Time Control Plans

Kate Vancouver

. Overview: This lesson is to help students understand what and Time Control Plan (TCP) is used for and when. After detailed explanation of definitions and purposes, students will be asked to create a TCP that will be talked about and examined at the end of the day for accuracy and comprehensiveness.

. Justification: It is extremely helpful in encouraging participants to closely examine the potential route, anticipate what the day is going to be like, and determine how long it will take to get to the day's destination. It is useful for outdoor leaders and their civilian counterparts so that they may have a plan (and backup plans) for where they will be at any given time in case of emergency. TCPs are also useful for judgment and decision making development as well as improvement of map skills.

. Goal – Students will understand what a TCP is, why and when it is important, and the various parts of a TCP.

. Learning Outcomes

. a) Students will be able to explain a TCP is, why and when it is important, and the parts of a TCP.

. b) Students will be able to create and implement an effective and accurate TCP.

. c) Students will monitor their daily progress and reevaluate their TCP and potentially make modifications to their objectives, and create TCPs for other days or trips.

. Areas & Equipment Needed

. a) The lesson will be taught in either Pisgah Nat'l Forest or the Outer Banks before the day's travel begins. An area that allows for the group to gather with necessary equipment is ideal.

. b) Students will need pens/pencils, notebooks, crazy creeks, water/snacks as needed and weather appropriate clothing/shelter, maps and measuring tools.

. Risk Management – It will be important to make sure the location of the lesson is safe from environmental dangers such as widow-makers. Students should sit on camp chairs to prevent getting cold. If necessary, tarps should be set up to protect from rain.

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. Lesson Content

. a) Introduction – Jason wanted to go for a hike with his friends but he knew that a storm was supposed to be coming in around 4 p.m. He had heard that the trail could be finished in 2 hours, so the group started the hike at 1 p.m. Unfortunately for Jason and his friends, they didn't realize that the 2 hour estimate was for people in much better shape, used to much higher altitudes and steeper trails than them. The group had not thought of what to do in case they were caught in the storm, and had no idea how much farther they had to reach the end of the trail. Seeing as how things were going so well already, the storm ended up coming in at 3:30. An hour and a half into their hike with no end in sight the lightning storm completely stopped their progress and they were stuck in a grove of trees with no food, shelter, or extra clothing.

. b) Main Activities – Explain definition, importance, and outline content – have students take notes on this information.

   Students will break into small groups and create a TCP for the day based on the outline. If they have any questions about what each section entails they should discuss it together or ask questions. They will be given approx. 20 minutes to work on this

. c) Closure Activity – Everyone should share what they came up with for their TCP and we can discuss any misunderstandings or issues encountered.

. d) Follow-Up Activity – At the end of the day we will see whose TCP was the most accurate. In following days students will be encouraged to consider the day's objectives and create a TCP.

. Assessment – Students' TCPs will be evaluated for understanding and proper completion. Students will be asked to explain the importance of TCPs and when and why the might be used. Students will be observed in relation to their continued use of TCPs.

. Teaching Considerations

. a) Timing – This would be a good lesson to teach in conjunction with travel techniques and map interpretation, preferably soon after both have been taught and while we are still on the backpacking portion of the trip.

. b) There are no alternative activities to deliver content.

. c) Inability to gather in large group due to trees, other factors: I would need to speak louder, address each individual on their understanding.

Information for me, from *Backcountry Classroom*:

1. Definition and purpose: A Time Control Plan (TCP) detailed itinerary of the day's travel. Extremely helpful in encouraging participants to closely examine the potential route, anticipate what the day is going to be like, and determine how long it will take to get to the day's destination.
2. TCPs are developed with consideration for:
   a. Knowledge of the country: It is important to know the country well but if you don't, be conservative in planning
   b. Need for flexibility: be sure to continuously reevaluate progress and, if necessary, modify the objectives.
3. TCPs are useful:
   a. On small group day hikes for emergency purposes
   b. In learning to anticipate travel times in various environments
   c. In developing map interpretation skills
   d. In developing judgment and decision-making skills
4. **TCPs include:**
   a. Group info
      i. Group leader name and member names
      ii. Number in group
      iii. Group gear to be carried
   b. Starting point
      i. Geographical description
      ii. Common name of location
      iii. Longitude and latitude data if possible
   c. Destination point
      i. Geographical description
      ii. Common name
      iii. Longitude and latitude
   d. Distance to travel: estimated distance in miles to the ¼ mile
   e. Elevation gain: determine total gain and total loss, then net loss/gain.
   f. Estimated travel time: time of depart and arrival, guidelines:
      i. On a flat trail with a relatively heavy pack most groups can travel at about 2 mph
      ii. Off-trail hiking 1 mph
      iii. At altitudes up to 7,000 ft add an hour for every 1,000 ft of elevation
      iv. At altitudes between 7,000 and 10,000 add 1 ½ hours for 1,000 ft of elevation
      v. For every 1,000 ft of elevation lost add 30 min
      vi. Factors:
         1. Pack weight
         2. Illnesses or injuries
         3. River crossings
         4. Terrain difficulties
         5. Water travel: wind direction and speed and current
   g. Estimated rest time: Try to determine the hiking/rest ratio and anticipate total rest time

h. Description of route: descriptions of trails to be traveled, intersections to be encountered, major physical features. Include elevations and distances.
i. Contingency plan: In case the group is unable to make it to camp
j. Obstacles and hazards that may be encountered

References

Drury, J, Berman, B. Bonney, D. Berman, M. Wagstaff. (2005). *The Backcountry Classroom: Lessons, Tools, and Activities for Teaching Outdoor Leaders.* Guilford, Conn.: Falcon/Globe Pequot Press, c2005.