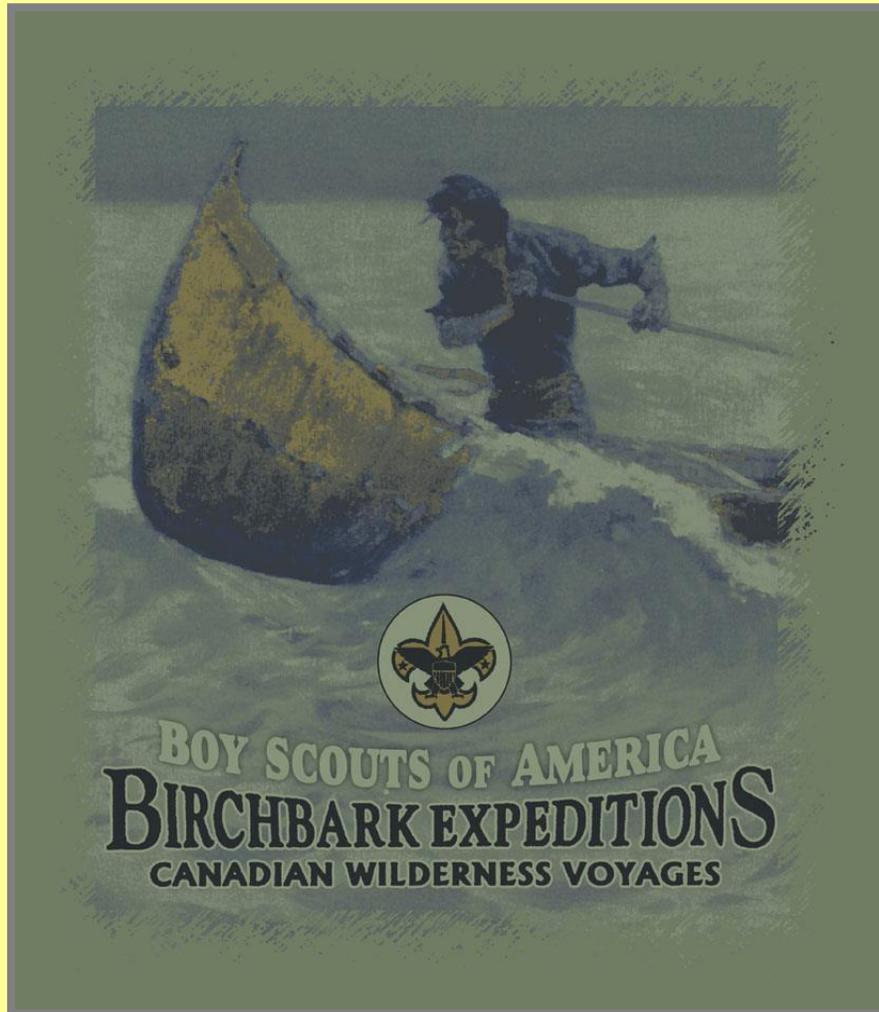


BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS

ADVISOR HANDBOOK

REVISED 2024



**A High Adventure Program of
Western New York Scout Council, BSA**

Voyages through the forests and lakes of
ALGONQUIN PROVINCIAL PARK
and the

WILDERNESS RIVERS of NORTHERN ONTARIO

BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS BSA

WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL

BOY SCOUTS  OF AMERICA

RISK ADVISORY

Participation in BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS BSA canoe trips involves a certain degree of risk and can be physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. Participation in these activities is entirely voluntary and requires participants to abide by applicable rules and standards of conduct.

Parents, guardians and adults must carefully consider the risk involved and give consent for their child(ren) and/or themselves to participate in these activities.

They also must release the Boy Scouts of America, the local council, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with the activity from any and all claims or liability arising out of this participation.



Advisor Handbook

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www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark

Expedition Overview:

Expeditions start on Saturday at 1PM at our basecamp at Whitefish Group Campground in Algonquin Provincial Park. Here crews will meet their [highly-trained Guide](#) for the duration of our trip. Upon arrival, crews are provisioned with all necessary back country food and crew equipment, including: canoes, paddles, PFDs, tents and cooking equipment. (Each participant must bring some basic high-adventure personal equipment.) Saturday afternoon, crews will spend time working on their paddling skills and explore Whitefish lake. Crews will also sort and pack their food, enjoy a meal prepared by their guide, and overnight at basecamp their own tents. On Sunday, crews will prepare breakfast and depart for either a cultural activity or planned hike, returning to basecamp in the afternoon for additional training.



Monday through Friday have crews following their custom pre-planned itinerary through the pristine lakes and forests of Algonquin Provincial Park, enjoying the incredible views, wildlife and camaraderie. Many treks include an opportunity for a day hike to a summit. Crews return to base camp on Friday afternoon, clean up and check in their crew gear, take a hot shower. Crews depart Friday afternoon or early Saturday morning, depending on the length of their drive home.

The program is open to Scouts BSA and Venture Scouts at least 13 years old and a "swimmer". Crews can range from 5 to 9 participants and must include at least two adults.

What's included:

- Basecamp operations at Whitefish Group Campground
- All park entrance and parking permit fees
- A full day of on-water and in-camp training
- A cultural tour of the Adirondack Wild Center or the Six Nations Indian Museum
- 5-day backcountry canoe trek expedition
- Optional day hike in the High Peaks
- All in-camp and backcountry meals
- A full-trained and seasoned guide for the entire duration
- Use of a complete crew gear kit with tents, rain tarp, and kitchen gear
- Canoes, paddles, PFDs and required safety gear
- Souvenir tee-shirt and water bottle
- A lifetime of memories and skills!

What our Fans Say:



"Definitely a good value considering you guys handled the training, all the logistics for sites, canoes, tours, meals, etc, and the communication up to, during, and after the trip has been excellent."

- Carl Chudzinski, Scoutmaster of Troop 456

"This is an excellent council-run BSA High Adventure program ... at a fantastic price point."

- Scott Oeth, Bull Moose Patrol, Maine Guide and Scouting Volunteer

"Do it! It will be a challenging, rewarding, and fun experience that you won't regret. You will get the opportunity to do things you haven't done before, go to new places, learn new skills, and have an adventure!"

- Molly Jackson, Troop 1485

"It's an experience that the Scouts (and Scouters) will remember for a lifetime."

