

Obsidian Bus Trips - GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION

OBSIDIANS AND FRIENDS are invited on these specially planned trips by the Bus Committee, sponsored by the OBSIDIANS, INC. We look for the unusual and prefer the back roads and sometimes the rails and water-ways; not the same as commercial tours. Each year we plan six to eight outings by motor coach. Most are day trips, but our agenda includes some overnight stays and usually one trip that covers multiple days. **Our purpose** is to follow the same basic objectives as the Obsidians, Inc., to explore the mountains, lakes, streams and trails of the northwest and to aid and assist as far as possible in the acquisition of the geological, ecological, biological, environmental and historical information concerning the region.

GENERAL INFORMATION: Trips are not for profit. Cost of the trip includes transportation, lodging and taxes, museum fees, admission charges, donations in lieu of admission, driver gratuity and the daily trip fees. Trip planners project costs and numbers of potential riders with the goal of keeping rider costs balanced with expenses. Unless otherwise designated in the trip description, meals are not included. Riders may be asked to provide their own sack lunch. Frequent rest stops are interspersed with activities. Participants wear name tags during all planned events. Sensible walking shoes are recommended. Those who have **Golden Age passes (Interagency Pass)** are asked to bring them. **Trips to Canada require individual passports.**

INSURANCE: The charter bus company carries the required liability and accident insurance. All riders are expected to provide their own medical, liability and accident insurance. In addition, the Bus Committee requires that you fill out a medical information form that will be carried in a sealed envelope on all trips you participate in. This form will be used in the event of an emergency thus the data *must be updated annually*. It will be held confidential. If you have serious updates during the season, please file a new form. Notify the reservations person if you need the form. Read trip descriptions, talk to the leaders and determine if you will be able to participate in planned activities.

LIABILITY WAIVER: Obsidians, Inc. requires each rider to sign a **Liability Waiver** prior to boarding the bus on each trip. The text of the waiver is below:

ACCEPTANCE OF RISK AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

I accept that outdoor activities can be dangerous, and that the Obsidians, Inc. activity leaders are volunteer facilitators and not professional guides. I accept all risks of this trip as my sole responsibility. I am providing my own equipment for my safety and comfort, including first aid supplies and medicines. I am physically fit for this trip. I have informed the trip leader of any condition that might affect my ability to participate in this activity. I agree to abide by Obsidians, Inc. policies.

By my signature below, and in consideration of Obsidians, Inc. sponsoring this trip and allowing me to participate, I release Obsidians, Inc., its officers, agents, and members from all claims on account of my death or injury resulting from any act, or failure to act, even if negligent, during my participation in this trip or activity, including travel to and from the trailhead or other starting point.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Any Obsidian may sign up for these trips. Non-members are welcome to join us and may be assigned an Obsidian host. The trip leader has the authority to exclude anyone who may present a danger to the group or to him/herself because of physical, medical or emotional conditions.

SIGN UP: Signing up for a trip early in the calendar year at the rally event indicates a commitment to participate and your intent to pay the costs by the due date. (Trips can also be paid for at the rally.) *Keep track of trips you sign up for, pay on time and keep the registrar or leader informed if you must cancel.* Leaders use the rally sign-up to determine if a trip must be canceled for lack of interest. We welcome additional riders, so you may phone the registrar or sign up on line if interested at a later date.

TRANSPORTATION: We charter buses which are modern, safe, clean, comfortable, air-conditioned and have an on-board toilet facility. Drivers are professional and well trained to insure enjoyable traveling.

LOADING SITE-ALL TRIPS: We will load at the (former) Shopko on Coburg Road near the bus stop on Coburg Road. Loading will be in the Park 'n Ride area between the old Shopko and Taco Bell. Most of our bus trips begin loading at 7:30 a.m., depart promptly at 8:00 a.m. and return between 5 and 6 p.m.

Specific times may vary depending on the destination and duration, so always check the monthly Obsidian Bulletin and any trip descriptions for details. On extended trips we encourage arranging private transportation to the loading site to avoid leaving private vehicles in the lot overnight. *Please notify the trip leader or Sharon Cutsforth (541-746-4929 or 541-735-4703) if you must cancel at the last minute.*

PAYMENT: Write a SEPARATE CHECK FOR EACH TRIP, payable to **OBSIDIANS BUS TRIPS.** It is your responsibility to observe the due dates for **all** payments. Priority on trips is based on the dates you paid in full. Please pay in a timely manner so that the trip leader has an accurate idea of the total number of riders. When the numbers are low at the cutoff date, the trip often is cancelled. Reserving your space well in advance also helps guarantee the trip.

WAITING LIST: A waiting list will be maintained if a trip is over subscribed. Only persons sincerely interested in participating should sign up. If your interest or availability changes, please inform the reservations person and/or the leader. The leader makes the ultimate selection based on the vacancy.

EXTENDED OR OVERNIGHT TRIPS: Room costs are based on booking for non-smoking, 2 persons, 2 beds. You are requested to select your roommate. Sometimes the leader or reservations person can assist you in that selection. The final selection is the rider's responsibility. If you need special considerations, let the registrar or leader know. Frequently there are no elevators so pack luggage you can carry up a flight of stairs. Be sure your luggage is labeled. **POLICY FOR SINGLES:** We encourage the single traveler to participate. Occasionally we can provide a single room, at a much higher rate. Our basic policy is based on 2 persons, 2 beds in order to minimize cost of the trip.

CANCELLATIONS CAUSE PROBLEMS. If you must cancel, inform the registrar or leader **IMMEDIATELY**. Leaders frequently must make guarantees and large payments 30 days in advance. Often motels require room lists 4 weeks in advance. Sometimes we are unable to recover costs; therefore you would be expected to pay them. If you are able to find a possible replacement that is appreciated but it will still be the leader's final decision, subject to the approval of the roommate. Persons on the waiting list have priority. . . It is difficult.

REFUNDS: Refunds will only be considered if a trip has generated a surplus. Such refunds will be determined after the trip when all financial data has been examined. Any refund is contingent upon recovery of prepaid fees, admissions, lodging costs, etc.

- **ONE DAY TRIPS:** No refunds unless the registrar or leader is notified in advance of the trip.
- **MULTI-DAY TRIPS:** Partial or full refunds may be made after the trip if cancellations are made at least 30 days before the trip.

BE RESPECTFUL OF OTHER RIDERS: The Federal Disabilities Act states that one should refrain from using scented deodorant, perfumes and heavy aftershaves in consideration of those who have allergies and related illnesses. On the bus, in close proximity to each other, it is important to be aware of common considerations of noise, volume, cell phone use and personal comfort. The microphone is available for anyone to share stories or information about points of interest. We have a **RULE: ALL TALKING CEASES WHEN THE MICROPHONE IS IN USE. This is particularly important when the leader is giving instructions concerning the trip or program.**

FINAL NOTE: Dates, itineraries or boarding sites may be changed so watch the monthly Obsidian Bulletin for updates. A waiting list will be maintained if a trip is over subscribed. Following is a description for each of this year's offerings. Multi-day trips will have detailed descriptions available nearer to the departure date. We hope you will find the trips appealing and will join us for an enjoyable experience.

All trips will be available for on line sign up beginning one week after the rally.

You may also call the reservations person to sign up.

Questions about Bus Trips? Email: bustrips@obsidians.org