

# Youth Opportunities Underground Hold Harmless Agreement

I understand that participation in caving activities involves a certain degree of risk and can be physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. I have carefully considered the risk involved and have given consent for myself or my child to participate in this activity. I also understand that participation in this activity is entirely voluntary and requires participants to abide by applicable rules and standards of conduct. I release the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with the activity from any and all claims or liability arising out of this participation.

In case of emergency involving my child, I understand every effort will be made to contact me. In the event I cannot be reached, I hereby give my permission to the medical provider selected by the adult leader in charge to secure proper treatment, including hospitalization, anesthesia, surgery, or injections of medication for my child. Medical providers are authorized to disclose to the adult in charge examination findings, test results, and treatment provided for purposes of medical evaluation of the participant, follow-up and communication with the participant's parents or guardian, and/or determination of the participant's ability to continue in the program activities.

I have read and understand the Hold Harmless Agreement. \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

I hereby assign and grant to Allen Maddox, the right and permission to use and publish the photographs/electronic representations and/or sound recordings made of me or my child by him, and I hereby release Allen Maddox from any and all liability from such use and publication. I hereby authorize the reproduction, sale, copyright, exhibit, broadcast, electronic storage, and/or distribution of said photographs/ electronic representations and/or sound recordings without limitation at the discretion of Allen Maddox, and I specifically waive any right to any compensation I may have for any of the foregoing.

Participant's printed name \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*Parent/guardian printed name \_\_\_\_\_

\*Parent/guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(\* If participant is a minor)

Emergency contact: Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

## **Safety First!**

Disclaimer: Caving is an inherently hazardous activity, with bruises and twisted ankles being common injuries. Broken bones, concussions, entrapment, disabling injuries, and deaths have been known to occur during caving trips. This information is not a substitute for instruction, experience, or personal responsibility.

Caving can be physically and emotionally demanding and stressful. It is important that you are prepared, fit, properly equipped, sober, and healthy.

We strongly recommend that beginners cave with and be led by experienced, knowledgeable cavers. Cavers need to understand their personal skill level and the difficulty of the cave being visited -- it is your responsibility to not exceed your abilities and skill levels. Inform your trip leader and companions of any situations or conditions that may limit your abilities and capabilities. Average cave temperatures are near 55 degrees with humidity of 100%. Dressing in layers of synthetic insulating clothing can help protect cavers from the constant hazard of hypothermia.

## **Cave Conservation**

Caves are very fragile, it is illegal to damage or remove formations or anything else from the inside of a cave. Formations will not grow back for thousands of years. Many animals that you may see in a cave are also protected by law and should not be disturbed.

Most caves do not clean themselves, trash, paint, human waste, and food crumbs will all remain in a cave for a very long time and impact the cave environment. Always pack out everything you take into the cave.

## **Essential Equipment:**

- **UIAA certified Climbing Helmet** (these are available from the grotto.)
  - **Electric headlamp** (these are available from the grotto) Bring your own fresh, new "AA" batteries as well as backups. LED lamps extend battery life.
  - **Two backup light sources** - small flashlights or headlamps work well. Bring extra batteries. All together, you should have THREE sources of light bright enough to exit the cave and two of the light sources need to be helmet mounted.
  - **Old rugged clothing.** Sturdy synthetic clothing is strongly recommended for warmth when wet. Synthetic coveralls are preferred by many cavers as they don't come untucked.
- No Tyvec or disposable garments allowed. Check with your trip leader regarding cave conditions so you can choose suitable clothing. Consider the outside conditions - will you be hiking 2 miles in 10 degree weather? Will you be scrambling up long hills in 95 degree weather?
- **Thermal layering underwear.** Synthetic or wool under-layers, fleece for cold caves or if you get cold easily. **NO COTTON DOWN TO YOUR SKIN**- it provides no warmth if you get wet and wet cotton makes you very vulnerable to hypothermia - the saying is that "cotton kills!" Bring an extra synthetic or wool top - fleece perhaps - in case the trip is colder than you anticipated.
  - **Warm socks.** *No Cotton.*
  - **Sturdy boots** - good fitting boots with good lugged sole and ankle protection are essential. Sturdy boots help prevent ankle sprains and good treads give you more secure footing. Boots are likely to get very wet and will wear quickly - many cavers use work boots or rubber boots from discount stores. **NO SNEAKERS.**
  - **Sturdy work gloves** - leather work, Nitrile or latex coated knit gloves are good. Bring synthetic (polypro) glove liners if you get cold hands. Some people prefer rubberized work gloves for wet caves. **NO FINGERLESS GLOVES.**
  - **Small backpack, fanny pack or string pack.** Keep your hands free.
  - **Water** - bring 1 liter of water or more.
  - **Food** - High energy/non crushable snacks, energy bars, granola, trail mix. Bring extra in case the trip runs longer than planned.
  - **Plastic garbage bag** - can be used as a heat tent for an in-cave emergency, and holds your wet dirty caving gear after the trip.
  - **Small First Aid Kit** - be able to manage blisters, headaches, loose bowels, small cuts, dirt in your contact lenses, etc. Any personal medications such as inhaler or epi pens should be in a crush proof / waterproof container. Let trip leader know you have them.
- Coordinate with your trip leader to ensure that the group has the resources necessary to handle larger problems.
- **Knee and Elbow pads** - highly recommended! You will be crawling and scrambling over rocks.
  - **Change of clothes** - clean clothes to change into down to your skin including shoes after the trip

## **Optional Equipment:**

- 1" climbers webbing - 30 feet or so - many possible uses in-cave
- Cave map and compass
- Watch (kept in a container inside your pack)
- Whistle
- Camera

**DO NOT** bring anything into a cave that you do not wish to get wet or mud covered.

Cave mud is very difficult to remove and will not wash completely out of most fabrics.

**DO** bring a garbage bag to hold your dirty caving clothes in for the ride home.