



# Orientation to Cave Rescue

*a technical course presented by the Western Region of the*

**NATIONAL CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION**

**of the National Speleological Society**

**April 27-28, 2013**

**Sequoia-Kings Canyon Natl. Park**

**Three Rivers, CA**



## About the Seminar

The NCRC's Orientation to Cave Rescue is an intensive two-day introduction to the science and management of cave rescue operations. Led by a team of highly qualified instructors, the techniques and skills you will learn from this seminar may be directly applied to cave rescue scenarios across the western states. Day 1 will include class sessions and exercises designed to teach a wide range of concepts and skills unique to cave rescue. Day 2 will deliver an underground mock rescue and debriefing custom-designed by the instructors to test and challenge your new skills.

## Accommodations & Meal Plan

Camping during this seminar will be available in the visitor parking lot of Crystal Cave. All students are encouraged to arrive on Friday the day before the seminar. Since the cave will still be seasonally closed to the public, we will have the facility to ourselves. We encourage all students to stay with the group overnight, but feel free to contact the registrar for recommendations of local accommodations if you need them. Restroom facilities will be available, but no showers. Lunch will be provided on Saturday and Sunday. Other meals are your own responsibility. There are no stores or convenient foodservice options near the cave, so please come prepared for the weekend. Please bring your own folding camp chair for sessions and evening presentations. At this time, we are unsure if there will be potable water available in the camping area. You may be asked to bring your own water supply.

## Environment, Area, Caves & Clothing

Cave environments in Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Parks can be rugged, cold, sometimes constricting, and, of course, dark. Crystal Cave has a constant temperature of 48 degrees. Be prepared to hike to the cave on both days of the seminar. Cold weather and layered clothing is necessary for this environment. You should have an extra layer of fleece to carry in your cave pack. Kneepads, sturdy boots, and leather gloves are strongly recommended. The hike to the cave is a half mile downhill from the camping area on a maintained trail. Weather at this location in April can be very unpredictable. Please be prepared for winter conditions.



*A cave rescuer manages the field phone during a recent mock rescue.  
Photo by Matt Bowers.*

## About the NCRC

The National Cave Rescue Commission is an internal organization of the National Speleological Society. It serves as the society's representative on issues of cave rescue training and operations. By design, the NCRC is not an operating cave rescue team. Rather, its mission is to provide training and development opportunities for persons and organizations engaged in cave rescue activities. Thus, while many of the volunteers associated with the NCRC perform rescues, they do this as members of their local rescue squads, civil defense units, or cave rescue groups. The main focus of the NCRC is development and maintenance of a national curriculum in cave rescue operations. It maintains a cadre of qualified instructors, who deliver cave rescue training programs at the national and regional levels.

## Experienced Instructors

Our volunteer instructors for this seminar have over 50 years of combined caving experience. As certified instructors with the NCRC, they have spent hundreds of hours perfecting the skills that will be offered to you in this intensive seminar. The student to instructor ratio is intentionally kept very low in order to guarantee that you receive the most hands-on experience possible.

## Required Equipment

This Orientation to Cave Rescue seminar will introduce you to nationally adopted cave rescue practices and the caving environment. At your discretion, this seminar may also be used to prepare you for the first of three levels of week-long cave rescue training classes offered nationally by the NCRC. This class gives a brief introduction to the major topical areas that are covered more thoroughly in the week-long classes. This course does not cover vertical rope techniques or surface search and rescue.

### Each student will need:

1. **HELMET.** A caving or climbing helmet is preferred. Modified construction type helmets with good chinstraps are acceptable.  
NO broad brimmed helmets.
2. **LIGHTS.** Three dependable, independent sources are required. Each must be capable of getting you out of the cave and must provide ample light to see. Each should be rugged and at least one, preferably all three, must be helmet mounted.
3. **RUGGED CLOTHING.**
4. **GLOVES.** Good leather or at least leather palm work gloves are a must.
5. **BOOTS.** Sturdy, lug soled, lace-up type boots with good support.
6. **FOOD.** Quick energy, ready to eat like trail mix, candy bars, small can of beans, fruit, etc.
7. **WATER.** Good water bottle or an army surplus canteen.
8. **SMALL PACK.** Items 2,6,7,9 and 10 go into this pack as well as extra batteries, bulbs and a note pad with short wooden pencils in Zip Loc bags.
9. **GARBAGE BAGS.** At least two 30-33 gallon size.
10. **PERSONAL FIRST AID KIT and SUPPLIES** including knife and whistle.

### Basic Course Outline:

Intro. to the NCRC and Cave Rescue  
Caves, Gear, Safety, & Conservation  
Rescue Operations and Management  
Logistics  
Equipment Planning and Packaging  
Cave First Aid / Medical Equipment  
Documentation  
Communications  
Cave Search  
Initial Response  
Media Interaction  
Medical Considerations  
Psychological Considerations  
Hypothermia  
Difficult Evacuation and Water Problems  
Litters and Patient Packaging  
Patient Packaging & Litter Handling  
Briefing for Mock Rescue

We will try to end Sunday's mock rescue and debriefing by 4pm for student travel considerations.

