



MOHONK PRESERVE
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Climbing Instruction Policy

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Rev. 12/11/94; Rev. 9/5/96; Rev. 4/18/99; Rev. 12/2/01;
Rev. 12/7/03; Rev. 5/25/11; Rev. 6/16/13; Rev. 3/9/16*

I. DEFINITIONS

Authorized Guiding Service An organization, accredited by the American Mountain Guides Association, and authorized by the Mohonk Preserve, to offer climbing instruction on a fee-for-service basis.

Guide. An employee of one of the Authorized Guiding Services, which is authorized by the Mohonk Preserve to offer climbing instruction on a fee-for-service basis.

Individual Certified Guide. An individual, certified in the rock discipline by the American Mountain Guides Association (A.M.G.A) or the Professional Climbing Guides Institute (P.C.G.I.), who is authorized by the Mohonk Preserve to offer climbing instruction on a fee-for-service basis, and may not subcontract any pupils at any time.

Visiting Guide. An individual, certified in the rock or alpine disciplines by the A.M.G.A. or P.C.G.I, who meets the visiting guides' requirements set forth in Section VI, who is authorized by the Mohonk Preserve to offer climbing instruction on a fee-for- service basis, and may not subcontract any pupils at any time.

Instructor. Any individual, including all categories of Guides, authorized by the Mohonk Preserve to offer climbing instruction. Instructors not in one of the above three (3) categories, who may be authorized to offer climbing instruction, must be in the service of an approved not-for-profit organization.

Organization. An organization, such as a guiding service, club, school, college, scout group, camp, etc. that is authorized by the Mohonk Preserve, to offer climbing instruction with or without charging a fee.

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Circumstances of geography – the configuration of the rock, ease of access, and proximity to metropolitan centers – have made the Shawangunk cliffs a mecca for rock climbers for over seventy years. Throughout its history, Mohonk Preserve, Inc. has honored its commitment to environmentally benign outdoor recreation by permitting climbing on its lands.

All organizations and individuals proposing to offer climbing instruction on Preserve lands must agree to share the many responsibilities that such instruction entails. These responsibilities are set forth in this Climbing Instruction Policy. Particular attention is called to the following general principles, which must be followed by organizations and individuals offering climbing instruction, and by those who receive such instruction, on Mohonk Preserve lands.

A. An Instructor has sole responsibility for the safety of his or her pupils. Mohonk Preserve, Inc. does not maintain the rocks, cliffs, or other natural features, is not responsible for the condition of the terrain or for climber protection on the cliffs (for example bolts, pitons, and rappel slings and rings), does not provide supervision or instruction, and takes no responsibility for the acts of persons, including instructors and guides, who may be on its property.

B. Mohonk Preserve, Inc., at its sole discretion, reserves the right to forbid any organization or instructor to climb, or to offer climbing instruction, on Preserve lands.

C. Mohonk Preserve, Inc. views the requirements set forth below as a minimal set of standards for responsible climbing instruction. The Preserve does not endorse the instruction offered by any organization or individual. Compliance with these requirements is not to be taken as signifying the Preserve's endorsement of such instruction.

III. ELIGIBILITY

Organizations and individuals proposing to offer climbing instruction on lands owned by Mohonk Preserve, Inc. must meet the following minimum criteria for eligibility:

A. **Liability Insurance.** Every organization or individual offering climbing instruction must be covered by a liability insurance policy acceptable to Mohonk Preserve, Inc. in the amount of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) per incident and not less than two million dollars (\$2,000,000) aggregate applicable to the instruction and guiding of rock (sheer cliff) climbing. Such policy must cover Organizations and Individuals proposing to offer climbing instruction on lands owned by Mohonk Preserve, Inc. and must cover claims made whether during the period the insurance is in effect or thereafter, and must also cover Mohonk Preserve, Inc. as a named Additional Insured on a Certificate of Insurance supplied to the Mohonk Preserve directly by the insurance company.

B. **Certification.** Every Instructor must hold valid certifications in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) and Basic First Aid, or higher levels of certification. All Individual Certified Guides and Visiting Guides must hold current A.M.G.A. or P.C.G.I. certifications in the rock or alpine disciplines.

C. **Licensing.** All three categories of Guide, and any Instructors who instruct minors, must hold a valid New York State Guide's License.

D. **Accreditation.** The American Mountain Guides Association must accredit each Authorized Guide Service.

E. **Instruction of Minor Climbers.** Authorized Organizations or Instructors who bring pupils under the age of eighteen (18) to the lands of the Mohonk Preserve for the purpose of instruction in rock climbing must be in possession of a signed waiver from the parent or guardian clearly stating that that the minor pupil has the permission of their parent or guardian to engage in the activity of rock climbing on the lands of the Mohonk Preserve. Waiver language is available from the office of Mohonk Preserve, Inc. All minor climbers who are being instructed must pay the adult rock climbing day fee, or be rock-climbing members of the Mohonk Preserve.