- Matthew Goldhawk, Troop 261



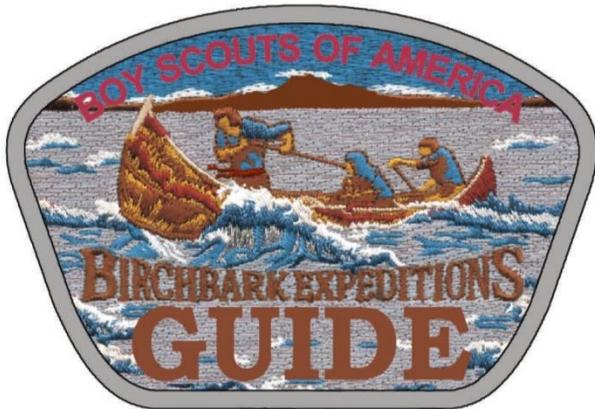
Even Baden Powell found it a challenge to keep older boys in the Scouting Program. It is particularly ironic, because we all know that teenagers thrive when challenged in an outdoor program. We believe **BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS** will appeal to a Scout's sense of adventure and provide a wholesome outlet for teenage energy.

- ◆ **Our Costs are Less / Travel times are Shorter.** Philmont costs over \$2,000 per person. BSA's Northern Tier Base in Minnesota costs more than a locally run program would, plus there is a 1,200 mile, two-day travel EACH WAY, adding greatly to the cost and time involved.
- ◆ **Ontario's Algonquin Provincial Park.** We are blessed that our area, we have access to the Algonquin Park, with nearly 3,000 square miles of wilderness, lakes, rivers and streams .
- ◆ **Cultural Program.** The program schedule includes a half-day to visit one of the many cultural museums or nearby sites. Your expedition includes entrance to the Algonquin Visitor Center and Logging Museums, or a guided hike on one of the nearby educational trails.

Why Birchbark Expeditions

- ◆ **We have local talent.** With extensive training, the Birchbark Expeditions guides have decades of experience canoe tripping in Algonquin and local waters.
- ◆ **Your Guide will "make the program."** Crews who have participated in Birchbark Expeditions have found that their Guide—who accompanies them for the whole week—is a tremendous asset and resource for them. We have tapped into the extensive tripping experience of many local Scouters, to enhance the program. Our Guides are outstanding Scouters as well as veteran canoe trippers. We think you, too, will like your Guide.
- ◆ **We Add Value.** Local pre-trip training by experts. With two evening training sessions, and extensive preparation training at our basecamp, crews will learn the craft of canoe tripping.
- ◆ **BSA National Accreditation.** First awarded in 2012, the Birchbark Expeditions program has achieved BSA National Accreditation for High Adventure Programs every year since, meeting the rigorous standards outlined by regular annual audits.





The Birchbark Expeditions Guides

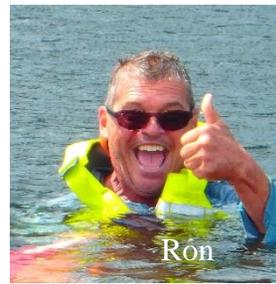
We're proud of our all volunteer Guides. They have been individually chosen for their outdoors competence, ability to work with youth, and good judgment. Most have been Scoutmasters and adult leaders for years—even decades—and have an in depth knowledge of Boy Scout methods.

Our Guides are fully trained, friendly and easy to be with. Chances are you'll get along real well with your Guide. Participants have told us that the Guides added great value to their trips.

For a complete list of guides, visit:

<http://www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark>

Guide Staff



Ron



Rick



Brian



Paul



Charles



Shawn



Alan



Hank



Steve



Dave



Birchbark Expeditions

Advisor “To Do” List

When	Activity
November – January	<input type="checkbox"/> Promote program in unit, recruiting crew members (6 scouts & 2 adults) <input type="checkbox"/> Collect \$100 deposit from every crew member <input type="checkbox"/> Secure crew slot(s) with a Reservation Request and a deposit/crew <input type="checkbox"/> Distribute Personal Gear List to crew members
January	<input type="checkbox"/> Crew(s) should meet and elect a Crew Leader and other crew positions <input type="checkbox"/> Crew members should make first payment
February	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit your preliminary Crew Roster (with Tee-shirt sizes)
March	<input type="checkbox"/> Advisors and Crew Leader should attend Leader Orientation Meeting <input type="checkbox"/> File your Crew Itinerary Worksheet <input type="checkbox"/> File your Food Selection Worksheet <input type="checkbox"/> Swim test at local pool or council-organized event <input type="checkbox"/> Crew members should make second payment
April	<input type="checkbox"/> Advisors and Crew Leader(s) should attend the Trip Planning and Route Selection meeting (all crew members welcome) <input type="checkbox"/> Start collecting completed health forms and permission slips <input type="checkbox"/> Hold first Personal Gear Shakedown with crew, helping crew members make decisions about appropriate gear <input type="checkbox"/> Hold backcountry scout skills training sessions with your crew(s), using the Voyageur Handbook as a guide to instruct various required skills <input type="checkbox"/> Create duty roster <input type="checkbox"/> Crew members should make final payments (varies based on crew size)
May	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue backcountry scout skills <input type="checkbox"/> Take crew canoeing and practice basic strokes and canoe control skills <input type="checkbox"/> All payments made to WNYSC
June	<input type="checkbox"/> All crew members should attend Outdoor Shakedown event <input type="checkbox"/> Final personal gear shakedown <input type="checkbox"/> All health forms and permission slips should be collected and organized per-car <input type="checkbox"/> Make copies of all materials <input type="checkbox"/> Leave one copy of crew materials with a contact in unit/council <input type="checkbox"/> Pack a second set to take on expedition
July	<input type="checkbox"/> Pick-up crew foodstuffs from WNYSC offices (in-council crews) or make arrangements for food drop-off elsewhere <input type="checkbox"/> Depart for your Birchbark Expedition!!!



Birchbark Expeditions Training Calendar

When	What	Where
December/January Information Night & Reunion	<i>For interested Units-Parents and Adult and Youth Leaders. Meet the Staff and Guides.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
MARCH Advisor Orientation Meeting	<i>A "Train the Trainer" event designed for crew advisors (adults) and crew leaders (youth) that will be overseeing the crew training and expedition planning. Covers the responsibilities and preparation process, paperwork and personal gear required to successfully participate in a Birchbark Expedition.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
APRIL Trip Planning & Route Selection	<i>Crews have an opportunity to review their itinerary plans with a guide, then file their plans along with their menu and tee-shirt orders.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
University of Scouting	<i>Attend Backcountry Skills, First Aid, Navigation and other sessions at regional University Scouting</i>	University of Scouting
APRIL / MAY Advisor Led Crew Training	<i>On their own time crews should work on the back-country skills as outlined in the training materials, practicing their skills</i>	Crew-planned
JUNE Outdoor Canoe Trip Shakedown	<i>Mandatory for local crews, this day-long training event gives crews a chance to practice their skills in a simulated "day in Camp".</i>	Camp Scouthaven in Freedom, NY
JUNE Food Pick-up and Check (local crews only)	<i>Local crews will pick-up their food and cooking supplies, verifying contents. Out-of-council crews will have special arrangements made.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
JULY Final Personal Gear Shakedown	<i>A final opportunity for crews to check their personal gear and pack their food in canoe packs, ready to head into the Adirondacks.</i>	Birchbark Expeditions Basecamp in Camp Mountaineer

