

# **BANNACK STATE PARK LIVING HISTORY RE-ENACTORS PERIOD WEAPON SAFETY POLICY**

REVISED 1-20-15

## **LIVING HISTORY RE-ENACTORS ETHICS AND CONDUCT**

Bannack State Park is a family oriented historic site. We strive to make our programs appropriate for all visitors to ensure a quality experience for our guests. Please keep this in mind when presenting your programs.

Living History and reenactments are an important and effective way of communicating and revealing the rich history of Bannack State Park to visitors. State Park staff strives to present accurate, factual and realistic reenactments of the events that took place here. Your commitment to helping us provide those experiences to visitors is appreciated.

Together we can present high quality interpretation in a safe and meaningful way.

Safety is our top priority for these events, your cooperation and attention to the safety guidelines outlined below will help keep Reenactors and spectators from being injured, reduce liabilities, help you present these reenactment programs safely and increase your credibility as a living history interpreter.

## **REENACTMENT SAFETY**

### **A. Safety Training**

All Bannack Living History Re-enactors and guests will be required to have safety training and/or certification prior to bringing or using firearms at Bannack State Park whether for a reenactment, demonstrations, or part of the historic costuming. All participants will take the safety test annually. Safety tests are to be administered and kept on file by the Bannack Firearms Safety Officer/Living History Coordinator who will provide tests.

### **B. Reenactment Safety**

1. Gunfire is prohibited in any area where gunpowder is being handled or exposed for the purpose of loading cartridges or within 25 feet of any stored powder, or ammunition.
2. There will be no movement through the spectator area with loaded long arms or loaded and drawn pistols, and a 30 foot safety area is to be maintained between the spectators and the loaded or drawn weapons at all times.
3. No live ammunition will be carried on or about any Re-enactor at any time at Bannack State Park. This includes live rounds carried in pistol belts and bandoleers, even if a different caliber than the firearm(s) carried.

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4. Firearms and supplies will never be out of possession, sight or control of the owner. It is imperative that you prevent access to your weapon and supplies before during and after the reenactment to prevent theft or mishandling. As the owner you are responsible for proper care and safety of your equipment. You are responsible for the security of your weapon(s) at ALL times.
5. Random or indiscriminate firing of weapons is prohibited at all times. For visitor safety please do not fire weapons unless in a scheduled demonstration.
6. No shooting is to take place when horses are within 300 feet of the area where gunfire will occur.
7. There shall be no firing from a prone position without prior authorization.
8. The safe fire zone is 30 feet. No fire shall be directed at another person within that distance, in reenactments that call for close quarters all weapons will be pointed to the side away from spectators and participants and in a safe direction of fire.
9. Weapons shall be safely and properly cleared prior to leaving the reenactment area. No loaded weapon shall be in the Bannack area unless participating in an interpretive event in which it is called for and approved by the Safety Officer.
10. The Safety Officer/Living History Coordinator will hold a safety check prior to each firing event. The safety officer shall inspect weapons. No dirty, damaged or unserviceable weapon shall be taken to the reenactment area or be used in demonstrations.
11. The Safety Officer/Living History Coordinator will insure that none of the participants are in possession of any live ammunition during reenactments. The Safety Officer will check for safe ammunition (Factory loaded "Hollywood" style blanks) or self loaded that DO NOT and CAN NOT fire any form of projectile, which includes wax, cardboard, or any other material, except powder.
12. Any malfunctioning weapon shall be immediately reported to the Safety Officer and removed from the reenactment area.
13. No ramrods or knives shall be used during reenactments. Ramrods and knives shall be secured during reenactment. Exceptions are occasions where knives are necessary for a particular demonstration such as, cutting patches, cooking or any other programs where a knife is an integral part of that demonstration. If in doubt check with the Safety Officer/Living History Coordinator.
14. The signal for a real injury in the course of reenactment is Medic / Medic!
15. It is the duty of the Safety Officer to ascertain that all weapons are secured after the reenactment.

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16. Spectators will only handle weapons in controlled, demonstration scenarios. The weapon being demonstrated will be unloaded and is never to leave the sight of its owner. Minors under adult supervision will only handle weapons with parental or guardians consent. Handling of weapons by spectators for any other reason other than described above is strictly prohibited. The only exception is the black powder shooting demonstration area.
17. To avoid unnecessary conflict, at no time should Re-enactors pick up another Re-enactors weapon without permission. The exception would be if Re-enactors believes the weapon has been forgotten and the intent is to retrieve it from its location with the intent to return it to the owner.

## **LONGARM SAFETY**

1. Weapons shall be clean and in good repair prior to use.
2. Weapons will be loaded prior to use with the permission of the Living History coordinator.
3. Longarms shall be loaded only with FF or FFF grade black powder.
4. Longarm charges must be made with paper, without tape or staples and shall not exceed a 70-grain load.
5. Cartridge long arms may be loaded with approved factory loaded "Hollywood" style blank cartridges made for reenactment situations. Any other types of blank cartridges need to be approved by the firearms safety officer before being used.