F. **Authorization.** Authorizations will be reviewed annually. The right to use the Preserve may be terminated at any time. In the event that any Organization or Instructor does not meet Preserve criteria for operating, that Organization or Instructor's authorization to instruct climbing will be revoked. If any change occurs to the ownership, or structure of an Organization, the Organization's authorization to instruct climbing on Mohonk Preserve lands will be re-evaluated, and may be revoked, at the sole discretion of the Mohonk Preserve.

IV. REGISTRATION AND FEES

Organizations and individuals offering climbing instruction on lands owned by Mohonk Preserve, Inc. must conform to the principles outlined in this section regarding registration and fees.

A. Entry Fees/Pupil Registration. Instructors other than Guides must pay the current day entry fee upon entering Preserve lands unless they hold a current Mohonk Preserve annual PLUS+ Membership or are Life Members of the Preserve; they must also register their group with the Mohonk Preserve at least TWO WEEKS in advance of their visit. All categories of guides must hold a valid Mohonk Preserve annual PLUS+ Membership or be a Life Member of the Preserve.

All Instructors are responsible for payment of the day entry fees for all of their Pupils, unless those pupils are holders of a current Mohonk Preserve annual PLUS+ Membership or are Life Members of the Preserve. If Instructors who are not Guides do not encounter a Preserve Staff person on the day they are instructing, the Instructor and/or Organization for which the Instructor is teaching become responsible for collecting all fees due the Mohonk Preserve and forwarding them to the Preserve within two weeks of the date the instruction occurred.

All Authorized Guide Services, Individual Certified Guides, and Visiting Guides must purchase day entry permits for their pupils in advance, or ensure that their pupils are current annual PLUS+ Members of the Mohonk Preserve. All Authorized Guide Services and Individual Certified Guides are required to provide to the Preserve on a monthly basis, a list of the individuals they have instructed. The list provided must contain the names and addresses of all pupils and the dates on which they climbed at the Mohonk Preserve. All pupils who currently are Mohonk Preserve annual PLUS+ Members, or Mohonk Preserve Life Members should be noted on the list. Visiting Guides must provide this list before they bring any pupils onto the Mohonk Preserve lands.

B. Registration of Instructors. Instructors must meet the criteria of eligibility set forth in Section III and must obtain an annual authorization from Mohonk Preserve, Inc. before bringing any pupil onto the Preserve lands. Each year, by the deadline of March 1, applicants for Guide Service, Individual Certified Guide or Visiting Guide must apply for an annual authorization to guide at the Mohonk Preserve for that year. All annual authorizations will take effect on April 1 of the current year and expire on March 31 of the following year. Materials submitted must include certificate of insurance, payment of annual registration fee and all other documents specified as required in the category for which authorization is being requested. Upon review and evaluation of all required materials, Mohonk Preserve, Inc. will issue annual authorizations in each category. Guide Services must register a minimum of four and up to ten guides at that time. Additional Guides, up to the limit of ten, may be added after that date. Authorized Guide Services may change the actual individuals instructing for them at any time as long as the maximum number of ten registered for the year is not exceeded, and they only make ten changes per year, and the Guides meet the criteria of eligibility as outlined in Section III. If more than ten changes per year are made, a fee for each additional change will be assessed. All documents for eligibility must be presented at the time of initial registration and at each annual renewal, and must be kept current while any individual instructs. No guide may subcontract any pupil to a non-registered guide. No Visiting or Individual Certified Guide may subcontract any pupil at any time. If at any time, any instructor does not have on file at the Preserve all of the eligibility requirements outlined in Section III they may not instruct climbing on the Mohonk Preserve and must be released from the service of the Organization until proper eligibility documents are on file at the Preserve. All organizations, and individuals, who offer instruction on the Preserve, must notify the Preserve, IN WRITING, when any registered instructor is ADDED or RELEASED from their service.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Mohonk Preserve, Inc. is responsible for the stewardship of a unique natural resource, which is highly vulnerable to overcrowding and environmental degradation. Accordingly, the Preserve requires all climbing instructors to subscribe to the following code. ANY violation of this code will be considered grounds for revocation of permission to instruct on Mohonk Preserve lands.

A. Environmental Impact. Instructors must observe, and require their pupils to observe, the Mohonk Preserve's own standards of environmental responsibility. These include proper disposal of litter and human waste; no radios, glass containers, or fires; and the use of designated trails, whenever possible. Instructors/Guides (in all categories) and their pupils are prohibited from bringing dogs with them to all climbing areas while instructing or receiving instruction on Preserve lands.