Precise dates and locations for each season can be found listed at:

<http://www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark>



Birchbark Expeditions Training Calendar Overview

When	What	Where
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JANUARY Advisor Orientation Meeting	<i>A "Train the Trainer" event designed for crew advisors (adults) and crew leaders (youth) that will be overseeing the crew training and expedition planning. Covers the responsibilities and preparation process, paperwork and personal gear required to successfully participate in a Birchbark Expedition.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
FEBRUARY Trip Planning & Route Selection	<i>Crews have an opportunity to review their itinerary plans with a guide, then file their plans along with their menu and tee-shirt orders.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
MARCH University of Scouting	<i>Attend Backcountry Skills, First Aid, Navigation and other sessions at regional University Scouting</i>	University of Scouting
APRIL / MAY Advisor Led Crew Training	<i>On their own time crews should work on the back-country skills as outlined in the training materials, practicing their skills</i>	Crew-planned
JUNE Outdoor Canoe Trip Shakedown	<i>Mandatory for local crews, this day-long training event gives crews a chance to practice their skills in a simulated "day in Algonquin".</i>	Camp Scouthaven in Freedom, NY
JUNE Food Pick-up and Check (local crews only)	<i>Local crews will pick-up their food and cooking supplies, verifying contents. Out-of-council crews will have special arrangements made.</i>	WNYSC Service Center
JULY Final Personal Gear Shakedown	<i>A final opportunity for crews to check their personal gear and pack their food in canoe packs, ready to head into Algonquin.</i>	Wye Marsh Nature Center

Precise dates and locations for each season can be found listed at:

<http://www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark>



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Meeting is for:

All Adult Leaders, interested Parents, and Youth Leaders from each crew.

Date and Time:

See the Birchbark Expeditions Web Site for this season's training dates and location:

www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark

Please Bring with You:

- Enthusiasm

Handouts to be given at Meeting:

1. Birchbark Expeditions *Tri-fold Brochure*
2. *Future Training Dates*
3. *Equipment List*

DECEMBER Information Night & Reunion

To Do:

- Mark your calendar
- Bring adults and youth leaders

Topics:

- Welcome!**
- Voyageur Song**
- Introductions to the Staff and Guides**
Get to know the people helping you execute your Birchbark Expeditions adventure
- Program Overview Presentation**
Highlights of the program, what to expect and an overview of preparation expectations
- Video: *Crew Expedition***
Follow along as a crew takes you on their Birchbark Expedition!
- Reservations for next year**
Sign-up sheet for next summer's trips
- Crew-gear hands-on**
See some of the crew gear used during a Birchbark Expedition
- Tasty Snack!**
(A well-fed crew is a happy crew)
- Round Robin**
What do YOU hope to get from your trip?
- Voyageur Song**
- Questions & Answers**



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Meeting is for:

All Adult Advisors, interested Parents, and Youth Leaders from each crew.

Date and Time:

See the Birchbark Expeditions Web Site for this season's training dates and location:

www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark

Please Bring with You:

- Notebook

Handouts to be given at Meeting:

1. *Advisor Handbook*
2. *Canoe Routes of Algonquin* book
3. *Voyageur Handbook*
4. Algonquin Park Map
5. Algonquin Information Newspaper

Advisor Orientation Meeting I

To Do:

- Mark your calendar
- Bring adults and youth leaders

Topics:

Time

7:00

- Training Outline**
Goals and objectives of the training sessions
- Materials Hand-out and Overview**
Needed materials and resources
- Canadian Customs**
Passports and Border Crossing regulations.
- Medical Forms**
- Red Cross Wilderness First Aid Course**
Sign-up sheet for the Course
- Travel Itinerary**
To Sainte-Marie, and to Algonquin
- Physical Conditioning**
Issues for adults and youth

8:00

- Swim Skills**
Training and testing your crew members
- Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat**
Offered on-line
- Equipment**
Personal Gear instruction
- Food Slection Process**
- Canoe Routes / Itinerary Selection Process**
Canoe Routes of Algonquin book
Reservation System,
Algonquin Park Maps, *Chrismar* Maps
- Finances**
- Questions & Answers**

9:00



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Meeting is for:

All Adult Leaders, interested Parents, and Youth Leaders from each crew.

Date and Time:

See the Birchbark Expeditions Web Site for this season's training dates and location:

www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark

Please Bring with You:

- Notebook
- Proposed Algonquin Canoe Trip Itinerary
- Menu Selection

Handouts to be given at Meeting:

1. Birchbark Expeditions *Leader Travel File*

Advisor Orientation Meeting II

Topics:

Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Leave No Trace Tripping (Whole Group) (10 min)
7:10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan ahead and prepare ▪ Travel and camp on durable surfaces ▪ Dispose of waste properly ▪ Leave what you find ▪ Minimize campfire impact ▪ Respect wildlife ▪ Be considerate of others
7:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The Risk Zone (15 min) ▪ Adults Beware ▪ Don't Drive Drowsy ▪ Get sleep the night before, Rest stops, breaks ▪ Go slow days 1 and 2, Friday at Algonquin
7:35	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Menu Selection (15 min) ▪ Finalize Selection, Turn into Guides
7:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Canoe Trip Itinerary Selection Finalize Routes (subject to review by Director and Guides), Turn into Guides for reservation booking.
8:05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Tee-Shirt Order Submission <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Binder Preparations ▪ Roster ▪ Medical Forms ▪ Passports / IDs ▪ Permission forms
8:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Future Training ▪ University of Scouting Sessions ▪ Wilderness First-Aid ▪ Water Shakedown ▪ Food Pickup
8:30	



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

**Meeting is for:
FOR ALL YOUTH AND ADULTS**
**This is a
VERY IMPORTANT
training session!**

Date and Time:

See the Birchbark Expeditions Web Site for this season's training dates and location:

www.wnyscouting.org/birchbark

Please Bring with You:

- Pack, completely packed. You will throw it into the lake for a 1-hour waterproofing test.
- Rope – 8-foot shank for knot tying
- Compass
- Medical Exam, completed
- Parental permission form, completed
- Water shoes. Your water shoes will get wet. An old pair of sneakers is fine.
- Change of clothes. We are NOT planning on swamping, but it is wise to have a change.
- Lunch
- A hearty snack.
- TARP and ropes for your troop/crew

June Outdoor Canoe Trip Shakedown

FOR ALL YOUTH AND ADULTS

Topics:

- Crew Tarp Setup**
- Voyageur Songs**
- Canoe Skills Part I –
“The Magic of Paddling”**
Strokes: Forward, Bow Draw, Cross Bow Draw, Sweep, Skulling, Back Stroke, Reverse Sweep, J-Stroke, Stern Draw, Stern Pry
- Canoe Skills Part II –
“Let’s Paddle”**
Pivots, Sideslip, J-Stroke, Changing positions while afloat. 100-yard paddle.
- Camp Skills –
“Pack Dunk, Bear Bag, Tie the Fly”**
Gear Dunk Test, Duluth Packs, Packing personal equipment. Tarp pitching. Bear bags.
- Portaging –
“Lake to Lake”**
Landing at a portage; The “Gear Pile”.
Portage Yoke. One-man carry; two-man carry.
Launching at the next lake. Voyageur knots
- Safety Issues in Canoe Tripping**
Rough Water Canoeing; Safe Swim Defense; Safety Afloat
- Wilderness Camping Technique**
Emergencies, signalling, evacuation. Water purification, filters and chemicals, Steri-Pens.
Paddling tips: kneeling pads, rubber bands, hats, sungalsses, nylon-blend clothing.
Permethrin and DEET.
- Personal Gear Review & Demonstration**
An opportunity to see an example collection of personal gear and ask questions about your crew’s selections.