## **PISTOL SAFETY**

1. Cap and Ball Revolvers and other non-cartridge pistols shall be loaded with FFF powder only. Each chamber shall have no more than a 35-grain load except that a single chamber pistol may be loaded with 40 grains. Cartridge pistols may be loaded with factory loaded "Hollywood" style blanks specifically made for reenactments.
2. Wads will be made with Styrofoam, wall insulation (pink or white), florist's foam, or dry, powdered Cream of Wheat or Malt o Meal. Cups or meat trays shall not be used. \*(DO NOT USE LUBE) Cap and Ball revolver cylinders shall be loaded as follows:
  - a. Charge all chambers with black powder.
  - b. Place foam in each chamber and ram down foam, or fill remainder of each chamber with Cream of Wheat down tight.

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- c. Do Not Use grease to pack a foam-loaded cylinder.  
(We have found that this can create a projectile hazard, the firm packing of foam and cream of wheat eliminates the chain fire hazard. This takes a little practice to load, but it is very safe and effective. Shooters must maintain the interval when using cream of wheat it will spray at close distances. It needs to be packed, with the compression lever several times when loading, and the excess should be dusted off. Weapons need to be cleaned daily when using this load.)
3. All pistols shall be loaded prior to reenactment.
4. Pistols shall either be discharged at the end of a reenactment or have the caps removed and the pistol secured.
5. All pistols shall be carried in holsters. Carrying pistols in waistbands or belts is prohibited.

## **BLADED WEAPONS**

Bladed weapons shall not be drawn or used during reenactment and must be secured in the scabbard or sheath unless used in demonstration purposes or maintenance. However, knives may be used for such things as cutting patches, cooking and other demonstrations where a knife is normally used.

## **SPECTATOR SAFETY**

1. The Safety Officer shall be in charge of spectator safety.  
However, spectator safety is the responsibility of each member.
2. The event staff is responsible for the placement of spectator barriers. The barriers are to be patrolled by the Safety Officer and event staff during all reenactment operations.
3. If, at any time, a spectator enters the 30-foot safety area during the re-enactment any re-enactor or safety officer observing the action shall call a cease-fire. The cease-fire shall be maintained until the spectator has been removed or disperses from the area.
4. Program announcements or printed materials shall include safety messages reminding visitors these areas have been defined for their safety.
5. Earplugs and safety glasses shall be made available to the public when participating in the black powder demonstration.
6. At no time should any weapon be pointed at a spectator.

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## **FIREARMS SAFETY OFFICER TO CHECK CERTIFICATION CARDS**

Bannack Firearms Safety Officer/Living History Coordinator will check all Bannack Firearms Certification cards and weapons before the first reenactment at events. All members arriving late will check in with the Safety Officer, who will insure that, their cards and weapons have been checked.

## **GLOSSARY**

**Edged weapons:** Any knives, dirks, daggers, swords, axes, hatchets, cleavers, etc with a sharpened edge.

**Living history:** The presentation of historic events, lifestyles, skills, etc. that is presented in historically accurate costumes, language and accoutrements for the period being represented.

**Living History Coordinator:** The person responsible for the historical accuracy of any living history presentation at Bannack.

**Longarms:** Firearms other than pistols that includes, rifles, carbines, muskets, shotguns, etc.

**Modern Weapons:** Firearms, knives and other weapons that are non-period.

**Powder/Black powder:** The explosive charge used in firearms. Designations of FFg and FFFg refer to the grain size of the powder.

**Reenactor:** A living history interpreter taking part in the recreation of an event that occurred in history, usually the people involved in the "gunfights".

**Safety area:** The immediate area surrounding the reenactment that is taking place-involving weapons fire. A minimum distance of 30 feet must be maintained between the re-enactors and the audience.

**Safety Officer:** The person responsible for the safe conduct of all reenactments and safe handling of firearms. The Safety Officer will inspect firearms and ammunition; and may provide training, testing and issue Bannack Firearms Certification cards.

## **Safety Officer Qualifications:**

The Safety Officer or Designee shall be Knowledgeable of:

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1. The functions and use of muzzle loading rifles, handguns, and shotguns.
2. Firearms history; familiarization and maintenance of equipment; proper procedures; and the sportsman's role in society.
3. Bannack's firearm policies and procedures; and the instructional process.
4. And, completed a safety training course, such as from the NRA, NMLRA, National Park Service, or other appropriate training and/or certification.

***Styrofoam:*** The material used as wadding in blanks. This is the green florist Styrofoam. It has also been found that either the white or pink wall insulation sheets are also safe and disintegrate upon firing.