Pledge to Travel Green
U.S. Travel Care Code
www.TravelCareCode.org

Club Sports at East Carolina University
Putting the Green in Greenville
2014
This *Pledge to Travel Green* Travel Care Code manual was developed by Heather De Martin, Club Sports athlete and team captain at East Carolina University. Funding for her research position was provided by the Center for Sustainability: Tourism, Natural Resources, and the Built Environment at East Carolina University, and is a joint effort of the Center and the ECU Campus Recreation and Wellness Unit. East Carolina University and the University of Colorado at Boulder are the first two collegiate club sports programs in the nation to adopt the *Pledge to Travel Green* effort.

The Club Sports *Pledge to Travel Green* program is a research and programmatic effort of the Center for Sustainability: Tourism, Natural Resources, and the Built Environment, through its Travel Care Code Initiative ([www.travelcarecode.org](http://www.travelcarecode.org)). For further information please contact Dr. Patrick Long, Director, Center for Sustainability at longp@ecu.edu, Justin Waters, East Carolina University Club Sports Assistant Director at watersj@ecu.edu or Kris Schoech, University of Colorado Club Sports Director at Kristopher.Schoech@colorado.edu.
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WHAT IS THE TRAVEL CARE CODE?

The TCC is a list of ten simple action items thoughtfully researched and designed to provide travelers with information on how they can reduce the negative impact of their travel and visitor related activities. It is available online for free use and replication. The Code was developed by graduate students, faculty and staff at the Center for Sustainability at East Carolina University in partnership with Miles Media Inc.

The Travel Care Code consists of these 10 action items:

1. Learn about your destination
2. Don’t leave your good habits at home
3. Be a fuel-efficient traveler
4. Make informed decisions
5. Be a good guest
6. Support locals
7. Dispose of your waste property
8. Protect your natural surroundings
9. Make your travel zero emissions
10. Bring your experiences home

IS EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY ALREADY GREEN?

Club Sports at East Carolina University is continuously giving back to Pitt County through volunteering and donating goods and services. Now is an ideal time to take action to protect our environment and make changes in how we travel and how we host those who are traveling to us to participate in games, matches, and retreats. We know little about our Greenhouse Gas (GHG) production and its impact on the community around us. From now on when we travel we are supporting the Pledge to Travel Green initiative.

There are over 40 Club Sports at ECU. These clubs utilize the Student Rec Center, Christenbury Gym, North Recreational Complex, Blount fields and other off campus facilities. Our Club Sports program is already going green by recycling at all of our athletic fields and using water re-fill stations. The North Recreational Complex uses a water recycling program throughout the eight multipurpose activity fields. As of 2013 large PowerAde Coolers were provided to athletes at North Recreational Sports Complex without plastic cups. Cups will not be provided in future years to continually influence our athletes to bring reusable water bottles as one plastic water bottle or cup can take hundreds of years to decompose.

Within the past two years, Club Sports at ECU has brought in over 70 universities that have visited Greenville. Last year clubs traveled to many destinations such as Daytona, Clemson, and Knoxville, traveling over 190,000 miles. With this mileage over $20,000 was spent on gasoline alone. ECU hosts an average of 6-10 home events, per club, per year. The Club
Sports program has developed tremendously within the past couple years and hopes to continue sustainable growth within the program. Although Club Sports at ECU have taken actions to reduce our carbon footprint we must further continue our efforts by following the Travel Care Code and pledge to make more environmentally conscious decisions going forward.

WHY SHOULD OUR CLUB SPORTS PROGRAM FOLLOW THE CODE?

Within the Club Sports Program at ECU, we strive to be leaders on and off the field, and hope that by leading this movement towards sustainable travel, other programs will join us our green transition. Along with the University Of Colorado at Boulder, we are the first to Pledge to Travel Green and hope to influence all other Club Sports Programs within our state and nationally. Following the Travel Care Code will encourage environmentally conscious decisions throughout Club Sports as well as everyday life. There are over 1,000 club sport athletes at East Carolina University who have a direct effect on waste, natural surroundings, emissions and energy use. Taking these initial steps and becoming more educated you can change a player, a team, or an entire program. Coming together off the field is the start of coming together on the biggest field of all- Earth.