Training Your Crew at Home

A UNIT CANOE TRIP TRAINING PROGRAM

Canoe Tripping is a sport that can become a lifelong avocation. It can lead you to places only accessible to true wilderness adventurers. We have assembled here a solid training program that your Unit can use at home to prepare for a Northwoods trip. This *Training for Adventure* program is designed to take many months to complete. Enjoy the process; you'll probably find out that no matter how experienced you are, there is still room to improve!

1.	Date	Location		Canoe Lore	Canoe types, Duluth packs, food packs, slide show, Presentation by Birchbark Expeditions Guide
2.				Equipment	Personal equipment list, tents, sleeping bags, Crew equipment.
3.				Knots	Tie the 8 ½ Voyager Knots blindfolded and behind your back. Practice one knot each week. Test at the end. Bear Bag. 50' Rope toss.
4.				First Aid	Red Cross WILDERNESS First Aid Course, emergency protocols, evacuation planning
5.				Route Selection and Safety	Remoteness. Always safety first. Safe Swim Defense. PADBALLS. Safety Afloat. PFDs. Importance of following the Wilderness Leader.
6.			Inside / outside	Map & Compass	Orient a map; map symbols, take degree readings, measuring pace, take a back azimuth to find position, bushwhack off trail for 1 mile.
7.			Inside / outside	Woods Tools	Tote-n-chip, split a 3-inch log, knife, ax and saw safety.
8.			outside	Firebuilding	Finding tinder. Lighting fires. Liquid fuel stoves. Kelly Kettle. Techniques and safety.
9.			pool	Swimming	Use a community pool for practice. 100 yard swim test.
10.			Inside / outside	Tent Pitching	Pitch the tent in daylight-one person. Pitch in darkness-two people
11.			outside	Trail Tarp	Rigging a trail tarp "lean-to" style. Rigging a "James Bay Tarp," Bowline, taut line hitch, sheet bend, Pierre's slippery hitch, daisy chain
12.				Food	Nutrition for canoeing, supermarket shopping for the trail, can/bottle ban
13.			pool	Water Skills	PFDs. Paddle Practice. Swamping.
14.				Trip Planning	Time frame and deadlines. BSA Tour permits. Transportation. Campsite reservations. Food costs. Fee schedule. Medical Exams. Dental Exams. Canoe Rentals.
15.				Personal Equipment Shakedown	Thorough and final check of all your personal equipment for size and appropriateness .



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Now that you are planning a canoe trip, it is a great time to bring your training up-to-date. The purpose of training is to prepare you for traveling safely in the woods.



Held in March every year at various locations, the University of Scouting event is an excellent resource to augment your training.

Get Your Credentials!

To Do:

- Set up time for Red Cross Wilderness First Aid
- Block out time for Online training

American Red Cross Training

- Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
(one adult should be currently trained in CPR)
- Wilderness First Aid
(recommended, but not required)

BSA Training

- Safe Swim Defense
(offered online)
- Safety Afloat
(offered online)
- Hazardous Weather
(offered online)
- Youth Protection
(offered online-required for adults)
- WNYSC Liquid Fuels
(offered at University of Scouting)
- BSA Lifeguard
(recommended, but not required)
- BSA Paddle Craft Safety
(may be offered by your Guide on your trip)
- BSA Lifeguard
(recommended, but not required)
- BSA Swimming and Water Rescue
(recommended, but not required)

Check out the following websites for BSA online training:

www.wnyscouting.org

www.myscouting.org

Personal Gear List

Wear in the Canoe

- Hat with brim
- Wicking T-Shirt
- Light Long Sleeve Shirt (bugs,sun)
- Wicking Underwear
- 1 Pair Shorts (nylon)
- Belt (nylon)
- Wool Socks
- Watershoes – (closed toe sandals)
- Bandanna
- Watch (optional)
- Eyeglasses w/ Sport Strap
- Bag for organizing clothes to wear on Day 1

Extra Clothing

- 20L Dry Bag for packing clothing
- Long Pants (nylon blend)
- Fleece Jacket
- Knit Cap
- 1 Wicking T-Shirt
- 1 Wicking Undershorts
- 1 Bandana (also use for first aid)
- 2-Good Pairs Wool Blend Socks
- Camp Shoes (pair of old sneakers)

Fanny Pack/Day Pack

(1/person for essentials)

- Sunglasses w/ Sport Strap
- Small Note Book w/ pencil*
- Medication* (give to leader)
- Sunblock #30 or #45
- 1/2 roll Toilet Paper*
- Water bottle-1 quart (nalgene)
- Rain Jacket (NO PONCHOS)
- Drinking Cup (12-ounce size)
- Spoon and Bowl
- Pocket Knife
- Matches/Lighter*
- Chapstick
- Whistle
- Bug repellent
- Head Net (optional)
- Small map*
- Camera (waterproof)*
- Extra battery for camera*
- Headlamp (waterproof)
- ...with extra Batteries
- 10' piece of paracord

* Protect these items from wetness with a sturdy zip-lock bag or other water-tight container.

Sleeping

- Sleeping Bag (Hollofil dries well) (Warm to 35 Degrees Fahrenheit)
- Nylon Stuff Sack or Dry Bag - 10" x 18" for sleeping bag- Compression Sack is best
- Sleeping Pad (super thin & compact)

Wash Kit

(Share with buddy)

- Small bottle Camp Suds- (biodegrades)
- Tooth Paste (sample size)
- Desenex Powder
- Hand Cream (sample size)
- Comb or brush
- Small Pack Towel-microfiber sports towel or "Sham-Wow"

Miscellaneous

- Swim Trunks
- 2 heavy duty 30-gal plastic bags

Travel / Night Before

(leave in car)

- Gym Bag for gear
- Uniform (wear on Saturday)
- Clothes for ride home
- After-trek towel, shaving kit & toiletries
- \$40 cash for souvenirs, meals
- Sharpie permanent marker

DO NOT BRING

- Aerosol Cans (danger of puncture)
- Ponchos (dangerous in water)
- Illegal Drugs / Alcohol
- Fireworks
- Firearms or Weapons

YOUR CREW SHOULD BRING:

First Aid Kit, 2 compasses, 1 pair leather gloves, 200 feet of Nylon Parachute Cord, Extra Zip-lock Bags, duct tape, 6 x Extra heavy duty 39 gal plastic bags, & stick lighter.

