

MASTER GUIDE OUTDOORS

Basic steps to organize a Master Guide Expedition

**YOUTH MINISTRIES
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is a Master Guide Expedition?	3
Vision.....	3
Mission	3
Goals.....	3
Steps to organize a master guide expedition	4
Running a Master Guide Expedition	8
List of Equipment (example).....	11
Difficulty levels for hiking.....	13

APPENDIX: FORMS/ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

Registration FORM.....	15
MGE-MGO- LIABILITY form	17
Preparedness self-assessment and suggestions.....	19
MGO Focus Group members	22

- **What is a Master Guide Expedition?**

According to the Oxford Dictionary, an expedition is “a journey undertaken by a group of people with a particular purpose, especially that of exploration, research, or war.”

This definition can be adapted as: A Master Guide expedition is a journey undertaken by a group of Master Guides and their friends with the intentional purpose of exploring nature, seeking to connect with God and our neighbor.

- **What is not a Master Guide Expedition?**

- It is not an Adventurers or Pathfinders activity.
- It is not a militaristic survival training, even if it is challenging.
- It is not a competition.
- It is not an individualistic activity, but a Christian community event.

- **Vision**

To connect all people with God by exploring His creation.

- **Mission**

To motivate Master Guides and friends to enjoy God's creation, by training them on how to participate and lead a successful outdoor expedition in unique locations.

- **Goals**

- Connect with God
- Connect with others
- Discover and enjoy God's creation
- Practice our camping skills
- Improve our resilience and lifestyle
- Disconnect from the routine

Steps to organize a Master Guide Expedition

1. Pray about it

- “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” (James 1:5)
- “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.” (Isaiah 48:17)

2. Train a small team

- At least one more person, aside from you, need to be 100% prepared and informed to lead the expedition in case, for any reason, you need to cancel your participation.
- Train one or two leaders to assist you before and during the expedition.

3. Find a place and date

A. Plan ahead

- The date **and** place should be defined 12 months in advance. (Enough time for booking the place and research)
- The registration deadline should be 6 months prior to the activity. (Enough time for training, get the equipment and made arrangements for transportation.)

B. Study different options

- NAD territory has astonishing natural places, find the one within your Union Conference that can help you to reach the goals of this activity.
- Principles of balance:
 - 1) If it is too easy, it may not be attractive, and if it is too hard it could generate frustration and increase the risks.
 - 2) Normal weather events (like moderate rain or moderate snow) should not represent a problem, but injuries generated from a trail that is too dangerous may provoke the expedition’s cancelation.
 - 3) Keep always in mind participants and their experience.
- You should know or plan to hike the place before a final decision.
- Is there any water source?
- What is the limit on number of people allowed in a group?
- What is the level of difficulty?
- Is there any potential natural disaster threatening the place?
- What are the 3 main risks in the area?

C. Find a date

- Is it available for the date you are planning?
- The same location may radically change from one month to another, from one season to another, keep this in mind.
- When will it be less crowded?

- When will it be safer?
 - When will it be more attractive?
- D. Book the place as soon as possible
- This is very important if you want to choose the date instead of getting what left.
 - Some places have an online registration.
 - In some places you can book a campground several months in advance.
- E. Define the number of participants
- The number will be directly related to the place and rules from that place.
 - To organize this event takes a lot of work, try to include as many as possible, always with the priority of reaching the goals.
- F. Make an exhaustive study of the chosen option
- This is “homework”, you should know as much as possible about the place and specific trail BEFORE the end of the registration process in order to create an accurate list of equipment.
 - Read blogs, reviews, official and unofficial reports.
 - Watch videos and photos.
 - Get familiar with the trail and alternative options (plan B).
 - Prepare a schedule for the participants including interesting and necessary information, like a map, elevation gain, average temperature and precipitation, wild animals, potential risks, etc.

