containers and water treatment tablets (or filter); headlight; whistle, sunscreen; first-aid kit (including stuff for blisters); trowel, toilet paper and zip lock bags for used toilet paper (Big Bend required that you pack out your used toilet paper); garbage bag; personal items. A note about ground pads: While inflatable ground pads, such as Therm-a-Rest or NeoAir, are very comfortable, they must be used very carefully in Big Bend. Thorns and stickers are everywhere. Your pad will be at great risk for puncture if carried lashed to the outside of your pack or if you don't police your tent site carefully. Bring your repair kit or consider using a foam pad such as a RidgeRest or a Z-Rest. Bring a backpacking stove with fuel; pot and matches for cooking hot meals. Participants MAY NOT bring ice chests.

**Note about daypacks:** All participants are required to carry the 10+ essentials for safe hiking, whether backpacking or day hiking. If your trip includes day hikes, plan on using your backpack or bring a daypack sufficient to carry lunch, 2 liters of water, all your essentials and any personal items you may need.

**Food:** Bring three breakfasts (assuming you'll eat Thursday breakfast at the Lodge restaurant), four lunches, three dinners, and snacks. No ice chests, please. Avoid meals that require excessive water for clean-up. On some trips, you might supplement food from home with a sandwich or snack from the small stores near the park's Visitor Centers or the Chisos Mountains Lodge restaurant. The Lodge and Chisos Basin store are 0.6 mile from the Chisos Basin group campsite.

**Water:** Water is scarce in the park but in years with normal rainfall, it's usually available at the locations noted in the trip descriptions that follow. You need leak-free containers to carry water in the quantities specified for the trip that you are on. **Don't fill your water containers in Dallas.** They could leak in route and get someone's equipment wet. You can fill your containers at a tap in the park after Thursday breakfast. Water you collect from natural sources must be treated with tablets, filtration or boiling before drinking. There are no guarantees that we'll find water at all expected sources. Your trip leader will give you additional information about water.

**Packing and Preparation:** Be careful with the optional items - weight adds up quickly and the possible need to carry sufficient water will occupy a significant portion of your pack's capacity. Remember, water weighs 8 pounds per gallon.

**Maps:** If you would like to get your own map of the area (encouraged), one of the best is the National Geographic Trails Illustrated Big Bend National Park map number 225 which is usually available at REI, One Map Place and similar stores, and on-line at Amazon.com and other outlets. A National Park Service map of the Big Bend may be viewed at <http://www.nps.gov/bibe>.

## **MORE RULES AND CAUTIONS**

**Leave No Trace:** Low or no impact wilderness ethics are expected of all participants. All trash must be packed out; human waste buried, and used toilet paper packed out (so bring zip-lock bags for this purpose). For numerous reasons, we don't build campfires, so bring a small camp stove if you plan hot meals. Smoking, pets, radios and firearms are not allowed.

**Medical:** Although our trip leaders have completed wilderness first aid training, they are not medical professionals. All participants are encouraged to have first aid supplies and a basic knowledge of how to deal with medical emergencies. If you have medical training, let the leader know so that he or she can use your skill in an emergency. Inform the leaders if you have a medical condition that could require special treatment in an emergency, such as controlled diabetes, heart problems, allergic reactions, etc. Carry any necessary medications for these conditions on your person at all times and let the leader know where you store them. If you are extremely allergic to bee stings, poison ivy or anything else that we are likely to encounter, ask your doctor if you should carry an antidote kit. If you are blind without your glasses, bring a spare. We will be hiking in a wilderness area, where rescue is difficult and time-consuming. The nearest hospital is over 100 miles away. Medical help could be days in arriving. Air evacuations are extremely expensive, and the injured party is responsible for payment of costs. **If you have a health condition that could require immediate medical treatment, you should not go on this trip.**

**Group / Safety:** It is important for group safety to follow the leaders' directions. By failing to obey the leader's instructions, you assume the risks of any consequences that result. The group should stay together to minimize the chance of someone getting lost, or an injured person going unaided. Sierra Club prohibits individuals from leaving the led group (the leader and those participants with the leader) for separate day hiking or other activity. If you leave the group, you do so at your own risk. Participants who leave the led group against leader advice will be asked to sign out of the trip and are no longer part of the trip. Don't expect the group or the leader to do more than notify the authorities if you do not return. The leader's responsibility is to those who are following him or her, not to those who choose to follow a different route and put themselves at risk. Note that if you leave the group and miss the scheduled bus pick-up at the trailhead, the bus will not wait and you will be responsible for getting your own transportation home.