BIRCHBARK EXPEDITIONS PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING:

Canoe packs for personal gear, Tents, Dining Fly, Stoves, Fuel, Fuel Bottles, Saw, Food packs, Cook Kits, Chef Kits, Water Purification System, Canoes, Paddles, Lifejackets, and Bailers.

Hints On Packing Gear

The Duluth Pack

The favorite pack of canoe trippers is named for the city in Minnesota where it was first manufactured. A *Duluth Pack* pack is made large, to carry lots of gear. It has soft sides to conform to the hull of your canoe; and it is frameless so it won't puncture the canoe body. Birchbark Expeditions uses a high quality nylon version of the famous Duluth pack.

Space Limitation

The Voyageurs of old were limited to a small pack of personal items, the size of a modern day airline carry-on case. Space in the canoe was needed for hauling trade goods. If a man was taller than five feet six inches, he could not become a Voyageur. His legs took up too much space! Today, tall Scouts are welcome on trips, but gear still must pass the size test.

Dry Bags

Bring one 20L or two smaller compressable dry bags. All your belongings should fit into the dry bag(s). Compression dry bags are very helpful for packing.

Dry Bag #1 - Your Sleeping Bag

Put your sleeping bag and any sleeping cloths in one of the dry bags. Squeeze the air out before closing the dry bag, making sure you get three full folds of the entry before closing.

Dry Bag #2 - your Clothing

To keep your gear dry follow this foolproof method:

1. Pack your clothing in sets in separate plastic bags. Each bag has one set of clothes. Squeeze out all air. Zip-lock bags work well.
2. Put all these bags inside a your dry bag.
3. Give the dry bag a good squeeze, forcing the air out, then close the dry bag.
4. Put the dry bag(s) inside your Duluth Pack.

Fanny Pack

Many guides like to bring a fanny pack for their water bottle, sun glasses, raincoat and sundries. The loaded fanny pack should weigh just a few pounds, because you will carry it with a Duluth Pack on the portages. A lightweight carabiner will allow you to clip the fanny pack to a thwart while canoeing.

Watch out for "Dangles"

All items should be packed inside your packs. Tying items onto the outside of a pack make it difficult to load and unload your equipment in the canoe and may damage the equipment.

Hold a personal equipment shakedown.

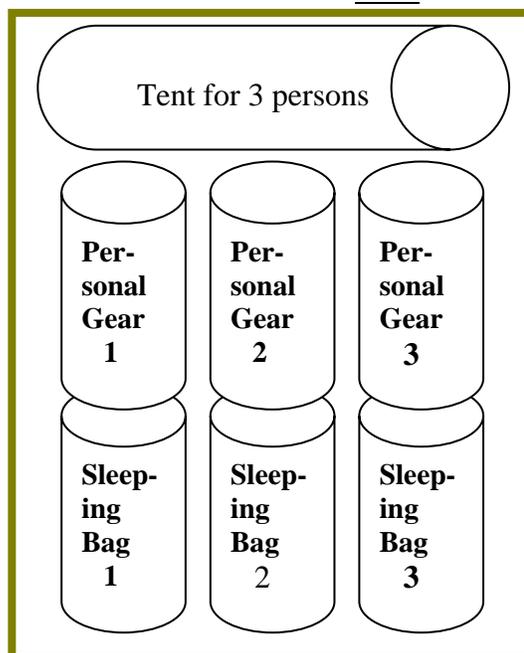
A few days before your canoe trip, lay out personal equipment so everything can be seen at once. Check against checklist. Make sure you have all the essential items; there is no store on the trail. Remember that extra unnecessary items carried by one person put an additional burden on everyone else.

Travel Clothes

In one bag, place your backcountry gear - a fabric grocery bag works well for this. In a separate bag, pack your travel-home clothes, shower sundries and towel. This keeps them dry and minimizes mix-ups prior to the trip. Bring extra plastic bags. Heavy duty bags are best.

Packing the Duluth Pack for Three (3) Persons.

Approximate weight: 50 pounds. 30"W by 36"H.
Stuff Sacks or Dry Bags for personal gear and sleeping bags each measure 10" x 18" or less.





WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Specialized Canoe Tripping Equipment

It is our intention to provide all crews participating in Birchbark Expeditions BSA state-of-the-art equipment. All equipment has been extensively field tested, and we believe it to be of the highest quality and durability. We hope the equipment issued to you enhances the enjoyment of your trip. The value of each crew's equipment is over \$6,000, and we appreciate your taking good care of it, so the next crew can also find it in excellent shape.

Crew-supplied Crew Gear

(not supplied by Birchbark Expeditions BSA):

- Crew First Aid Kit
- 200' Nylon 1/8 inch Parachute Cord (for tying tarps and camp use)
- Lightweight Ax (optional)
- Cell Phone in waterproof case (optional)

Crew Equipment

To Do:

- Decide on additional equipment to bring (left column).

Equipment Provided by Birchbark Expeditions

- \$4,500 17' Old Town Penobscot Tripping Canoes (3)
- \$ 300 Paddles (11)
- \$ 400 Life Jackets (8)
- \$ 750 Eureka 3-man Timberline Tents (3)
- \$ 150 BSA 12' x 12' Dining Fly (1)
- \$ 100 Gas Stoves (2)
- \$ 200 Kelly Kettles (2)
- \$ 20 Stove Grate (1)
- \$ 50 Fuel Bottles (4)
- \$ 20 Folding Saw (1)
- \$ 100 Cook Kit - pots and pans (1 kit)
- \$ 20 Chef Kit – spoon, ladle, spatula (1 kit)
- \$ 80 Water Purification System
- \$ 15 50' Bear Bag Ropes (2)
- \$ 15 5/16 Bear Bag Pulleys (3)
- \$ 5 Messenger weight and line
- ~ \$6,000 TOTAL VALUE OF CREW EQUIPMENT

NOTE: Equipment Agreement

Each crew is asked to return equipment in good condition. A crew may be charged for abuse of equipment (other than normal wear and tear).



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Important Notes regarding First Aid supplies

Certain medical emergencies should be carefully prepared for.

- Medications. All the leaders will want to be aware of prescription medications taken by everyone, including the other leaders.
- Diabetes must be monitored carefully. High energy consumption due to intense physical activity may cause blood sugars to drop more than at home.
- Allergic Reactions. The person allergic should carry an *unexpired* EPIpen, and the Adult leader should also carry a spare. The allergic person should consult his doctor about the advisability of also using an antihistamine in conjunction with the EPIpen.