4. Advertising

- A. Once you had taken the final decision in consultation with your Union Youth Director and NAD Master Guide Outdoors committee, you need to prepare the advertising for the event.
- B. Mention the general place (example: Glacier National Park) but not the specific trail, then you will have the opportunity for making last moment changes due to unforeseen situations (wildfires, closed routes, floods, etc.)
- C. Share photos, videos, interviews, with an intentional emphasis on connecting with God in nature.
- D. Use social media, newsletters, and every possible way of communication.
- E. Include your face and name in the advertising, people should know who is behind the activity.

5. Registration

- A. Who can register?

There will be two kinds of expeditions:

- 1) **With leaders only:** in order to train them on how to organize expeditions. These leaders should be invested Master Guides that are approved by the Conference Youth Directors as delegates.

- 2) ***With leaders and friends:*** in order to open the registration for people that are not involved in Club Ministries or are not Adventist. This turns the activity not only into a spiritual retreat but it opens the church doors to the community.
- B. Registration form
 - See attachment
 - Health certificate
 - You must be familiar with registration forms from the participants in order to adapt the activity.
 - C. Registration fee
 - Define a registration fee, non-refundable, according to the expenses and services that will be provided to the participants.
 - This fee needs to be approved by the Union Youth Director.
 - D. Deadline
 - Try to set the deadline 6 months in advance, maybe including an “early bird” option.
 - E. The process for registration will be first come first serve. As soon as the registration is completed, stop the advertising.
 - F. You may or may not use a waiting list in the case some registered attendees cancel their participation.

6. Equipment

- A. Define a list with the equipment requirements necessary for your specific expedition. (Read the Backpacking Honor from MGO)
- B. Every expedition is unique due to weather conditions, season, geography, and people attending, so you will need to adapt the list for every event.
- C. Explain the reason why every item is on that list.
- D. Meals:
 - 1) Define how many meals they will need to bring to the activity unless the group is planning to share the meals.
 - 2) Define cooking procedures according to the specific rules of the chosen location. Consider that fire bans or other restrictions may be a factor.
 - 3) Be sure to pay attention to allergies and special diets.

7. Training

As soon as the registration is over:

- A. The training process should start.
 - Define the training necessary for the place and date.
 - Provide developed Honors and extra material to the participants as soon as possible.

- Suggest a workout routine to prepare physically the participants for the specific geography and season.
- B. Send the list of equipment necessary.
- C. Establish clear and simple rules like:
 - The organizer **leader** has the last word on decision making.
 - We respect the **rules** of the place being visited.
 - We expect a **Christian behavior** of respect and courtesy within the group and with other hikers.
 - If failing in to follow these rules, the expedition leader may ask an attendee to return to the base camp with the company of a leader.
- D. The members of the expedition should create a group using Slack, WhatsApp, or any other social network, in order to build team spirit and share information. A video conference meeting is also a good idea.

8. Insurance and safety

- A. If there are minors (16 and 17 years old) among the participants, the leader/s of the expedition should complete the Verified Volunteers background check.
- B. Explain clearly the specific risks in this expedition
- C. Explain the process on how to be covered by the church insurance?

9. Budget

- A. Transportation to the base camp is the responsibility of each participant.
- B. What will be the cost per person for the base camp rental and national park campground?
- C. What will be the cost per person for transportation from the base camp to the hiking area?

10. Transportation

- Inform participants of the base camp location and some options for public transportation to get there from the airport or driving.

11. Special Notes

- Be available to answer questions
 - Share with the participants your email, cell phone number, and when is the best time to contact you.
- Even if not required, being part of a Master Guide Club can be a big advantage for attending an expedition as a team already informed and trained. Also transportation, equipment, and meals can be organized ahead of time as a group. In consultation with your Conference Youth Director, explore the option of opening a Master Guide Club.

