

# Interpretive Walks

An interpretive walk is really a talk that is spread out along a trail in serial form. It should have all of the elements of a talk - theme, introduction, transitions, and conclusion.

## Preparation

1. Plan your route.
2. Gather equipment: Radio, first-aid kit, props, water.
3. Look good - sharp, professional, like a leader.

## Beginning the Walk

1. Arrive at least 15 minutes early.
2. Greet hikers individually, engage in conversation.
3. Start introduction on time.
4. Introduce yourself and your organization.
5. Welcome the group to Denali National Park and Preserve.
5. Let hikers know what to expect:
  - Trail name.
  - Distance to be covered
  - Time hike will take
  - Type of terrain to be covered, trail conditions
  - Wildlife precautions (see Bear, Moose & Wolf Warnings script)
  - Necessary gear: Water, good shoes/boots, raingear if appropriate, bug repellent
  - Ending location
6. Remind hikers of conservation issues: Leave the flowers, rocks, everything for future visitors and for use by wildlife.
7. Introduce your theme.

## The Walk

### *Logistics/Crowd Control*

1. Start off briskly, make first stop in sight of starting location so that stragglers can find you.
2. Stay in the lead; don't let kids (or adults!) run ahead.
3. Stop at planned points of interest that you have developed to support your theme but take advantage of the unexpected interpretive moment.
4. When asked questions while walking, defer questions to next stop.
5. Notice if someone needs a rest.
6. Constantly consider visitor & personal safety.

### **At Stops:**

- A. Don't make stops too long; be aware of signs of restlessness.
- B. Keep track of group; gather everyone at stops before talking.
- C. Stop where all can see and hear.
- D. Make adjustments for group size: Know where good stopping places are that can accommodate large groups.
- E. Project your voice; you shouldn't have to shout.

### ***Talk Tips***

1. Involve the group:
  - Avoid lecturing
  - Use questioning; allow people to theorize, speculate
  - Avoid technical vocabulary
  - Involve all 5 senses
2. Repeat visitor questions and responses for whole group.
3. If you don't know an answer, say so.
4. Keep explanations simple, relevant, concrete. Silence can be powerful.
5. Visitors usually love to hear your personal experiences but notice if you hear yourself saying "I" too often.
6. Share your enthusiasm, be yourself.

### **Finishing the Walk**

1. Make sure all visitors are accounted for.
2. End with a strong conclusion that wraps up your theme.
3. Thank hikers for their participation in the preservation of Denali National Park and Preserve