First Aid Kit Supplies

(*Not supplied by Birchbark Expeditions*): Your crew first aid kit should weigh under 4 pounds. Here are items other crews have carried with them. You may want to adapt the items for your own crew.

Common Prescription Medications used:

The leader may (but is not required to) carry and dispense all prescription and over the counter medications.

- Asthma inhalers
- Bee-sting kits (Epi-pens) carry two (2)
- ADD / ADHD medications
- Anxiety medication
- Diabetes medication
- Blood pressure medication
- Cholesterol medication

Crew First Aid Kit

To Do:

- Assemble Crew First Aid Kit
- List Crew Members' medications

MEDICAL INFORMATION

- 1...Small first aid handbook and Pencil
- 2...Patient assessment form
- 2...Evacuation forms

MEDICATIONS (OVER THE COUNTER)

- 20...Ibuprofen (anti-inflammatory)
- 20...Tylenol (headaches)
- 20...Aspirin (blood thinner for suspected strokes)
- 1...Glucose Paste (glucose) for diabetics
- 1...Afterbite sting and itch relief wipe
- 2...Packets powdered Gatorade(electrolytes- for leg cramps and heat exhaustion)

ESSENTIALS

- 1...Sam splint 4" x 36"
- 1...CPR face shield
- 1...EMT shears
- 1...Tweezers
- 1...Nail Clippers
- 1...Nail File
- 1...Magnifying Glass
- 1...Duct tape 2" x 5 yards
- 3...safety pins

WOUND CARE

- 1...Triple Antibiotic Ointment
- 2...Gloves
- 2...Hand wipes
- 1...Syringe or plastic bag (for wound cleaning)
- 1...Small bottle hand sanitizer
- 20..Band-aids assorted

BANDAGE MATERIALS

- 1...Trauma Pad 5" x 9"
- 1...Trauma Pad 8" x 10"
- 8...Sterile Gauze Dressing 4" x 4"
- 8...Sterile Gauze Dressing 2" x 2"
- 1...Sterile Conforming Gauze Roll 3"
- 1...Sterile Eye pad
- 1...Triangular Bandage
- 1...Tape 1" x 10 yards
- 1...Ace Elastic Bandage 3"

BLISTER / BURN CARE

- 1..."Second Skin" dressing 3" x 4"
- 1...Molefoam 5" x 6"
- 1...Moleskin 4" x 7"

LEECHES

- 1...Salt Shaker-small (salt removes leeches)

Crew Menu Planning Worksheet

Birchbark Expeditions Trip Menu Planner - 2019

Crew _____ Leader _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Allergies/Considerations: _____



Day	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Sunday	xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx	
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday		xxxxxxx	xxxxxxx

Breakfasts	
#1	Pop Tarts, Instant Oatmeal, hot cocoa, Tang. (Bulky & Heavy - best for Monday & Saturday AM) ♦♦
#2	Pancakes, precook bacon, maple syrup, cook spray (Requires cooking) ♦
#3	Plain granola, powder milk, hot cocoa ♦
#4	Cranberry raisin granola, powder milk, hot cocoa. ♦♦

Lunches	
#1	Peanut butter and squeeze jelly on pita bread with fruit snack packs (Bulky & Heavy) ♦
#2	Triscuits crackers, stick pepperoni, peanut packages ♦
#3	Triscuits crackers, tuna salad packages, summer sausage ♦
#4	Peanut pkgs(9), granola bars(9), summer sausage, fruit snacks ♦
#5	Black beans and rice wraps (Requires cooking - prepare during morning breakfast) ♦

Dinners			
All dinners include a side vegetable or soup, desert and powdered drink			
#1	Chicken and Rice ♦	#7	Vegetable stew w/beef
#2	Beef Stroganoff ♦	#8	Chicken teriyaki w/rice ♦
#3	Macaroni and Cheese ♦	#9	Chicken a la king
#4	Spaghetti and Sauce ♦	#10	Chicken stew
#5	Sweet and sour pork w/rice	#11	Chicken alfredo
#6	Lasagna w/meat sauce	#12	Chili mac w/beef ♦

♦ indicates standard menu item for crews that fail to submit their menu selections by March 1st

Snacks - Crews will be provided a universal snack assortment consisting of:	
16 pkgs of fruit snacks	20 pkgs granola bars
8 pkgs of Ramen Noodles	1 Large bag of GORP (1.5-2 lbs)

Birchbark Supplied Cleaning and Cooking Materials		
1 roll of paper towels	Sponge, scrubbie & gloves	Stove fuel cans 2 or 3 per crew
2 rolls toilet paper	Dishwashing Soap and Bleach	8 pkgs fryingpan bread - use at any meal
6 Turkey roaster bags		Vegetable oil, for fryin bread and pancakes

Suggested Crew-supplied Spices and Materials		
Coffee/ tea	Salt/ pepper	Matches/Lighter
Sugar	Tabasco/ hot sauce	Hand soap

Submit your Menu Plan at: February Route/Menu Planning Meeting
or via email: birchbark@wnyscouting.org

Tips on Food

Do We Have Enough Food?

That is a question that arises on every canoe trip. What should a good leader do?

Menu selections are designed to be more than adequate.

For the vast majority of Birchbark Expeditions BSA crews, meals are generally more than sufficient in quantity. It's fairly common for crews to return to basecamp with un-eaten snacks and side-dishes.

Beware! extra food adds weight very quickly. So think twice about adding another food pack to your crew gear.

How Do We Get Our Food?

For crews from Western New York, you will receive an email when your food is ready to pick-up (usually a few weeks before your expedition) with instructions on the pick-up location.

For crews outside Western New York, be sure to coordinate with your guide for delivery at Wye Marsh or Camp Stonehaven.



How Do We Pack Our Food?

Checking and packing your food is one of the activities on Saturday evening at Wye Marsh (see photo). The process takes place in the Community Room and starts by setting up two buffet tables end-to-end and laying out the food in the order that you will consume it, starting with Saturday morning, working through to the next Saturday morning. We recommend spreading the snacks throughout the week, usually packed with the breakfast for each day. All the dry goods, spices and cleaning supplies go with Monday's dinner.

Once everything is layout and checked, it's time to start packing:

Since Sunday's dinner and the two Saturday breakfasts are eaten in basecamp, they should be put in a box, clearly marked with your crew number and set aside. (we recommend taking Friday dinner on the trail, just in case your expedition gets extended by bad weather)

All the cans of dehydrated food need to be opened (removing the oxygen absorber) and the contents of each are put into a supplied roaster bag and zip-tied closed. Remove the label from each can and put it and the respective roaster bag into a large zip-lock bag.

You will be provided five color-coded food pouches and two food canoe packs. Each of the pouches should be marked with a day of the week (Monday – Friday) Each day's food should be put in the respective pouches, and loaded into the food canoe packs starting with Friday on the bottom. All the dry goods and cleaning supplies go in toward the top with Monday's dinner.

