

Risk Assessment Worksheet	1. Project/Incident/Work Activity	2. Location
	IPWA Volunteer Activities	Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, Boulder Ranger District
3. Specific Objective	4. Name and Title of Preparer	5. Date
Conducting volunteer patrols in a backcountry environment	Lyle Skaar Recreation Management Specialist	Tuesday, April 18, 2023

6. Risk Decision Authority: (Authority Signature Block) If block 15 is Moderate, High or Extremely High a higher level of authority needs to sign in this block.
Signature/Date:

Assess Hazards					Identify Risk Mitigation Measures	Residual Risk				
7. Task	8. Hazard	9. Severity/Consequence	10. Hazard Probability	11. RAC	12. List all mitigation or abatement measures	13. Severity/Consequences	14. Hazard Probability	15. RAC	16. Necessary (Yes/No)	17. Hazard Control Assigned to:
Check in/ Check out and response plan in case of emergency.	Failure to have a plan in place to initiate an emergency response when patroller is overdue	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*Before you Leave Home: Check the weather forecast. Storms can affect your ability to complete a trip as initially planned (return over a high mountain pass may be too dangerous if weather conditions deteriorate).</i></p> <p><i>*IPWA volunteers should hike with another volunteer, friend, or family member when possible. Volunteers who choose to hike alone are required to establish a contact, provide them with an itinerary (estimated time of departure and return, trail, trailhead, & destination), and tell them who should be contacted if overdue. Upon return from a hike, volunteers hiking alone must visit the IPWA website and check the box on the field report indicating they have checked back in with their established contact.</i></p> <p><i>*If you know that you are lost or injured and know a search has been initiated, do not change your location. Stay put until rescuers locate you. Facilitate their efforts as much as possible (i.e. use whistle, signal mirror/tarp/fire, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>*Do not rely solely on cell phones, as you may not have coverage or battery power when you need it. Consider a SPOT device if you travel solo regularly.</i></p> <p><i>*Know your location and how to report it. Carry a map and compass and know how to use them.</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
Preparedness for field travel	Environmental injuries and hazards	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p><i>*Carry a well-stocked first aid kit and know how to use it for your personal use and for optional use under the Colorado Good Samaritan guidelines.</i></p> <p><i>*Be prepared to survive in the backcountry for an extended period of time. Carry the provisions for emergency shelter, fire, water, food and signal.</i></p> <p><i>*Carry plenty of water and drink often before getting thirsty. Carry emergency provisions to purify water if you should run out (treat all water by boiling or purifying and never drink directly from streams or lakes). Bring along enough calories to sustain the energy demands of hiking.</i></p> <p><i>*Always travel with adequate raingear and extra layers of warm clothing. Wear sunscreen, hat and sunglasses.</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller

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Foot travel on and off trail	Personal injury resulting from hiking or falls	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p><i>*Wear appropriate footwear with sufficient ankle support and slip-resistant heels and soles. Stretch and warm-up properly prior to hiking. Attain adequate conditioning prior to field season.</i></p> <p><i>*Be alert to trail obstacles and surrounding/overlying hazards. Use extra caution when traveling in steep terrain. Know and stay within your limits. Do not be afraid to turn around short of your planned destination.</i></p> <p><i>*Use caution when walking through dense vegetation and be aware that terrain underneath is not visible.</i></p> <p><i>*Wear eye protection to avoid injury from branches or debris.</i></p> <p><i>*Use caution when walking on logs, especially when wet. Avoid if possible.</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Travel in proximity of snowfields, talus/scree fields, rock outcrops, or steep areas with loose rocks or debris	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*Do not travel in vicinity of any snow-covered slopes steeper than 28° without official avalanche training, and avalanche equipment.</i></p> <p><i>*Avoid travel across snowfields, scree fields or talus slopes if alternatives exist. Wear appropriate head protection in these areas and be alert to falling/rolling debris or rock slides. Cross such areas one person at a time and leave the area as soon as possible.</i></p> <p><i>*Be alert to areas where snow may collapse or where crossings are made dangerous because of hazards under the snowfield or at the foot of the snowfield (i.e. jagged rocks, deep or fast flowing water, etc.)</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller

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	Stream Crossings	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p><i>*Use caution on narrow or slick bridges. Do not use bridge if crossing appears treacherous or unstable.</i></p> <p><i>*When crossing creeks, never enter deep or fast moving water or where the stream bottom is not visible. Use a walking stick or other aid to cross.</i></p> <p><i>*Be aware that stream bottoms can be very slippery and harbor unseen hazards.</i></p> <p><i>*Keep in mind that stream levels can fluctuate dramatically in a short period of time as a result of precipitation or rapidly warming temperatures that increase snow melt – crossings that are passable when first encountered may not be so on the return.</i></p> <p><i>*Unbuckle pack straps and waist belts when crossing so that pack can be easily and quickly removed if necessary.</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Sharing the trail with other users	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p><i>*Yield to uphill traffic and livestock. Allow livestock to pass on the uphill side.</i></p>	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Yes	Every Partoller
	Fatigue and dehydration	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*Take breaks when necessary.</i></p> <p><i>*Carry plenty of water and drink often before getting thirsty. Replacing electrolytes with flavored drinks and snacks is also important. Carry emergency provisions to purify water if you should run out.</i></p> <p><i>*Be alert to the signs of dehydration, including headache, nausea, weakness, etc.</i></p> <p><i>*Bring along enough calories to sustain the energy demands of hiking.</i></p> <p><i>*Know your limits and set realistic itineraries. Do not be afraid to change plans if fatigue sets in.</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
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	Becoming lost or disoriented	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*Carry a map and compass when traveling and know how to use them.</i></p> <p><i>*Check weather forecasts and be aware that fog or heavy snow can make navigation above treeline difficult. Be aware that storms could affect your ability to complete a trip as initially planned (i.e. return over a high mountain pass may be too dangerous if weather conditions deteriorate).</i></p> <p><i>*If you cannot reorient yourself, stay calm and do not change your location. Use your emergency provisions to wait for help to arrive. If you have prearranged a contingency plan for an overdue return, searchers will try to locate you. Help rescuers by signalling to them with your whistle, signal mirror, signal tarp and fire.</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
Exposure to variable environmental conditions	Altitude Sickness	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*Know how to recognize symptoms of altitude sickness. Descend rapidly to lower elevation if symptoms develop. Altitude conditions can occur at any elevation, although 10,000' is often where symptoms become most reported.</i></p> <p><i>*Susceptible individuals should plan to sleep at lower elevations on extended trips</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller

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	Sudden storms, lightning, wind, heavy rain, snow, fog	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*Know the forecast before you set out. Have contingency plans in place in case unanticipated weather conditions are encountered.</i></p> <p><i>*Be alert to dead trees/branches that could fall during wind events.</i></p> <p><i>*Always travel with adequate raingear and extra layers of warm clothing that are protected from moisture (i.e. wrapped in plastic) inside your pack.</i></p> <p><i>*Plan your day so that you are not in exposed areas (i.e. above timberline) during storm activity. Always keep in mind that conditions in the high country can change very rapidly.</i></p> <p><i>*When lightning activity is nearby, avoid the tops of ridges, wide open spaces, ledges, rock outcrops, bodies of water, lone trees, damp/wet ground, shallow caves/overhangs, railroad tracks and sheds or shelters in exposed locations. Dismount from horses or livestock and move away. Put down any tools or metal objects. Do not handle any flammable material (i.e. stoves, white gas, etc.). If traveling with a group, spread out. The best place to seek shelter in a backcountry situation is in a ditch, canyon, or head-high clumps of trees in open forest areas. Make yourself as small a target as possible. Crouch down with feet together to minimize the flow of current. Keep a distance of twice the height of the nearest tree between you and the tree.</i></p> <p><i>*If someone is struck by lightning, seek medical attention immediately. Administer rescue breathing and CPR if appropriate.</i></p>	Critical	Unlikely	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Sun Exposure	Moderate	Likely	High	<i>*Wear sunscreen, hat and sunglasses.</i>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Hypothermia	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<i>*Keep in mind that most hypothermia cases occur on cold, wet, windy days with temperatures above freezing (usually 30-50°F). Fatigue, injuries and cold water immersion can quickly predispose an individual to hypothermia. Know how to treat and recognize the symptoms of hypothermia, both in yourself and others. An individual exhibiting early signs of hypothermia can quickly deteriorate to a point where they are unable to help themselves. Prevention is key – always anticipate situations where hypothermia could develop and plan accordingly. Always travel with raingear, extra warm clothing and provisions for fire and shelter.</i>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Mosquitoes	Moderate	Almost Certain	High	<i>*Mosquitoes can transmit both encephalitis and West Nile Virus. Minimize bites by wearing long sleeves, pants, and an insect repellent containing DEET. Be especially diligent in wet areas and during times when mosquitoes are most active.</i>	Negligible	Almost Certain	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller

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	Stinging insects (bees, wasps)	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>*If you or anyone you are traveling with has a known allergy to stinging insects, make sure that everyone in the group is aware of the problem. Carry emergency medication at all times.</i></p> <p><i>*If any individual develops symptoms of an adverse reaction such as difficulty breathing, a drop in blood pressure, or unusual swelling, seek medical attention immediately.</i></p> <p><i>*If a stinger is present, scrape it off, but do not use tweezers or otherwise squeeze the attached venom sack. Apply a cold pack, analgesic swab and watch for infection.</i></p> <p><i>*Wear light-colored clothing (dark or red colors resemble the bee's natural predators). Avoid using scented perfumes, shampoo, deodorants, after-shaves, strongly scented gum, etc.</i></p> <p><i>*Watch for hives in brush, hollow logs, abandoned animal burrows, or an area where insects are frequently traveling in and out of one location</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
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	Wildlife encounters	Negligible	Likely	Moderate	<p><i>*Never feed any wildlife or allow food to be inadvertently accessed by wildlife. Pick up all trash and secure food in camp so that it is out of reach.</i></p> <p><i>*Keep in mind that all wildlife (including non-predatory animals such as deer, elk or moose) can be aggressive and dangerous if sick, injured or if they feel their young are threatened.</i></p> <p><i>*Know how to recognize bear, moose and mountain lion habitat. Make noise and be particularly vigilant when traveling through dense brush and riparian areas. Learn to recognize scat, claw marks and other signs. If a recent kill is discovered, leave the area immediately. Mountain lions will cover a carcass with dirt, leaves, branches, or snow and will return repeatedly to feed on it.</i></p> <p><i>*Avoid use of game or predator-created trails.</i></p> <p><i>*If an animal is encountered, always give them a way to escape. In a bear or mountain lion encounter, stay calm. Do not run from the animal or attempt to climb a tree to escape. Black bears may try to intimidate you by charging to within a few feet before withdrawing. Slowly but deliberately back away and make yourself appear larger. Do not take your eyes off the animal, but avoid direct eye contact. If the animal attacks, fight back with rocks, sticks, etc.</i></p> <p><i>*Report potentially life-threatening encounters with black bears to the Colorado Division of Wildlife. All mountain lion sightings should be reported (attacks or encounters should be reported immediately).</i></p>	Critical	Unlikely	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Abandoned mines	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p><i>Never enter abandoned mines or mine shafts. Be aware that the ground in these areas may be unstable and subject to collapse, especially near the entrance.</i></p>	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Yes	Every Partoller