Running a Master Guide Expedition

1. The Base Camp

- A. The Base Camp will be very important in order to do last minute adjustments for the expedition.
 - It will be the place where participants will leave their luggage to take only what they need for the expedition.
- B. Follow these recommendations:
 - The base camp should be booked several months in advance and established the afternoon BEFORE the expedition.
 - Welcome the participants and lead them to their lodging.
 - Inform participants of the schedule for that evening.
 - Set a supper time. You may include a supper for the group in the expedition fee, but this is a risk to spend precious time that you will need for final adjustments.
 - Set a specific time to prepare all the backpacks together.
 - Your goals for this gathering are:
 - 1) Introduce yourself as the leader of the event.
 - 2) Remove equipment that is not necessary, wasn't in the list, or duplicate equipment that can be shared among the group.
 - 3) Review step by step how to pack and adjust the backpack.
 - ✓ Sleeping bag, sleeping pad, sleeping bag liner (if necessary), sleeping clothes.
 - ✓ Extra clothes.
 - ✓ An accurate number of meals.
 - ✓ Cooking system.
 - ✓ Water for the hike, and a purification method.
 - ✓ Tent/shelter equipment.
 - ✓ Extra equipment (headlamps, emergency whistle, first AID kit, etc.)
 - 4) Just carry all that you need, not all that you can.
 - 5) Check the weight of every backpack, trying to keep it from 5% to 10% of the hiker weight. (Bring a pair of scales for this).
 - 6) Close the backpacks and leave them ready for the expedition the next day.
 - This is THE opportunity to connect with every participant and help them.
 - By reaching these goals, you will prevent several issues during the expedition.

2. The hiking

- A. Be on time and respect the program.
- B. Also be ready to adapt, since nature changes all the time.
- C. If possible, make a major physical effort on Friday, "recover" on Sabbath, and finish the hiking on Sunday. (For example: if you are planning to walk 20 miles, try to walk

12 miles on Friday and 8 on Sunday). In this way, the group will spend more energy at the beginning, and finish the activity with enough energy to drive and prepare the return to their homes. Also, if a participant has any physical issue that wasn't solved during Saturday rest, that person will appreciate a shorter distance.

- D. Keep the group together, with a trusted guide leading, and a trusted leader closing the group.
- 1) The first one needs to be familiar with the path, and regulate the speed in order to keep contact with the leader that is closing.
 - 2) The second one needs to be sure that NOBODY is left behind and support the participants that walk at a slow pace.
 - 3) Both of them should maintain **personal** (option A) and regular contact with the leader of the expedition.
 - 4) Walkie-talkies may be an option B to avoid cell phones.
- E. If someone gets exhausted, especially at the end of the hiking or when the trail ascends, and if this cause a delay in the group, it is up to the criteria of the leader to take some of these actions:
- 1) Find a good place and take a 5 minutes break with the group, drink water (rehydration salts), and eat an energy bar. Kindly evaluate the status of that hiker trying to find the reason for his/her condition.
 - 2) If this is not enough, release weight from the backpack of that participant, by splitting the charge among others.
 - 3) Finally, ask that participant his/her backpack and take turns to carry it, at least until the hiker gets better or the trail goes thru a more friendly geography.
 - 4) **NEVER abandon a participant.**
- F. Breaks: Every group is different, some of them will need more breaks than others. As a principle, the longer the break, the harder to return to the trail. Short 5 minutes breaks for hydration (water with or without rehydration salts) will help to dose energies.
- You can also include:
- 1) Eat trail mix, energy bar or a fruit.
 - 2) Change socks.
 - 3) Stretch muscles.
 - 4) Share POSITIVE information on where you are, the good pace, the little that remains until arriving at the camp, etc.
 - 5) Split the journey into short goals. Example: the lake, another campground, the ranger station, etc.
- Try to encourage the group all the time
- G. Courtesy
- While in the trail, hikers have to avoid destruction and contamination of nature.
 - Hikers descending should yield the trail to those ascending.

- If in a bridge, yield the trail to smaller groups.
- Greet everybody with a smile.

3. Program:

Design a unique/creative spiritual program

- It is not the same to pray alone in your room than to do it in the forest.
- It is not the same to preach from the pulpit than from a rock in the river, or next to a campfire.
- It is possible to find hundreds of Bible verses describing the connection between God and nature, like in Job 38 and 39.
- Take the time and make a program balanced between spiritual activities, training and recovery/social time.
- Invite a preacher that loves hiking and is able to walk with the group.
- Invite participants to discover and share spiritual lessons in the activity.
- Make the activities dynamic including group discussion combined with **short** hikes.
- During the program, set a time for **evaluating the activity** and the status of everybody in the group. This is a perfect opportunity to share the pros and cons and make adjustments.

