



Participants Risk Management Policies and Recommendations

AOA Bear Spray Policy

General

Orienteering carries a risk of encounters with large wild animals. Historically most encounters have been by organizers prior to the event, rather than at the event itself. One of the most effective strategies at avoiding a negative encounter is carrying bear spray while in the forest. Although this accepted practice has become commonplace among recreationalists in the Bow Valley, there has been some reluctance among race participants to carry bear spray while out on course despite the fact that every year, there are multiple encounters with bears and other wildlife by the general public in bear country.

The AOA wants to ensure that:

- All orienteering event participants are safe.
- All events held in Canmore Nordic Centre Provincial Park are compliant with the CNCP bear spray policy.

AOA Bear Spray Policy:

For all AOA sanctioned events and all AOA affiliated clubs' events which are held in bear country (designated by map location) and/or an area that has a bear warning in effect:

- Organizers must inform the participants about the risks associated with wildlife and/or bears in the area and implement the recommendations below:
- **Participants 18 years and older are recommended to carry bear spray at all times when participating in any orienteering activities alone.**
- **Youth between the ages of 12-18y are either recommended to carry bear spray or recommended to be accompanied by someone else who is carrying bear spray with them.**
- **Children under 12 years of age are recommended to be shadowed by an adult who is carrying bear spray with them.**
- All participants who carry bear spray must acknowledge that they know how to use it.

Recommendations regarding bear encounters and how to use bear spray:

<http://www.albertaparks.ca/kananaskis-country/advisories-public-safety/wildlife/be-bear-smart/>



AOA Wild Smart Policy

General

Many orienteering events happen in wilderness areas where there are animals such as bears, cougars, wolves, elk and moose. Every year numerous interactions between people and wildlife occur. Although most interactions are harmless to both people and wildlife, some can become a serious public safety threat resulting in injury, property damage and/or dead or relocated wildlife.

The AOA wants to ensure that all orienteering participants are safe by knowing how to:

- reduce the risk of animal encounters;
- react in case of animal encounters.

AOA Wild Smart Policy:

- **AOA and all affiliated clubs must encourage their members to review the WildSmart information yearly and have it available on their website where applicable.**
- **Organizers must inform the participants about the risks associated with wildlife in the area and provide safety recommendations.**



Recommended educational information about living with wildlife:

http://www.albertaparks.ca/media/2777016/web_living_wildlife_pamphlet.pdf

<http://www.wildsmart.ca/learn.htm>

About bear encounters and how to use bear spray:

<http://www.albertaparks.ca/kananaskis-country/advisories-public-safety/wildlife/be-bear-smart/>