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Camping	Sleeping in hazardous areas; water-borne illness	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p>*Take special care when establishing a campsite to avoid the following hazards: dead standing trees, dead branches or leaning green trees; hillsides where rolling/falling rocks or rockslides may occur; areas that could be overtaken in a flash flood event; at the base of snowfields steeper than 28°.</p> <p>*Always secure food so that it is out of reach of wildlife. Store cosmetics, toothpaste and strongly scented items with food, away from sleeping quarters.</p> <p>*Treat all water by boiling or purifying. Never drink directly from streams or lakes.</p>	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Yes	Every Partoller
Dispersing fire rings, trash clean-up	Injury from handling sharp objects or moving rocks	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p>*Always wear leather gloves when dispersing fire rings. Watch for fish hooks, broken glass, metal cans, or other sharp objects that may be buried in the ashes. Use care when moving rocks to avoid back injuries or crushing fingers/toes. Lift with your legs, not with your back.</p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
	Exposure to hazardous material or bloodborne pathogens	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p>*Trash clean-up will generally involve collecting occasional discarded items alongside the trail or in campsites. Wear gloves when handling. Do not handle any trash that may expose you to hazardous chemicals or bloodborne pathogens.</p>	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Yes	Every Partoller
Public contacts	Creating a negative experience for visitors or a risk to your personal safety	Moderate	Almost Certain	High	<p>*Strive for the minimum level of contact with other visitors necessary to disseminate information or establish a presence (i.e. sometimes simply being visible from a distance in uniform is adequate). Learn to recognize how much interaction is appropriate.</p> <p>*Maintain a calm, professional demeanor, do not be aggressive or argumentative. If someone gives you a hard time, don't let yourself become agitated or emotional. Try to listen rather than talk. Speak and act professionally, do not let situation get personal. Use available resources (info hand-outs, phone # list, Forest website, etc) to appease visitor and refer them to someone with more detailed information (pass the buck). It's okay to say "I don't know, but I can help you find the answer to your question."</p> <p>*Use available resources to educate visitors (i.e. handouts, phone #s, web addresses, etc.). Do not be afraid to admit that you do not know the answer to something. This is better than leaving a visitor with bad information that will reflect on the agency and organization you represent.</p> <p>*DO NOT INITIATE A CONTACT IN ANY SITUATION WHERE DRUGS, ALCOHOL, FIREARMS OR SUSPICIOUS INDIVIDUALS ARE PRESENT OR IF YOU DO NOT FEEL COMFORTABLE.</p> <p>*IF A CONTACT BECOMES THREATENING OR VIOLENT OR HAS THE POTENTIAL TO DO SO, REMOVE YOURSELF FROM THE SITUATION QUICKLY AND POLITELY. REPORT THE INCIDENT TO USFS OR LAW ENFORCEMENT.</p>	Negligible	Almost Certain	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller

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Clearing debris from trail	Injury to self or others	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	<p><i>*Do not attempt to tackle any situation for which you do not have adequate personal protective equipment (leather gloves, eye protection) tools, skills, training, or personnel. If trained you will also sign the Trail Maintenance and Construction JHA.</i></p> <p><i>*Be alert to the potential of debris to move in such a way that you or others are injured. Avoid moving anything that may accidentally roll onto trails, switchbacks, or potentially occupied areas below you.</i></p> <p><i>*Do not take any obstacles for granted. Branches and small trees can be especially deceptive when bound by other objects. Bind can create tension and compression forces that can cause the tree or branch to behave unpredictably when disturbed.</i></p>	Moderate	Unlikely	Low	Yes	Every Partoller
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In the event you are injured while performing	Proper treatment of injury	Critical	Possible	High	<p><i>Step 1: Seek proper medical attention immediately.</i></p> <p><i>Step 2: Contact one of the following people for injury forms and billing information within 48 hours:</i></p> <p><i>Patricia Hatchell: 303-541-2527</i></p> <p><i>Lyle Skaar: 303-541-2521</i></p> <p><i>Albuquerque Service Center: 1-877-372-7248 #2 OWCP</i></p> <p><i>Billing Address:</i></p> <p><i>US Forest Service</i></p> <p><i>2140 Yarmouth Ave</i></p> <p><i>Boulder, CO 80301</i></p>	Moderate	Possible	Moderate	Yes	Every Partoller
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