4. For the organizer

- A. Have an emergency plan and inform the participants about it.
- B. If possible, consider to bring an NOAA Weather Radio for the activity and get familiar in how to understand weather reports.
- C. Inform the local church and authorities concerned (like rangers or police) of the activity details (who, what, when, where, why).
- D. Prepare all the backpacks the day before and kindly double check every backpack.
- E. Offer to participants to double check your own backpack.
- F. Understand that they are not Adventurers nor Pathfinders.
- G. Understand that militarism can be an obstacle to reaching the goals of this activity.

Master Guide Outdoors

North American Division – Seventh-day Adventist Church

List of Equipment (example)

Event: **The Glacier Master Expedition**

Date: **September 6-8, 2019**

Place: **Glacier National Park**

Note: This is just an example. The equipment in the backpack should be defined in the base camp, the day before to the expedition, with an accurate weather forecast, always keeping in mind that the mountain sometimes has its own forecast.

Equipment for “summer days” and “winter nights”

“What kind of weather and conditions can I expect in late August and early September?”

The seasons have turned fall like. Many streams have dried up, days are shorter and temperatures are cooler. It is not unusual to see fresh snow in September. It is a good idea to bring extra layers and long underwear, just in case. There are few mosquitos and few bugs in general. High temperatures in the low 70's Fahrenheit.” (www.graniteparkchalet.com/faq.html)

List of equipment

- Without snow, probably we will not need a snowsuit nor boots.
- We will probably have warm days and cold nights.

Clothes while we are on the trail: (dress in layers is the key)

- Comfortable, no-new, light hiking shoes or boots.
- Cotton socks (at least 2 pairs by day)
- Comfortable **long** pants.
- Cotton t-shirts (at least 2 by hiking day)
- Fleece jacket (hoodie if possible).
- Jacket and pants wind/waterproof (to use if necessary).
- Cap or sun hat
- Emergency whistle (plastic).
- Sunscreen (Optional)
- Sunglasses (Optional)

Sleeping clothes for using only in the sleeping bag (kept in a different bag inside the backpack):

- Thick wool socks.
- Long underwear and long sleeve shirt (merino wool if possible).
- Balaclava or ski mask (fleece or wool)
- Wool gloves.

The backpack:

- 50-70 liters backpack, comfortable and adjustable.
- Plastic bag for the interior of the backpack.
- Waterproof bags for clothes.
- Mummy sleeping bag (30°F).
- Sleeping pad (solid or inflatable).
- Fleece blanket or sleeping bag liner (for using as a layer)
- Water bottle or camel bag for the trail.
- Portable water filter.
- Fork, spoon, knife, cup, dish (plastic or wood is lighter than metal).
- Headlamp or any flashlight (new batteries).
- 10 feet rope.
- Cocoa butter lip balm.
- Personal medications.
- Toothbrush and toothpaste.
- Biodegradable wet wipes or soap.
- Toilet paper.

For the team (Items that only volunteers will bring):

- # Insect repellents (any with more than 10% of DEET).
- # First Aid kits
- # backpacking stoves, and pots for boiling water, not for cooking.
- The minimum number of tents. We need to be efficient with this by using most of the space in each tent. Two shelters with tarps (optional)
- # Bear spray.
- # Garbage hanging bag and 25 feet of rope for hanging food and garbage.
- # Little shovels for the group (toilet)
- The # will be defined according to the number of participants.

