



Spring Seeker Safety

Land Access

Always make sure of the land ownership and management of the places you plan to visit. You can check this on our Spring Seeker Waters Map, BLM maps, or a number of different apps for your phone. Follow regulations. Don't hike off-trail to visit a spring if a land manager prohibits it in that area. Make sure you have the proper recreation permit to visit an area. For example, you might need a recreation pass to hike in National Park lands or on Forest Service lands in Madera Canyon or on Mt. Lemmon. State lands require a yearly recreation pass that you can obtain here (<https://asld.secure.force.com/recreationalpermit/>).

DO NOT enter private lands without permission. You should only enter private lands if you know the owner and they give you explicit permission to record spring data on their land. Similarly, do not enter or record data on tribal lands unless you are a member of the tribe or have explicit permission to do so.

Springs are Fragile

Springs are more fragile than other ecosystems. Take care not to trample spring vegetation or crush aquatic animal life. Enjoy the water, but be respectful of these precious places. We don't recommend taking your dog to springs, but if you do, please make sure that they don't dig or disturb wildlife.

Know your Limits

While we're excited for you to help us gather spring data, our first concern is your safety. Many springs are not on established trails. They can be in very steep, rugged terrain. Roads to get near them may be 4WD. Stay within your normal comfort zone for exploring outdoors. If you normally hike on trails, don't try to go to springs off-trail. Use good judgement – coming home safe is more important than recording data at another spring!

Stay Safe

Listed below are some of the hazards you may encounter surveying springs and the actions you can take to stay safe. It is always a good idea to let someone know where you are going and when you are expected back, and then to check in with them upon your return. We require checking-in like this with SIA staff if SIA sends you to a particular spring.

Sun and brush - Wear pants, sturdy shoes/boots. Long sleeves, sunscreen, and a brimmed hat no less than 4.5 inches are encouraged.

Unstable footing, falls, injury - Wear sturdy boots with non-skid surface. Be aware of your surroundings, especially your footing. Test each step in loose areas. Do not walk on flood debris. Take frequent breaks. Be sure to use caution when crossing barbed wire fences. Maintain situational awareness to avoid injury to eyes or being scratched or poked by branches while distracted by work tasks or human interaction.

Encounters with animals or insects (poison, rabies, attacks, etc.) - Don't approach or touch any animal that acts strange or out of character. Rabid animals may or may not exhibit aggression. Treat all animals as potentially dangerous. Pay attention to where you sit or put your hands. If you are allergic to insect stings, carry proper medication at all times. Do not feed wild animals.



Mosquitos: Use insect repellants. Wear long sleeves and pants. Avoid being outdoors at dawn and dusk.

Ticks & chiggers: Very likely in grassy areas during monsoon season. Tuck pants into your socks, and shirt into your pants. Spray insect repellent or cedar oil on your clothing.

Javelina: Make your presence known – make noise so they can hear and avoid you. Do not approach from down wind.

Mountain Lion: Make lots of noise. If a lion is encountered, give animal an escape route, talk calmly and firmly, back away slowly, and try to appear larger by raising arms, jacket, etc.

Bears: Make plenty of noise. If a bear is encountered, give the animal plenty of room to escape. Talk firmly and back away slowly. If attacked, do not fight back, clasp hands across back of neck, and tuck body into ball to protect vitals. Do not use scented sprays, lotions, or perfumes.

Rattlesnakes: Wear 8" high leather boots. Be alert when walking or climbing in rocky areas. Look before placing feet or hands on rocks. If someone is bitten, call for medical assistance immediately.

Hot and Cold Weather (Heat exhaustion, hyponatremia, hypothermia) - Always have plenty of hydrating fluids with you in the summer and winter (water, occasional sports drink). Hydrate appropriately. Carry electrolytes during warm weather. Be in good physical condition and know your limitations. Always be aware of expected weather conditions and be prepared. In hot weather, take frequent breaks and work at a reasonable pace. In cold weather, wear clothing in layers and carry extra high-energy food, waterproof matches, and small flashlight. It is wise to have a coat in your vehicle at any time of the year. During rainy seasons travel with rain gear.

Flooding – Do not cross flooded streams or areas. If rain is anticipated, plan outings to avoid low-water crossings.

Lightning - Best protection is to return to your vehicle. If this is not possible, seek shelter in a low-lying area under a thick growth of small trees. Avoid tall trees, ridge tops, open water, peaks, saddles, and put down metal tools. Also do not shelter in caves.

Border Considerations - Don't travel alone. Use caution, courtesy, common sense in dealing w/ all people encountered. If a situation looks as if weapons are involved, large parcels are being loaded/unloaded, groups of people are present, leave the area immediately. Avoid remote canyons near the border unless you are working with a group of people. Don't slow down or stop for people who approach your vehicle unless you are with a group. Let someone know where you are going each day and when you expect to return. Stay out of areas where you have no cell communication unless you are working with a group.