Once all the packs are loaded, use a piece of tape and marker to label your packs with your crew number and which day's food is in which pack.

Congratulations! Your food is ready for the trail!



Day by Day Schedule

To Do:

- Follow the program for maximum enjoyment

<p>Day 1 Saturday Destination: Birchbark Expeditions Basecamp – Whitefish Group Campground 1:00 pm Check-in and meet guide 1:30 pm Get crew gear, set up tents, change into bathing suits 2:30 pm Meet at waterfront – PFD and paddle sizing, on-water training 5:30 pm Guide-prepared Dinner 6:00 pm Food Packing 7:00 pm Personal Gear Shakedown (just the critical items) 8:00 pm Advisor/Guide Meeting – inReach procedures 9:00 pm Campfire</p>	<p>Day 4, 5, 6 Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday Destination Interior Canoe Campsites (jot down planned itinerary here)</p>
<p>Day 2 Sunday Destination: Birchbark Expeditions Basecamp 7:00 am Breakfast in crew site 8:00 am Medical Screening by Staff / Final Prescription Drug packing 9:00 am Depart for cultural activity/hike 12:00 noon Trail lunch 3:00 pm Camp set-up, Bear Bags, Water Purification training 6:00 pm Trail Dinner 8:00 pm Campfire</p>	<p>Day 7 Friday Destination Birchbark Expeditions Basecamp 12:00 noon Showers, Lunch 1:00 pm Hand out Tee-shirts and Crew gear photo 2:00 pm Crew gear cleaning/check-in 3:00 pm Additional Program 8:00 pm Closing Campfire, Patches, Baptism</p>
<p>Day 3 Monday Destination Adirondack Interior 6:00 am Trail Breakfast 8:00 am Boats in the water!</p>	<p>Day 8 Saturday Destination HOME ! 6:00 am Trail Breakfast 7:00 am Head for Home 12:00 noon BUY LUNCH ON THE ROAD</p>



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Importance of Friday. Leaving for home on Saturday, after a day of rest on Friday provides many advantages for your crew.

- **Hot Showers** are welcome after a week in the northwoods. The shower house at Pog Lake has plenty of hot water and is a chance to get cleaned up for you group picture!
- **Avoid the Risk Zone.** It is not prudent to drive six hours of mountainous / expressway traffic if you are physically exhausted. Wait till early Saturday morning to leave, and enjoy Algonquin for one more day!
- **Opportunity for extended trip.** Several crews have been anxious to get on the canoe trail early. Instead of foregoing the terrific program day at the Algonquin Visitor Center and Logging Museums, a crew can get an extra day of paddling in on Friday. It is a great opportunity to spend an extra day in the park interior, because they have a place to land and camp Whitefish on Friday night.

Friday in Algonquin

To Do:

- Select your Friday afternoon program

- **Equipment Cleanup.** Each crew should take 1 hour to wash out the canoes, hang the life vests, tents and packs out to dry. A thorough cleaning of the crew gear is required, making it ready for the next week's groups.
- **Restaurant Dinner.** The Portage Store on Canoe Lake and the Mad Musher in Whitney are great options for a sit-down dinner, about 20 minutes from Whitefish. They offer good meals at reasonable prices, and the crew can make a visit to an outfitter for some souvenirs.
- **Program Opportunities.** Friday afternoon is an opportunity to take in some of the additional program options in the area. The Algonquin Art Museum, or a hike to a summit would be a great way to further experience Algonquin.
- **Closing Campfire.** At the closing campfire patches are presented to the participants and the Voyageur Baptism is performed.
- **Conservation Good Turn.** Friday may be a good time to perform a 1-hour service project. Make arrangements ahead of time with your guide.



BSA Registered Scout, Venturer or Leader

Scouts and Scouters from the Western New York Scout Council (WNYSC) are covered under a excess claims policy, provided the participant is registered with the WNYSC or with the BSA. That is why it is important that EVERY participant be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America.

If you are from outside the Western New York Scout Council, you will need to provide proof of registration with the Boy Scouts of America.

BSA Accident Insurance

WNYSC members are covered by the WNYSC policy with their registration. You will not need a copy of your WNYSC insurance, as the Council has the information.

If you are from another Scout Council, you will need to bring a copy of your Council's or Unit's accident insurance coverage.

Auto Insurance in Canada

A *Canadian Auto Insurance ID Card* gives evidence that your United States auto policy covers you while traveling in Canada. Call your insurance carrier about coverage in Canada, and they will send you a card. Usually there is no charge for the Canadian ID Card.

Province of Ontario Auto Insurance required minimums are higher than New York State minimums.

- Ontario requires \$200,000 minimum liability coverage. Ask your own company if you will be covered in Canada.
- The BSA requires each car to have minimum coverage of \$50,000 per person / \$100,000 per accident / \$50,000 property.
- It is prudent to consider carrying even more liability coverage (or perhaps an umbrella policy) because

Insurance Matters

THE FOLLOWING LIABILITY ISSUES ARE VERY IMPORTANT. PLEASE GIVE THEM SERIOUS ATTENTION.

To Do:

- BSA Registration
- BSA Accident Insurance (out of Council units only)
- Medical Insurance ID card
- Auto Insurance ID card
- Credit Card

there are often multiple passengers in your vehicle, and because of Ontario's higher claims patterns.

- Note: in Ontario, not only the driver but also the owner of the vehicle is liable when an accident is caused with his vehicle. Be sure you give permission to drive your car only to competent drivers

Hospitalization

Emergency evacuation, (for example, an air evacuation from a remote site) may be covered by your medical insurance company. Check ahead of time with your medical insurance carrier. You may also wish to ask your insurance company if there are any restrictions on receiving medical care in Canada. Each person should have a copy of his or her medical insurance ID card.

Credit Card for Emergency Care

Canadian Hospitals do not normally accept USA medical coverage, because they have a different health care system than the United States. In case medical treatment is necessary, generally the hospital will require payment by a credit card. Keep the receipts. Then your US medical care company will usually reimburse you for covered expenses.

Carry In Your Canoe

The adult leader should carry in his canoe these items in the event an evacuation is necessary:

- Medical Forms
- Permission Forms
- Credit Card
- Keys to your vehicle(s)
- Cell Phone (For use on Highway 60. Note that there is no reception in most of the Algonquin interior)



Travel to Canada

Entering Canada and USA

All participants will need a *Passport, Passport Card, Enhanced Drivers License* or *NEXUS Pass*.

Passports can be obtained at many US post offices. Enhanced Drivers Licenses can be obtained at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Additional Requirements for Youth

Each crew will also need a letter on troop letterhead, listing those participating and include their parent's names and telephone numbers (see sample on the next page)

We recommend that parents who share custody of their children carry copies of their legal custody documents, such as custody rights. If you share custody and the other parent is not travelling with you, or if you are travelling with minors for whom you are not the parent or legal guardian, we recommend you carry a consent letter to provide authorization for you to take them on a trip and enter Canada. A consent letter must include the custodial parents' or legal guardians' full name, address and telephone number.