Menu

- Your favorite energy bars or trail mix while hiking (no more than 3 by day)
- Your favorite dehydrated food for Friday, Sabbath and Sunday (Three meals each day, boiling water will be provided)

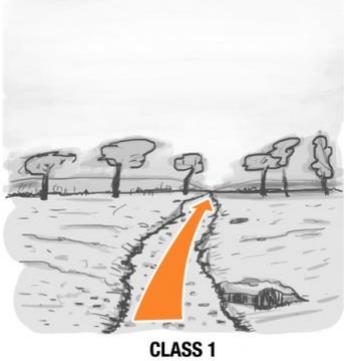
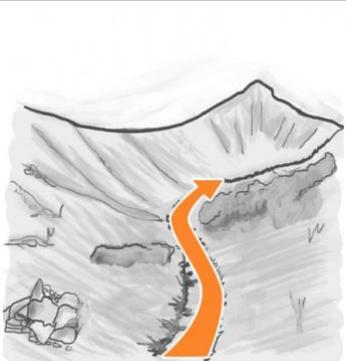
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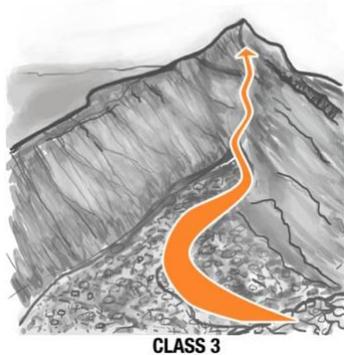
Difficulty levels for Hiking

The United States and Canada widely use the Yosemite Decimal System to rate the difficulty of hikes, trail runs and climbs. This system has five levels, ranging from your typical dirt path to rock climbing that requires technical gear. It's most important to seek out the class of a route when gearing up for hikes that could get technical, like 14ers (hikes with a peak elevation over 14,000 feet above sea level).

If you're new to hiking classes or still aren't sure what each class really means, we've got you covered. Here are the five hiking classes explained.

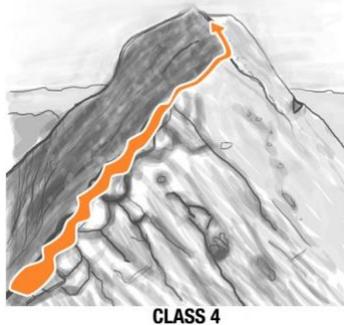
<p>Class 1</p>  <p>CLASS 1</p>	<p>A Class 1 hike is a low-risk hike on a well-marked trail. A majority of frequently accessed hiking trails are considered Class 1. A Class 1 rating doesn't mean you won't gain elevation or have your mind blown by the views; it simply means that there's very little chance of you falling off a ledge and biting the big one. No technical gear is required, although hiking shoes, hiking poles and a day pack are nice to have on any hike.</p>
<p>Class 2</p>  <p>CLASS 2</p>	<p>Ready your map-reading skills, because Class 2 trails might have sections that aren't clearly marked. There is a chance you'll need to use your hands to steady yourself, depending on how cautious you are, but for the most part the terrain is considered easy or moderate. The unsteadiness of a Class 2 trail often comes from the need to traverse over scree (small, loose rock) or talus (larger, semi-loose rock) fields. Slick snow pack on steep terrain can also be thrown into the mix. A good pair of hiking shoes or hiking boots is highly recommended here, but no technical gear is required.</p>

Class 3



If you feel confident on rock and want to mix things up, Class 3 is where things start to get fun. Often Class 3 hikes include sections with rugged terrain where the use of your hands is necessary. That's right, you get to scramble through Class 3 sections of hikes. Using your hands could be due to extreme terrain, such as large rocks, steep slopes, or a combination of both. You don't need technical climbing gear, but some people use ropes for added safety. The exposure (being exposed to a steep slope with little to no protection from a fall) of a Class 3 hike is kicked up a notch, meaning a fall could result in serious injury... or worse. Don't be deterred by this, just be prepared. Some of Colorado's most beloved 14ers, including Longs Peak, are rated as Class 3 trails.

Class 4



Here's where climbing ropes start coming into play. Class 4 is considered to be more of a climbing or mountaineering route than a hiking trail. While the climbing or traversing is considered easy, unstable terrain and a high level of exposure warrant the use of a rope for most Class 4 routes. Ropes, along with harnesses, belay devices and the knowledge of how to use this gear is best practice, here. Let's just say falling without rope protection on Class 4 routes is a good way to summon a helicopter.

