

Wilderness Network of Georgia

TRIP DIFFICULTY RATING SYSTEM

Appraise Yourself "Honestly"

Most activities require that participants be in good physical condition and prepared to take what the weather dictates. We ask you to appraise your own capabilities "honestly." If you fit the rating described, you are more likely to enjoy the trip and not feel intimidated that you might slow down the other participants.

Policy

All trips submitted to the newsletter must be rated if the leader wishes it to be published. The system outlined below must be used.

Activities not rated below: It is up to the trip leader to use their own experience and judgement regarding these trips. Examples of such trips include mountain biking, rock climbing, and rafting.

Hiking

For backpacking, use the rating system for hiking, but increase the rating one level higher for each description. For example, a moderate backpacking trip would cover 3-5 miles per day. Also assume in this rating that you are carrying a pack of approx. 30 lbs. for "very easy" to "strenuous" trips and 45 lbs. for "very strenuous" trips.

Rating	Description
Very Easy	Hikes generally involve 3-5 miles per day of hiking on gentle terrain. These hikes are good for beginning hikers.
Easy	Hikes will generally cover 3-5 miles per day on gentle to moderate terrain. These hikes may include sections of trail with steep grades and rough terrain. Participants should be in good physical condition.
Moderate	An average day on these hikes might involve 5-8 miles of hiking over moderate to steep grades. These hikes are more fast-paced, and participants should have hiking experience and be accustomed to physical activity and strenuous exercise.
Strenuous	Individuals opting for these hikes may find themselves covering between 8-11 miles a day over steep, demanding terrain, in adverse weather. Participants on these hikes should have experience hiking and should be accustomed to a regular schedule of strenuous exercise such as extensive backpacking, jogging, cycling, stairmachines.
Very Strenuous	Same as strenuous, but mileage is more than 10 miles a day.

Canoeing

Whitewater canoeists should refer to the international whitewater rating scale such as Class II, Class III, etc.. Rivers are frequently swollen in the Spring or after heavy rains. Higher water levels result in swifter currents. Trip leaders are encouraged to check river conditions before leading trips. This rating system is based on a moderate pace. If a faster pace is desired, the next highest difficulty rating should be used.

Safety Requirement: All canoeists on WNG canoe trips are required to have life jackets in the canoe for each person in the canoe. Anyone who cannot swim or is a poor swimmer must wear a life jacket at all times.

Rating	Description
Very Easy	Canoeing for 3 miles or less on a calm lake or river with no noticeable current. No canoeing experience needed.
Easy	Canoeing for 3-4 miles on a calm lake or river with a slight current. Little or no canoeing experience needed.
Moderate	Canoeing for 4-6 miles on a river with a moderate current, but no whitewater; or 4-10 miles on a calm lake.
Strenuous	Canoeing for 6-8 miles on a river with a moderately swift current, but no whitewater; or 10-16 miles on a calm lake.
Very Strenuous	Canoeing for greater than 8 miles per day with a moderate to swift current, but no whitewater; or 16 or more miles on a calm lake.

Road Biking

This rating system is based on a 10 mph pace. All WNG riders are required to wear safety helmets.

Rating	Description
Very Easy	Bike rides of 15 miles or less on a fairly flat terrain. Rides good for beginners.
Easy	Bike rides of 10-30 miles with flat terrain or small rolling hills. Good for beginners in decent shape.
Moderate	Bike rides of 15-40 miles with rolling hills and possibly a few steep hills. Riders should have some distance riding experience. Must be in good physical condition.
Strenuous	Bike rides of 20-60 miles with many moderate size hills or several steep hills. Riders should have distance riding experience and be in good physical condition.
Very Strenuous	Bike rides of 50+ miles (less if extremely hilly). Riders should have recent distance riding experience and be in excellent physical condition.