In order to retain the natural state of the cliffs as far as possible, the Preserve forbids all environmentally damaging climbing practices. These include, but are not limited to, trundling rocks, chipping holds, cutting trees, and placement of any bolt or piton. The Mohonk Preserve explicitly disclaims all responsibility for the safety of any bolts and pitons that may be found in place anywhere on the cliffs of the Mohonk Preserve.

B. Carrying Capacity. In order to avoid the impact of large instructional groups, a ratio of at least one (1) instructor to four (4) pupils will be enforced. The following maximum numbers of pupils per day apply to all Organizations and Instructors:

- One(1) to five (5) registered instructors; maximum of twelve (12) pupils per day.
- Six (6) to seven (7) registered instructors; maximum of sixteen (16) pupils per day.
- Eight (8) to ten (10) registered instructors; maximum of twenty (20) pupils per day.

These ratios apply to the following cliffs: Trapps, Near Trapps, and Millbrook. All other areas on the Preserve are only available to a maximum of four (4) pupils per day per service, organization, guide or instructor.

At the present time and until further notice, the Mohonk Preserve limits the number of Authorized Guide Services allowed to operate on its lands to four (4). Mohonk Preserve also limits Individual Certified Guides and Visiting Guides allowed to operate on its lands to a maximum of seven (7) in both categories.

Because the Instructor has sole responsibility for the safety of his or her pupils, he or she shall provide a higher Instructor/Pupil ratio when warranted by circumstances such as, but not limited to, the difficulty of the route and the experience of the Pupil(s). There shall be a limit of no more than two groups, comprising a total of no more than two instructors and eight pupils, at any one instruction site at any time.

C. Not-For-Profit Organizations. On weekdays only, Instructors may instruct Pupils from not-for-profit organizations, such as camps, schools, and scout groups; at a ratio of six (6) Pupils to one (1) Instructor. In order to provide for the safety of the larger group, this instruction may only include rappelling and top-roping, and specifically precludes multi-pitch climbing. This provision for accommodating not-for-profit groups, does not affect the total number of Pupils allowed per day.

The Preserve is large enough to accommodate many visitors, but only so long as all respect the right of others to enjoy the Preserve lands in an atmosphere of peace and tranquility. All Climbing Instructors and their Pupils are, therefore, urged to extend the utmost courtesy and consideration to one another, and to all other visitors to the Preserve.

C. Advertising/Media Coverage. Instructors are required to comply with a long-standing Mohonk Preserve policy that discourages media coverage or advertising of climbing that exploits any sensational aspects of the sport. If an Instructor or Organization has any questions concerning this policy, consult the Preserve before proceeding.

VI. VISITING GUIDES

In order to allow increased opportunity for qualified Guides from other areas to gain access to the unique natural environment of the Shawangunks, the Preserve has developed a Visiting Guides program.

A. Eligibility: To be eligible, a Visiting Guide may not be employed by one of the organizations authorized by the Mohonk Preserve to offer climbing instruction. The Visiting Guide must hold a current A.M.G.A. or P.C.G.I. certification in the rock or alpine discipline. The Visiting Guide must conform to all the minimum criteria in Section III above, with the exception of part C (since Accreditation from the American Mountain Guides Association only applies to Guide Services). The Visiting Guide must also comply with all applicable requirements in Sections II, IV, and V of this policy.

B. Application: In order to share the limited resource with other climbers, a maximum of seven (7) Visiting Guide authorizations per year will be issued. Each authorization allows a Visiting Guide a total of ten (10) pupil days. No Visiting Guide may obtain more than one authorization per calendar year. No Visiting Guide may sub-contract, or transfer their authorization.

To apply, a potential Visiting Guide must submit:

- Copies of certificate of insurance, first aid, C.P.R., New York State Guides license, and an A.M.G.A. or P.C.G.I. certification in the rock or alpine discipline which are current for the time period the Visiting Guide will be instructing on Preserve lands.

- A deposit of \$300, which will be credited towards the Visiting Guide's registration fee if the application is accepted.

- A cover letter describing the dates and number of pupils who will be participating.

- A written reference from another climbing facility, where the applying Visiting Guide operates, which is familiar with the guide and his/her operation and reputation.

When the Preserve receives all materials, the request will be evaluated. If a Visiting Guide authorization is issued, the Visiting Guide must meet with designated Preserve Staff upon arrival for orientation, payment of remaining fees, and production of pupil list.

All incomplete applications will be returned. Once an authorization is issued, the deposit is not refundable. Applications will be processed in the order in which they are received.