Class 5



Now we've made the full transition from hiking to rock climbing. A Class 5 route is considered technical free-climbing and requires the whole rock climbing getup: a rope, a harness, a belay device, climbing shoes, a helmet and other hardware, such as quickdraws, depending on the type of climbing you're doing. You certainly don't want to fall without a rope in this scenario, so be sure to grab your belay buddy before scoping out a route. From here, you actually get thrown into another dimension of ratings. Free-climbing routes have an added decimal system and letters (5.0-5.15d) to gauge the difficulty of specific class 5 routes.

<https://www.sierratradingpost.com/blog/hiking/hiking-classes-defined/>

Special Notes

Even if this is a popular grade system, it is far from being complete since not consider very important factors that can increase the level of difficulty:

1. Temperatures and weather conditions:

- A flat Class 1 trail could increase into a higher level of difficulty with severe weather conditions like a snowstorm, a sandstorm or heavy rains. The same would happen with extremely high or low temperatures.

2. Physical condition:

- A flat Class 1 trail can be a huge challenge without the proper physical condition or with an overweight backpack.
- The same increase in difficulty will occur for example if the trail is too long or the gain in altitude occurs in a short distance.

3. Mental condition:

- One of the most important factors is mental. It is not the same walk 10 miles reaching short goals than to do it in a single path without reference points.
- It is not the same to walk with a united group with a positive attitude than to do it with people complaining and threatening to give up.
- Mental strength will make the difference, especially in the last part of the trail.

Master Guide Outdoors

North American Division – Seventh-day Adventist Church

Registration Form (sample)

Event: **The Glacier Master Expedition**

Date: **September 6-8, 2019**

Place: **Glacier National Park**

First Name:Last Name:

Address:

City/State:Zip code:

Phone number:Email:.....

Previous experiences in hiking

Month/Year (Most recent first)	Location	Miles walked	Backpack
			Yes/No

Do you have any allergies or physical conditions that may affect your performance in this activity?

.....

- Attach a copy of a current Health Certificate (Everybody)
- Attach a copy of the MASTER GUIDE EXPEDITION-MASTER GUIDE OUTDOORS PARTICIPANT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY (Everybody)
- Attach a vote from your local Church Board supporting your participation (Adventist)
- Attach a support letter from your Conference Youth Director (Adventist)
- Attach a support letter from your Adventist friend that is also registered (Non-Adventist)
- Attach a background check (Everybody) (www.verifiedvolunteers.com)

MASTER GUIDE EXPEDITION-MASTER GUIDE OUTDOORS PARTICIPANT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY - ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

As a condition of my participation in the above-described Event as a participant, volunteer or otherwise, I release and waive any liabilities against the event sponsor and/or Master Guide Expedition-Master Guide Outdoors (MGE-MGO) and its employees and volunteers arising out of my child’s participation in the event designated below, and I further agree to indemnify the Event Sponsor its employees and volunteers, for any and all damage or injury that I may cause as a result of my participation in the event. This Release and Waiver of Liability, and Assumption of Risk (this “Release”) is a contract with legal and binding consequences and it applies to all activities relating to the Event regardless of event location. I have read this Release carefully before signing, and I understand what it means and what I am agreeing to by signing.

In consideration of the acceptance of my application for entry or participation as a volunteer in this Event by one or more Releasees, I hereby freely agree to and make the following additional contractual representations and agreements:

