

Appendix C

Springfield Plateau Grotto Statement of Principles

The following statements are the principles or ethics by which Springfield Plateau Grotto (SPG) conducts itself in order to protect and preserve caves and the access to caves and to enjoy orderly, productive trips and meetings. In order to join SPG or to take part in trips or other functions, participants are expected to conduct themselves in conformity with these Principles:

1. I will do all I reasonably and legally can to protect caves from destruction. This means that I will never vandalize caves, and I will seek to prevent others from doing so. Vandalization includes taking part in improper or unauthorized defacing of a cave or its features, harming cave-related wildlife or ecosystems, damaging cave gates or signs, or using tobacco products in a cave.
2. I will cave in a reasonable and safe manner and not under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Caving while impaired is both dangerous and a bad example for others.
3. I will protect myself, SPG, and my fellow cavers by not possessing, distributing, or using drugs in an illegal manner during SPG events or functions in which SPG participates. SPG seeks to work harmoniously with private landowners and public officials and must maintain a good public image as well as be safe from legal sanctions.
4. In order to enjoy efficient and productive meetings, it is essential that they be conducted in an atmosphere of civility and mutual respect. Angry outbursts or profanity violate this civility and interferes with members enjoying the meetings and the Executive Committee governing properly and are therefore not allowed. Since meetings may be held in public places, guests and the general public should not have to witness such behavior.
5. The elected officers and their appointed deputies govern the course of the meetings and all should abide by their decisions about appropriate conduct. Those exhibiting offensive or disruptive behavior or exhibiting disregard for the proper venue for the settling of disputes or disagreements will be asked to behave themselves. If they continue, they may be escorted out of the meeting place or event location.
6. An important way to preserve caves is to keep their locations secret from the general public and those who might vandalize them. All SPG members must take precautions when dealing with others outside of the grotto concerning sensitive caves and their locations. This same precaution should be taken when taking non-members on SPG sponsored cave trips. In cases where it is not clear whether the mention of a cave or a cave location should be given, the member must first contact SPG's Trip Committee Chairman or, if it is a project cave, the leader of that project.

I, the undersigned, have received a copy of SPG's Constitution and Bylaws, and have read and understand the grotto's goals and ethics. I agree to abide by these Principles and realize that following these goals and ethics is a condition of my membership and participation on cave trips and grotto events. I understand that violating the Principles may result in disciplinary action by the SPG Board of Governors, up to and including expulsion from the organization.

Sign Name _____

Print Name _____ Date _____