



CONNECTING TODAY TO YESTERDAY. PRESERVING TODAY FOR TOMORROW.

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## Branch Out Event Waivers , Policies and Agreements

All Branch Out event participants (or their designees) are required to indicate they've read, understand and agree to GSMA's waivers, policies and fitness/endurance requirements during the registration process.

**Event Rating:** I understand that this event will travel at a group pace. I understand that most events require walking on uneven surfaces with trip hazards such as exposed roots and rocks. The conclusion of the day could be earlier or later than the designated time depending on multiple factors, including changes in programming, weather, hiking ability of the group, and educational opportunities encountered along the way.

**Photo/Video Release:** I understand and agree that Great Smoky Mountains Association and/or hired guides may use photos and/or video images of me taken during this trip for promotional purposes to support Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

**Cancellation/Refund Policy:** I understand that Great Smoky Mountains Association operates on a limited budget and is unable to issue refunds for my non-participation of a scheduled event. Instead, I agree my payment will constitute a tax-deductible donation to the Great Smoky Mountains Association Legacy Fund. Events travel rain or shine and follow Great Smoky Mountains National Park Service policies for weather and road conditions. Should an event be cancelled by GSMA or NPS, I am entitled, though not obligated, to request a full refund of my registration fee.

**Liability Waiver:** My registered guests and I assume the entire responsibility, understand and accept that Great Smoky Mountains Association events could involve risk, danger and hazards. I release Great Smoky Mountains Association, its officers, directors, members and contracted event leaders from all liability for accidents, injury, illness, or loss of property for myself and/or my dependent(s). I confirm that I am physically capable of participating in the described scheduled event. I will alert my guide to any allergies, diseases, physical limitations, injuries or physical conditions that could be aggravated by activity while participating in the Great Smoky Mountains environment.

**What to Bring:** I understand I am responsible for my own comfort during this event. In addition to plenty of water, an appropriate amount of food for my comfort and comfortable hiking shoes, I agree to dress in layers, bring a backpack and rain gear. I agree a personal first-aid kit and trekking poles may be helpful as well.

## Activity Rating Scale and Personal Endurance Agreement



**Easy:** A relaxed experience requiring little or no physical activity. Distances: 0 - 1 mile maximum. Typical settings: Indoor and outdoor programs. Seating often available. Most events are ADA accessible.

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**Easy Active:** Great for participants who want to participate in a low-impact outdoor program. Distances: 2 - 5 miles maximum. Settings: Walks that ramble along uneven trails and waterways with exposed roots and rocks. Potential for slight elevation gain and loss. Participants could encounter hazards such as exposed roots and rocks, insects and snakes.



**Moderate:** A medium-impact outdoor experience for those who are comfortable with physical exertion in spurts or for longer periods of time. Distances: 5 – 8 miles maximum. Settings: Hikes on rolling or mountainous trails with some steep ascents/descents. Expect elevation gain and loss. Participants could encounter hazards such as exposed roots and rocks, insects and snakes.



**Strenuous:** Designed for participants who are accustomed to hiking and who can independently navigate physically challenging and unplanned situations, such as climbing over or under down trees and crossing waterways. Participants should possess the skills and gear required to be safe in the backcountry during inclement weather. Distances: 9 miles or more. Settings: Hikes are in remote areas over mountainous terrain with steep ascents/descents. Participants could encounter hazards such as exposed roots and rocks, insects and snakes.

**My Fitness/Endurance:** Based on the event rating, I hereby attest that my level of fitness and personal ability to endure the event's potential physical requirements.

**Event Exclusion Policy:** All registered participants must read and agree to Great Smoky Mountains Association's waiver policy prior to joining an event. Even after a participant has digitally signed the waiver through the online registration process, GSMA representatives and/or event guides retain the right to exclude a registered participant if, in their professional opinion and estimation, said participant would put themselves or others at risk of injury by joining the activity. If a registered participant is asked not to join, he/she is entitled to an 80% refund of the registration fee, available by calling 865.436.7318, Ext. 349.