1. I know that this Event, which takes place both in daylight and at night, is held on open roads and is a potentially hazardous activity. I voluntarily assume full and complete responsibility for all risks associated with participating in the Event and for any injury or accident that may occur during my participation in this Event, including by way of example and not limitation: (a) illness; (b) traveling to and from the event; (c) falls; (d) collisions with pedestrians, vehicles, other participants, and fixed or moving objects; (e) the effects of weather, including temperature extremes and humidity; (f) traffic accidents; (g) the negligence of myself and/or others, including Releasees; (h) animal attacks; and (i) road conditions, including darkness and surface conditions such as pot holes. I am aware of and appreciate all of these risks. I understand that both vehicle traffic and spectators will be present along the race course and that police protection will not be provided. I know that the presence of vehicle traffic during the Event increases the risk of motor vehicle accidents involving participants, spectators, and/or other vehicles, and that such accidents can result in death or serious injury. I further understand that the Releasees are not responsible for lost/stolen/damaged items from vehicles.
2. I acknowledge that I should not enter and participate in this Event unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete this road race and I further agree that race officials may authorize necessary emergency treatment for me.
3. I give my permission for the Event Sponsor to use pictures taken at the above event in Sponsor publications or promotional materials.
4. I understand the Event registration fees are nonrefundable. I have read the MGO - Basic steps to organize a Master Guide Expedition and agree to abide by the rules and conditions contained therein.
5. I acknowledge and agree that there are no refunds if the Event is cancelled or delayed due to causes beyond Releasees’ control, including but not limited to, acts of God, war, strikes or labor disputes, fires, riots, terrorism, vandalism, accident, government orders, failure to obtain necessary permits or approvals or consents, severe weather conditions such as severe heat, electrical storm, snowfall, tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, flooding, fog, severe weather conditions where significant damage or altercations to the race course occur, or any other force majeure event.

EVENT NAME: _____ CHURCH NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ TODAYS DATE: _____

PARTICIPANT NAME (print): _____ PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE: _____

MINOR WAIVER - COMPLETE IF RUNNER/VOLUNTEER IS BELOW THE AGE OF 18

I am the parent or guardian of the above-named minor (my “Child”). My Child is fit for the Event, and I (and, if I am married, my spouse) consent to my Child’s participation. I have read and I understand the above Release. In consideration of allowing my Child to participate, I (and, if I am married, my spouse) consent to the foregoing Release and agree that its terms shall likewise bind me (and, if I am married, my spouse), my Child, and our respective heirs, legal representatives, assignees, and anyone else who might claim on their own behalf or mine or my Child’s behalf. I (and, if I am married, my spouse) hereby forever release and discharge, and shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless Releasees, from every claim (including without limitation a claim of loss of

consortium), liability, cause of action, and expense that I (and, if I am married, my spouse) or my Child or any other person may allege against any of the Releasees (including medical expenses and reasonable legal fees and costs) as a direct or indirect result of injury or death to me or my Child because of my Child's participation in the Event, whether caused by the negligence of my Child, the Releasees, or others, to the maximum extent permitted by law. I (and, if I am married, my spouse) covenant not to sue Releasees on my behalf or on behalf of my Child for any claim arising from my Child's participation in the Event. If I am married, I am signing this Release also in behalf of, and as authorized agent for, my spouse.

PARENT NAME (print): _____ PARENT SIGNATURE: _____

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North American Division – Seventh-day Adventist Church

Registration Preparedness Self-Assessment and Suggestions

We suggest that each individual participating in an MGE-MGO event evaluate their preparedness based on 3 factors: physical, mental and skill as each event will require a different combination of these factors. Below, we have outlined a general self-assessment.

A) **Physical:** How physically fit am I for this event? How often do I exercise?

- **Level 1:** I can do the following: walking fast mostly on level ground, water aerobics, bicycling on mostly level ground, push a lawn mower, do simple yard work. I have difficulty with stretching and flexibility. I do not know what my heart rate and breathing rate are. My 1.5-mile time is very poor to poor. (See Table 1.1 below).
- **Level 2:** I can do the following: Running, swimming laps, fast bicycling or biking hills, play basketball or soccer. I can do basic body-weight movements such as push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups and I am moderately flexible. I have basic knowledge of my heart rate and breathing rate. My 1.5-mile time is fair to good (See Table 1.1 below).
- **Level 3:** I can do everything Level 1 and 2 can do and also lift weights, calisthenics, and all body weight movements without difficulties. I know exactly what physical abilities are and keep track of my accomplishments. I have exercise goals and have sufficient knowledge to know how to reach them. I know exactly what my heart rate and breathing rate are and know how to control both based on the type of exercises I am participating in. My 1.5-mile time is good to superior (See Table 1.1 below).