If you want to leave the led group to do separate day hiking, **you do so at your own risk**. If you choose to take that risk, please don't hike alone. Most deaths in the wilderness occur when a solo hiker becomes incapacitated, and dies of hypothermia or dehydration before being found. If you do leave the led group, you should hike in parties of at least three people, and tell the leader your planned route and time of return. If someone is injured while away from the led group, leave one person and all of the party's food and warm clothing with the injured person, and send all of the others for help, either at the trailhead or at the trip's base camp.

If you get lost, stop and wait to be found; don't wander aimlessly. **When day hiking, even for short trips, bring a jacket, raingear, warm hat, space blanket or space bag, food, water, map, compass, flashlight, first-aid kit, matches and whistle.** If you twist an ankle or get lost, these essentials could save your life if you end up spending the night away from camp. Potential nighttime lows in the 20's make hypothermia a real threat.

Leaders are not allowed to search for missing persons at night. They may not put others in the group at risk to look for a lost participant. When leaving camp even for a moment (to go to the bathroom), especially at night, be careful to not get disoriented and lose your way back. This could create a life-threatening situation if the weather is bad or the person is not dressed for the cold.

The biggest single danger on this trip is falling off ledges due to clumsiness, inattention or loose and unstable rock. Do not get too close to cliff edges, such as at the South Rim, on Emory Peak, or at the Windows Overlook.

Sunburn is a potential problem. Remember, this is a desert environment with little shade; wear a long sleeve shirt, long pants, a wide-brimmed hat and bandana, and use sunscreen.

**Big Bend Rules:** The following regulations apply to this trip and must be followed:

- No ground fires. You must use a backpacking stove for all cooking.
- Pack out all litter. Trash should be carried back to Dallas. Big Bend has very limited solid waste disposal facilities.
- Disturbing or collecting any natural or historical feature or object is prohibited.
- Do not bathe, swim, wash in or contaminate water sources.
- Bury human waste at least 6 inches deep well away from camp or water sources. **Big Bend National Park requires that you carry out all toilet paper.** Carry extra Ziploc bags for your used TP.
- Hammocks are not allowed.

**Bears:** Big Bend has bears! Bear canisters will eventually be required for backcountry use. The Park provides metal bear boxes at selected campsites. The following are Park Service requirements:

- Bring food that doesn't have strong aromas. Consider foods that require no cooking, as those generate fewer dirty dishes and wastewater.
- Store all food, beverages, trash and toiletries inside the food storage box provided at your campsite if there is one. Do not store these items in your tent.
- Prepare meals away from your sleeping area.
- Keep your campsite clean. Keep scraps in the storage box with your trash and unused food.
- Do not pour oils or grease used in cooking onto the ground. Carry out these residuals once they have congealed. Take care not to spill liquids when cooking.
- Disperse cooking water over a wide area, away from camp.
- Carry out all garbage, leftover food, and waste cooking oils and grease. **Do not bury your trash.**

Park rangers take food storage requirements seriously. A few years ago, a bus trip participant was fined \$50 for improper food storage.

Should you encounter a bear or mountain lion, group together, make lots of noise, waive your arms, and look mean. Don't run. Don't turn your back to a mountain lion – keep facing it directly. Give the animal an escape route if you have accidentally cornered it. If you are between a bear and her cubs, slowly move away from both while doing all of the above.

The Dallas Sierra Club has run trips such as those described above for over 35 years without any serious injuries. If you are in reasonably good physical condition, have the necessary experience and skills, and select a trip matching your abilities (and of course, don't do anything stupid), these trips are reasonably safe. The above cautions and disclosures of risk are intended to give you the information necessary to make an informed decision on whether you should participate in any of these trips. Hopefully, they will also encourage those who do participate to be safe and careful; so we can all have a good time.

**Join us for fun and relaxation in Big Bend National Park by signing up TODAY!**





Please fill in this form as accurately as possible. It is essential for leaders to evaluate individual and group health needs as part of trip planning, and for use during emergencies. After reviewing this form, the leader may contact you to discuss whether the trip will be safe and enjoyable for you considering your medical history.

We will keep the information on this form confidential. It will be seen only by leaders, medical personnel, or others who know and understand its confidential nature. This form will be destroyed following the trip. If you choose not to go on the trip, this form will be destroyed immediately.

**General Information**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Blood Pressure: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Resting Heart Rate: \_\_\_\_\_ bpm

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Evacuation and Medical Insurance Information**

We strongly encourage you to have medical and evacuation insurance and to bring your insurance card or other documentation with you on the trip.

Evacuation Insurance	Medical Insurance
Company Name: _____	Company Name: _____
Policy Number: _____	Policy Number: _____
Contact Phone Number: _____	Contact Phone Number: _____

**Allergies**

Include medicines, foods, animals, insect bites and stings, and environment (dust, pollen, etc.).  NONE

Allergy	Reaction	Medication Required (if any)

Continued on next page . . .