Some people find 20' of tubular one-inch nylon webbing and a couple of locking D carabiners handy, but they are not required. All participants must sign a liability waiver when they arrive at the seminar. Participants under 18 years of age must contact Roger Mortimer at [RMortimer@fresno.ucsf.edu](mailto:RMortimer@fresno.ucsf.edu) or (559) 442-4156 before registering,

## Travel Directions

Crystal Cave is located off the Generals Highway in Sequoia Kings-Canyon National Park, between the Ash Mountain entrance and Giant Forest. The Generals Highway may be subject to periodic closures for highway construction! Please be sure you provide a legible e-mail address on your registration form so we may update you as new information becomes available. Students are strongly encouraged to arrive on Friday evening. Activities will start promptly on Saturday morning. There is a half-mile hike required to get to the cave entrance from the parking area. Saturday morning will begin at the Crystal Cave parking area and then proceed downhill to the cave. Registration will begin at 8:15. Please be on time.

## Register Today

To guarantee a personal (and fun!) training experience for all participants, there are a limited number of spaces available for students in this seminar. This is an excellent opportunity for you to focus on learning some great skills with quality personal attention from nationally recognized instructors - each of whom has spent hundreds of hours learning, practicing and teaching these skills.

To register, please fill out the attached form and mail it in today. All students will be expected to sign a liability release upon arrival for the weekend's events.

Additional information is available by contacting the seminar registrar, Roger Mortimer, at [RMortimer@fresno.ucsf.edu](mailto:RMortimer@fresno.ucsf.edu) or (559) 442-4156.



Cave rescuers in this OCR will practice patient packaging techniques in real cave environments. Photo by Bill Frantz.

Additional copies of this registration form may be downloaded from <http://www.caves.org/ncrc/ncrc-wr/>

# Registration: Orientation to Cave Rescue

April 27-28, 2013 - Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park - Three Rivers, CA

Please type or print legibly - Use one form per person - Detach and mail with registration payment  
All participants must review and sign a liability waiver at check-in registration.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Natl. Speleological Society #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone: \_(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ Mobile/pager: \_(\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Agency or Grotto Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_ How long? \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary or health considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Registration per person:	\$40.00	
Would you like to be notified of future training opportunities?		
TOTAL ENCLOSED:		

Please mail registration form and your check or money order to:  Checks should be written to NCRC-Western Region	Dr. Roger Mortimer NCRC - Western Region 1455 N. Echo Ave. Fresno, CA 93728-1718
<i>Students under the age of 18 must contact the registrar prior to entry.</i>	

## Be Bear Aware!



Black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are an integral part of the Sierra ecosystem and one of the many wildlife species the National Park Service is mandated to protect. Black bears range throughout the parks - where they forage for natural foods - digging up roots in meadows, ripping apart logs, and peering into tree cavities for food.

The Crystal Cave area may be visited by black bears. If these usually shy animals learn to seek human food, they may damage cars, coolers, and tents. If a bear gets very destructive, it must be killed. To prevent this, you **MUST** follow the park's strict requirements to properly store items like food, toothpaste and deodorants during the seminar. Bear-proof storage boxes are provided in the camping area. You **WILL** be fined by the park rangers for failure to use these boxes!

Registrar tracking:	
Date Recd:	_____
Confirmed:	_____
Cancelled:	_____
Waiver:	_____

## Seminar Notes & WNS Instructions

### Seminar Notes:

Please plan to arrive at the seminar location no later than 8:30 AM on Saturday morning. Registration will begin at 8:15. Classes will start promptly at 9:00. Your registration includes lunch on Saturday and Sunday. Additional meals are your own responsibility.

**Cancellation Policy:** This seminar is expected to be filled to capacity. There will be no cancellation penalty until April 12. After that date, there will be a \$10 processing fee and the remainder of your registration fee will be refunded. No refunds will be given after April 23. Registrations may not be substituted without advance permission of the registrar.

**Availability:** There are a limited number of student spaces in this seminar. All interested participants are encouraged to register early. There are **NO** non-student rates available for this seminar. Please do not bring non-participating guests.

**Waitlist:** Once filled, the seminar registrar will create a waitlist for students should spaces become available. Registrations will be processed in order received based upon postmark.

**Confirmation:** When your registration is received and processed, you will be notified by phone call or e-mail.

### White Nose Syndrome Instructions:

Absolutely no clothing or equipment that has been used in White Nose Syndrome afflicted areas will be allowed in Crystal Cave unless ALL clothing and equipment has been decontaminated in advance using national decon protocols. All students and instructors will be expected to sign an affidavit stating they they understand and have followed these rules. More information is available at [www.caves.org/WNS/](http://www.caves.org/WNS/)