

SMALL PARTY ASSISTED RESCUE



A technical seminar presented by the

Southeastern Region of the NATIONAL CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION

**March 7 - 10, 2024
Little River Property
Menlo, GA**

About the Seminar

This NCRC Small Party Assisted Rescue (SPAR) seminar is an intensive four-day introduction to cave rescue techniques that a party of six or fewer people can perform, using minimal gear that can be carried on caving trips. Topics covered in the class include preventing and preparing for common caving-related problems, basic medical skills, moving patients through obstacles, helping people who are stuck on rope, and building and operating haul and lower systems.

Students will need to study some material in advance so that the sessions reinforce and elaborate on existing information. Students will practice skills in a rope gym setting, and then will build on those skills at cliff and cave sites. The course will be demanding, with long days and evenings, but will provide participants with valuable skills that they can use to help themselves and others when they are needed most.

Entrance Skills Demonstration

For safety and class efficiency, students should already be competent and comfortable with knot-tying and vertical-caving skills. Before taking the course, students must successfully demonstrate the knot-tying and single-rope-technique (SRT) skills described in the [March 2024 Menlo SPAR student preparation guide](#). We encourage students to contact an NCRC instructor to complete their skills demonstration prior to the class. For any students who are unable to complete this in advance, we will hold a skills demonstration session at the course site on Wednesday, March 6, from 5 - 9 pm.

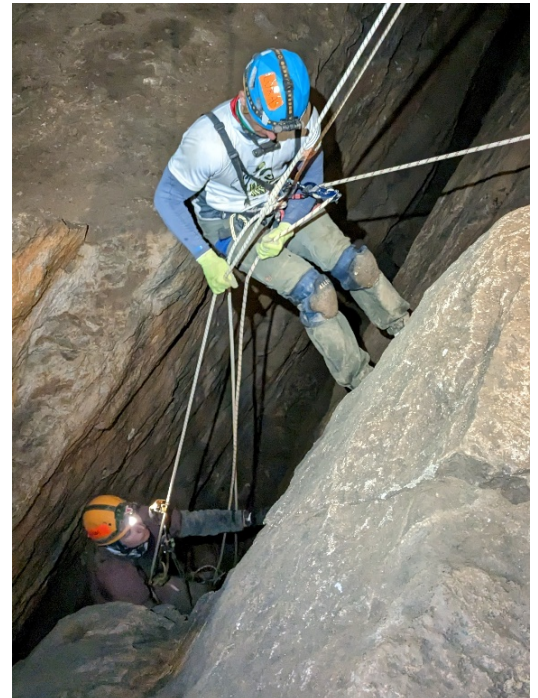
Pre-Registration and Registration

Class size will be limited to 12-16 students (depending on instructor availability). We will hold a five-day "pre-registration" period beginning on Dec 8, 2023, and ending at 11:59 pm Eastern on Dec 13. See <https://caves.org/event/spar-menlo-march-2024/>. We will select students from the pre-registered group of students by random drawing. If selected, you will be charged for the course; be sure to read the cancellation policy before pre-registering. Cost, which includes on-site camping and some meals (see below), is \$250 for current NSS members; \$300 for non-NSS members. Non-NSS members may pre-register at the NSS member rate by first [joining or renewing NSS membership](#).

Arrival and Schedule

Students should plan to arrive and check in Wednesday evening, March 6, from 5 – 9 pm. From Thursday through Saturday, course sessions will start each day at 8:00 a.m, and will continue after dinner. On Sunday, we will start at 8:00 a.m., and will conclude around 5:00 p.m. Students should come prepared each day with food, water, and appropriate gear and clothing for classroom, rope gym, and cliff or cave activities. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructors.

Please see next page for more information.



Rappelling Counterweight Haul

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Accommodations and Food

The 160-acre Little River property, located at 2477 Old State Rd in Menlo, GA, will be our base camp. This will be our location for classroom and rope-gym sessions, group meals, and camping with showers.

The course fee covers meals from Wednesday dinner through Sunday lunch. We will do our best to accommodate dietary preferences and restrictions shared at pre-registration, but please remember you are ultimately responsible for your own health.

Field Sites / Weather

This course will include field exercises at cliffs and caves in northwest Georgia. Daytime highs are likely to be in the 50s to 60s, with nighttime lows potentially near or below freezing. Come prepared for the possibility of rain. We encourage students to bring folding camp chairs for the classroom and rope gym sessions.



Classroom / Rope Gym at the Little River Property, Menlo, GA

Required Equipment for All Participants

All gear must be clean and in good condition. Synthetic-based life-safety gear (e.g., helmets, harnesses, cordage, etc.) should be less than 10 years from date of manufacture.

1. **HELMET.** Caving or climbing helmet, UIAA or CE approved, with a 3 or 4-point non-elastic chinstrap.
2. **LIGHTS.** Three dependable, helmet-mountable, and independent sources of light.
3. **SEAT HARNESS.** Commercially sewn.
4. **ASCENDING SYSTEM.** Must be a complete and functional system with a minimum of two points of attachment connected to the seat harness; including a mechanical ascender that can be manipulated with one-hand. Tether connected to the seat harness, with a carabiner (may be non-locking IF not part of the handle tether) on the free end independent of the ascender.
5. **DESCENT CONTROL DEVICE.** Rack (standard or 4-bar w/ hyperbar micro), bobbin with friction device, or Scarab-style device.
6. **RUGGED CLOTHING.** Cave suit optional. Must have insulating, wicking layers, and an outer protective layer.
7. **GLOVES.** Leather or rubber caving gloves.
8. **BOOTS.** Sturdy, lug-soled boots with good support.
9. **FOOD.** Quick energy, ready to eat (trail mix, candy bars, cheese, etc.).
10. **WATER.** 1 - 2 liters recommended (enough to stay hydrated for a full day of field work).
11. **SMALL PACK.** Rugged enough for the cave environment.
12. **TWO CARABINERS.** Two extra locking carabiners that are not part of your SRT gear.
13. **WEBBING (1") or ACCESSORY CORD (7+ mm).** 15+ feet long, 10+ kN minimum breaking strength (MBS).
14. **RESCUE GEAR (optional).** Any pulleys, Prusiks, or small rescue gear that you normally carry in your cave pack.

About NCRC

The National Cave Rescue Commission is a commission of the National Speleological Society (NSS). It serves as NSS's representative on issues of cave rescue training and operations. By design, 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.

Questions?

For questions regarding **gear, prerequisites, or seminar material**, contact Ron Miller, ron.miller@caves.org.
For questions regarding **registration or course logistics**, contact Cathy Borer, cborer@caves.org.