### Medical History

Please list all prescription, over-the-counter, and natural medications you are taking. Use a separate sheet if necessary.

Medication Name	Dosage	Frequency	Side Effects (known & potential)	Reason for Taking

Do you currently have, or have a history with, the following conditions (explain in blank and use separate sheet if necessary):

- Yes  No Respiratory problems, Asthma, Do you smoke \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Diabetes \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Gastrointestinal problems \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Cardiac problems, Hypertension \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Neurological problems, Seizures \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Vision or Eye problems \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Hearing problems \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Bone, Joint, Muscle problems \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Head trauma, Traumatic Brain Injury \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Substance Abuse, Anxiety, Depression \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No If female: Are you pregnant \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Have you had an illness within the last 12 months \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Have you had surgery or been hospitalized in the last 12 months \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Have you ever had problems related to exposure to altitude \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes  No Any other health complaint or medical issue that would affect your participation in this trip \_\_\_\_\_

If YES, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last tetanus immunization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of most recent physical: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please have physician sign if your leader requires a physical prior to trip**

Physician's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The information provided here is a complete and accurate statement of any physical and psychological conditions that may affect my participation on this trip. I realize that failure to disclose such information could result in serious harm to myself and other participants. I agree to inform my trip leader should there be any changes to my health status prior to the start of the trip. I understand the outing may require vigorous activity that is both physically and mentally demanding in isolated areas without medical facilities. **I am fully capable of participating on this trip.**

**Trip Name:** Big Bend Bus Trip **Trip Dates:** February 27-March 4, 2019

**Signature (required):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

# RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Outing: Big Bend National Park Bus Trip	Date(s): February 27 – March 4, 2019
Bus and Trip Leader: Mark Stein	Additional Leaders: Jake Trousdale, Lynn Marple, Patrick Johnston

**Sign-In Sheet & Acknowledgment of Outing Member Responsibility, Express Assumption of Risk, and Release of Liability**

I understand that during my participation in this Sierra Club Outing, I may be exposed to a variety of hazards and risks, foreseen or unforeseen, which are inherent in each Outing and cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of the Outing. These inherent risks include, but are not limited to, the dangers of serious personal injury, property damage, and death (“Injuries and Damages”) from exposure to the hazards of travel and the Sierra Club has not tried to contradict or minimize my understanding of these risks. I know that Injuries and Damages can occur by natural causes or activities of other persons, animals, trip members, trip leaders and assistants or third parties, either as a result of negligence or because of other reasons. I understand that risks of such Injuries and Damages are involved in adventure travel such as Sierra Club Outings and I appreciate that I may have to exercise extra care for my own person and for others around me in the face of such hazards. I further understand that on this Outing there may not be rescue or medical facilities or expertise necessary to deal with the Injuries and Damages to which I may be exposed.

In consideration for my acceptance as a participant on this Outing, and the services and amenities to be provided by the Sierra Club in connection with the Outing, I confirm my understanding that:

- I have read any rules and conditions applicable to the Outing made available to me; I will pay any costs and fees for the Outing; and I acknowledge my participation is at the discretion of the leader.
- The Outing officially begins and ends at the location(s) designated by the Sierra Club. The Outing does not include carpooling, transportation, or transit to and from the Outing, and I am personally responsible for all risks associated with this travel. This does not apply to transportation provided by the Sierra Club during the Outing.
- If I decide to leave early and not to complete the Outing as planned, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to leave and waive all liability against the Sierra Club arising from that decision. Likewise, if the leader has concluded the Outing, and I decide to go forward without the leader, I assume all risks inherent in my decision to go forward and waive all liability against the Sierra Club arising from that decision.
- This Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by law. If any provision or any part of any provision of this Agreement is held to be invalid or legally unenforceable for any reason, the remainder of this Agreement shall not be affected thereby and shall remain valid and fully enforceable.
- To the fullest extent allowed by law, I agree to **WAIVE, DISCHARGE CLAIMS, AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY** the Sierra Club, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders from **any and all liability** on account of, or in any way resulting from Injuries and Damages, even if caused by **negligence** of the Sierra Club its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders, in any way connected with this Outing. I further agree to **HOLD HARMLESS** the Sierra Club, its officers, directors, employees, agents, and leaders from any claims, damages, injuries or losses caused by my own negligence while a participant on the outing. I understand and intend that this assumption of risk and release is binding upon my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, and includes any minors accompanying me on the Outing.
- I have read this document in its entirety and I freely and voluntarily assume all risks of such Injuries and Damages and notwithstanding such risks, I agree to participate in the Outing.

Name (print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are a minor (under age 18), your parent or legal guardian must sign this Agreement on your behalf.

I hereby agree and consent to the foregoing Agreement on behalf of the minor below.

Print Name and Age of Minor: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_