The Ten Essentials

- **Map** - Topographical maps are strongly recommended, 1/24000 Scale

- **Compass** - Compass know-how and the ability to accurately use compass in the field. Practice makes perfect. Buy a good quality compass, you will thank me later.

- **Flashlight** - Ensure you have an extra bulb & batteries. A head lamp is very useful. LED style is preferred due to extended battery life

- **Extra food & water** - Carry food which requires little or no preparation (i.e. food bars). Sadly, there is no longer any uncontaminated surface water in the lower 48 states. Bring it with you, and be prepared to treat all other water.

- **Extra clothing** - Include a hat & gloves with your extra clothing. Rain protection is a must; wool is always a good choice for layering. A space blanket is an ideal addition to any kit.

- **Fire starter** - Must be waterproof. It is a good idea to have three options for fire starting (i.e. a lighter, waterproof matches & magnesium/flint). Practice makes all the difference.

- **Candle/fuel tablets** - These are remarkably effective as hand warmers, a quick hot beverage, or for making a fire much easier to start.

- **Knife** - The Swiss Army knife or Leatherman is an excellent, basic choice. The addition of a larger camping type knife is also quite useful (i.e. gathering firewood).

- **First Aid kit** - Basic First Aid & CPR training should be considered a critical part of your First Aid kit. Latex gloves and a CPR shield are important parts of your kit.

- **Signaling device** - At a minimum carry a whistle. Signal mirrors are very effective, as are smoke signals & flares (potential fire hazard).