

## **PHYSICAL CONDITIONING FOR TRAILS PROGRAM PROJECTS**

The following is a general guide to assist in determining the level of physical ability needed to perform on a project. Projects are rated at three Levels of Physical Difficulty to assist members in determining, for themselves, if they can perform the physical duties of a project. If individuals have questions about the difficulty of a project or their ability to perform the work safely, they should discuss their concerns with the project Squad Leader.

**Level III** Trail or Building Maintenance Project Requires an “Arduous” Physical Fitness Requirement:

Generally, **Level III Projects** are pack string supported wilderness projects requiring 6 or more miles of hiking with moderate to high changes in elevation during the hiking. Duties include hiking into the project and significant daily hiking with a day pack and associated extensive physical labor such as brushing; primitive trail and bridge construction or reconstruction; building retaining walls, turnpikes, or boardwalks; and/or sawing with chain or crosscut saw.

**Level II** Trail or Building Maintenance Project Requires a “Moderate” Physical Fitness Requirement:

Generally, **Level II Projects** are light duty trail maintenance, campground maintenance, or building structure projects that most often are accessed by hiking 5 or less miles with a day pack on relatively level trails or driving to the work site with physical labor most likely to be light trail work involving tread repair, water bar construction, and brushing; or moderate carpentry and building construction of facilities such as reroofing a cabin, constructing a corral or fence, or general repair of a facility.

**Level I** Trail or Building Maintenance Project Requires a “Light” Physical Fitness Requirement:

Generally, **Level I Projects** are drive to projects involving light carpentry or administrative site maintenance duties. Hiking on a relatively level trail for up to a mile may be required.

### **Cautionary Note:**

Before you begin to train for testing yourself to determine your physical ability or increasing your level of activity, consult your physician. This is especially important if you are over 40 and have been inactive, have a history of heart condition, chest pain, loss of balance, or have a joint or bone problem that could be made worse by a change in physical activity.

Start training at least three months before you are scheduled to work on a project. To be in shape for work duty, you may want to train in the footwear or boots you will wear on the job. Footwear should be ankle high and protect the ankles. Start physical conditioning by walking. Train for the Physical Difficulty level for which you will be required to perform. Start training without a pack. Gradually increase distance and begin carrying the weight you would on the project.