		Fitness Level on Cooper 1.5 mile Run Test					
Age	Gender	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Superior
13-19	Males	>15:31	15:30-12:11	12:10-10:48	10:48-9:41	9:40-8:37	<8:36
	Females	>18:31	18:30-16:55	16:54-14:31	14:30-12:30	12:29-11:50	<11:50
20-29	Males	>16:01	16:00-14:01	14:00-12:01	12:00-10:46	10:45-9:45	<9:44
	Females	>19:01	19:00-18:31	18:30-15:55	15:54-13:31	13:30-12:30	<12:29
30-39	Males	>16:31	16:30-14:44	14:43-12:31	12:30-11:01	11:00-10:00	<9:59
	Females	>19:31	19:30-19:01	19:00-16:31	16:30-14:31	14:30-13:00	<12:59
40-49	Males	>17:31	17:30-15:36	15:35-13:01	13:01-11:31	11:30-10:30	<10:29
	Females	>20:01	20:00-19:31	19:30-17:31	17:30-15:56	15:55-13:45	<13:44
50-59	Males	>19:01	19:00-17:01	17:00-14:31	14:30-12:31	12:30-11:00	<10:59
	Females	>20:31	20:30-20:01	20:00-19:01	19:00-16:31	16:30-14:30	<14:29
60-69	Males	>20:01	20:00-19:01	19:00-16:16	16:15-14:00	13:59-11:15	<11:14
	Females	>21:01	21:00-20:30	20:31-19:31	19:30-17:30	17:30-16:30	<16:29

Table 1.1: Fitness Level on Cooper 1.5 Mile Run Test

Your heart rate at rest is a measure of heart health and fitness. For most adults, a healthy heart rate is 60 to 100 beats a minute. Below a table to help asses both your heart rate and breathing rates:

Heart Rate (beats per minute)				
At Rest	During Exercise	Immediately After Exercise	2 Minutes After Exercise	4 Minutes After Exercise

Breathing Rate (beats per minute)				
At Rest	During Exercise	Immediately After Exercise	2 Minutes After Exercise	4 Minutes After Exercise

Backpacking training tips and exercises:

<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/backpacking-how-to-cross-train.html>

<https://www.rei.com/learn/expert-advice/thru-hiking-goal-training.html>

B) **Mental:** How mentally fit am I for this event? Mental toughness or preparedness is a measure of individual resilience and the ability to cope with difficult situations. Some areas of mental toughness to consider are: commitment/motivation, concentration/focus, control under pressure, confidence/self-belief.

- **Level 1:** As soon as any obstacles or difficulties emerge, I will quit. I have little motivation and get discouraged and distracted easily. I rely on others for guidance in difficult situations.
- **Level 2:** I have basic knowledge and experience with difficult situations. I understand my physical and mental capabilities and know my limitations. I am committed and motivated as long as I know exactly what is expected of me. I can concentrate for determined periods of time.
- **Level 3:** My mind and body are resilient enough to cope with any difficult situation as I have experienced them in the past. I have confidence in my abilities and know when to stop if necessary. I consider myself the leader or expert most of the time and enjoy sharing my knowledge and skills with others. I have the physical and mental strength to be able to help others in difficult situations. I am fully committed, self-motivated and confident in my physical and mental abilities.

C) **Skill:** What skills (hiking, climbing, rock climbing, swimming) are required for this type of event? Do I have the necessary skills to participate in this event? Do I have first-hand experience with them? Limited experience? Are there any factors (temperature, humidity, snow, ice, altitude, air quality) that will influence my performance which is independent of my skill level?

- **Level 1:** I have basic knowledge to no training or experience.
- **Level 2:** I have intermediate knowledge and limited experience.
- **Level 3:** I have first-hand experience and the skills necessary to be an instructor.

Master Guide Outdoors Focus Group members:

(These were the persons that wrote, compiled or reviewed this material)

- Pr Armando Miranda
- Rosangela Ortiz
- Chris Ohlmann
- Nestor Osman – Chairperson and editor (nestorosman@hotmail.com)