HOW SHOULD WE GET STARTED?

To begin the transition towards sustainable travel, we suggest each team assign a Travel Care Code Officer, or a Go Green Liaison, to specifically focus on sustainable travel within their club sport. This designated officer will become familiar with the Travel Care Code and work with his or her team’s travel coordinator to ensure sustainable travel. The duties of the TCC Officer include researching hotels, restaurants, destinations or companies that engage sustainable practices before traveling. Please also have sustainable practices on the mind wherever you may go. Practicing these tasks on and off the field will create a better environment for us athletes and will create leadership within our clubs, that others will follow.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL TRAVEL

LOCAL

East Carolina University is fortunate enough to be in close proximity to many teams in our conferences. For ECU, local travel would be defined within a 250 miles radius or less from ECU’s main campus. When traveling locally we advise using the vans the Club Sports program provides for us. If the ECU van is unavailable, please carpool and minimize the amount of cars traveling whenever possible. Also, please consider driving in a traffic-free route will reduce stress and carbon emissions generated when traveling. There are several methods to reduce the carbon footprint of your car such as driving better, maintaining and increasing the maintenance of your car, and keeping your tires properly inflated. Please stay educated about sustainability practices and always travel the most efficient way.
Local Travel Checklist

- 4+ persons to each car
- Only (or mostly) fuel-efficient, well-maintained vehicles
- Avoid traffic as much as possible – alternative route
- Take any extra weight out of the car to increase vehicles fuel economy**
- Any necessary equipment (relevant to your sport)
  - Filled reusable water bottles
- Driving behaviors
  - Avoid idling
  - Use cruise control when possible
  - Obey the speed limit

REGIONAL

Regional travel for East Carolina University varies from year to year, ranging from 100 miles to 1000 miles away. Regional travel locations rotate quite often as conferences and events are hosted at different places almost every year. When teams from ECU are traveling regionally please focus on the most sustainable mode of transportation to use when traveling. When at the desired destination please make sustainable food and lodging choices as well.

NATIONAL

When traveling nationally, air travel is the most reasonable form of travel even with its environmental setbacks. Before traveling nationally, consider the itinerary and purpose of the trip. Ask questions like; can you combine this trip with another trip or team? Is there time to schedule another game? Simple ways to reduce your team’s carbon footprint of your air travel is to fly nonstop, purchase electronic-tickets, and buy carbon offsets whenever available. Many airlines offer a carbon offset purchase at checkout or you can donate to carbonfund.org to offset your emissions. Carbonfund.org uses your donations to fund third-party validated offset projects.

CONCLUSION

Club Sports Programs nationally have a duty to be role models and set standards for others on campus as well as the community that surrounds them. The Travel Care Code is a set of guidelines to make traveling sustainable and enjoyable. When traveling to other colleges and universities, eating at independent restaurants and lodging at sustainable establishments, you are significantly improving the lifestyle of the respective community and environment. Please help us become the first club sports program in the nation to adopt the code.
CONTACT INFORMATION

East Carolina University- Club Sports
128 Student Rec Center
Greenville NC 27858
Clubsports@ecu.edu
252. 328. 2995

Justin Waters
East Carolina University
Assistant Director of Club Sports
watersj@ecu.edu
252. 737. 2713

Dr. Patrick Long
East Carolina University
Center for Sustainability: Tourism, Natural Resources, and the Built Environment
College of Engineering and Technology
longp@ecu.edu
252. 328. 9469

Heather De Martin
East Carolina University
Demartinh12@students.ecu.edu
908. 328. 3652

Center for Sustainable Tourism
East Carolina University
sustainabletourism@ecu.edu
252. 328. 4969

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