Parents should travel in the same vehicle with their youth.

Canada Passports & Border Crossing

To Do:

- US-Canada Bridge Traffic Information
1-800-715-6722
- Adults: get your passports ASAP
- Youth: bring birth certificates and
Picture ID and permission forms
- Fill gas tank before you reach the bridge

**THIS INFORMATION IS CURRENT AS OF
JANUARY 2022**

Carry with you in the car in which you travel:

- Passports/Passport Cards/Enhanced Drivers Licenses
- Parental Permission Form (for youth)
- Driver's License (for drivers)

Department of Homeland Security Website

For up-to-date border crossing information please go the Department of Homeland Security website: WWW.DHS.GOV Then go to *Travel Security*, then to *Crossing US Borders* and to *Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative*.

Phone Numbers:

Rainbow Bridge (Niagara Falls)	716-282-3141
Lewiston-Queenston Bridge	716-282-1400
Peace Bridge (Buffalo)	716-884-6744

Sample Crew Travel Letter

(on Troop Letterhead)



<date>

To whom it may concern:

The following youth are members of Boy Scouts of America, Troop <troop #>:

Youth	Parent's Name(s)	Telephone #

The aforementioned scouts are traveling as a youth group from <town, state> to Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario from <dates of expedition>. The youth are traveling under the direct supervision of the following adult advisors:

<list of adults>

Please facilitate their passage to/from Canada without delay.

Sincerely,

<name>
Scoutmaster

Health and Safety Form and Notice

Form can be found at: http://www.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-001_ABC.pdf

A

Part A: Informed Consent, Release Agreement, and Authorization

Full name: _____

Date of birth: _____

High-adventure base participants:

Expedition/crew No.: _____

or staff position: _____

Informed Consent, Release Agreement, and Authorization

I understand that participation in Scouting activities involves the risk of personal injury, including death, due to the physical, mental, and emotional challenges in the activities offered. Information about those activities may be obtained from the venue, activity coordinators, or your local council. I also understand that participation in these activities is entirely voluntary and requires participants to follow instructions and abide by all applicable rules and the standards of conduct.

In case of an emergency involving me or my child, I understand that efforts will be made to contact the individual listed as the emergency contact person by the medical provider and/or adult leader. In the event that this person cannot be reached, permission is hereby given to the medical provider selected by the adult leader in charge to secure proper treatment, including hospitalization, anesthesia, surgery, or injections of medication for me or my child. Medical providers are authorized to disclose protected health information to the adult in charge, camp medical staff, camp management, and/or any physician or health-care provider involved in providing medical care to the participant. Protected Health Information/Confidential Health Information (PHI/CHI) under the Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information, 45 C.F.R. §§160.103, 164.501, etc. seq., as amended from time to time, includes examination findings, test results, and treatment provided for purposes of medical evaluation of the participant, follow-up and communication with the participant's parents or guardian, and/or determination of the participant's ability to continue in the program activities.

(If applicable) I have carefully considered the risk involved and hereby give my informed consent for my child to participate in all activities offered in the program. I further authorize the sharing of the information on this form with any BSA volunteers or professionals who need to know of medical conditions that may require special consideration in conducting Scouting activities.

With appreciation of the dangers and risks associated with programs and activities, on my own behalf and/or on behalf of my child, I hereby fully and completely release and waive any and all claims for personal injury, death, or loss that may arise against the Boy Scouts of America, the local council, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with any program or activity.

I also hereby assign and grant to the local council and the Boy Scouts of America, as well as their authorized representatives, the right and permission to use and publish the photographs/film/ videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings made of me or my child at all Scouting activities, and I hereby release the Boy Scouts of America, the local council, the activity coordinators, and all employees, volunteers, related parties, or other organizations associated with the activity from any and all liability from such use and publication. I further authorize the reproduction, sale, copyright, exhibit, broadcast, electronic storage, and/or distribution of said photographs/film/videotapes/electronic representations and/or sound recordings without limitation at the discretion of the BSA, and I specifically waive any right to any compensation I may have for any of the foregoing.

Every person who furnishes any BB device to any minor, without the express or implied permission of the parent or legal guardian of the minor, is guilty of a misdemeanor. (California Penal Code Section 19915[a]) My signature below on this form indicates my permission.

I give permission for my child to use a BB device. (Note: Not all events will include BB devices.)

Checking this box indicates you DO NOT want your child to use a BB device.



NOTE: Due to the nature of programs and activities, the Boy Scouts of America and local councils cannot continually monitor compliance of program participants or any limitations imposed upon them by parents or medical providers. However, so that leaders can be as familiar as possible with any limitations, list any restrictions imposed on a child participant in connection with programs or activities below.

List participant restrictions, if any: _____

None

I understand that, if any information I/we have provided is found to be inaccurate, it may limit and/or eliminate the opportunity for participation in any event or activity. If I am participating at Philmont Scout Ranch, Philmont Training Center, Northern Tier, Sea Base, or the Summit Bechtel Reserve, I have also read and understand the supplemental risk advisories, including height and weight requirements and restrictions, and understand that the participant will not be allowed to participate in applicable high-adventure programs if those requirements are not met. The participant has permission to engage in all high-adventure activities described, except as specifically noted by me or the health-care provider. If the participant is under the age of 18, a parent or guardian's signature is required.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/guardian signature for youth: _____ Date: _____

(If participant is under the age of 18)

Complete this section for youth participants only:

Adults Authorized to Take Youth to and From Events:

You must designate at least one adult. Please include a phone number.

Name: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Adults NOT Authorized to Take Youth to and From Events:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____



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Part B1: General Information/Health History

Full name: _____

Date of birth: _____

High-adventure base participants:

Expedition/crew No.: _____

or staff position: _____

Age: _____ Gender: _____ Height (inches): _____ Weight (lbs.): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP code: _____ Phone: _____

Unit leader: _____ Unit leader's mobile #: _____

Council Name/No.: _____ Unit No.: _____

Health/Accident Insurance Company: _____ Policy No.: _____



Please attach a photocopy of both sides of the insurance card. If you do not have medical insurance, enter "none" above.

In case of emergency, notify the person below:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____ Home phone: _____ Other phone: _____

Alternate contact name: _____ Alternate's phone: _____

Health History

Do you currently have or have you ever been treated for any of the following?

Yes	No	Condition	Explain
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diabetes	Last HbA1c percentage and date: _____ Insulin pump: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hypertension (high blood pressure)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult or congenital heart disease/heart attack/chest pain (angina)/heart murmur/coronary artery disease. Any heart surgery or procedure. Explain all "yes" answers.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family history of heart disease or any sudden heart-related death of a family member before age 50.	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stroke/TIA	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asthma/reactive airway disease	Last attack date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lung/respiratory disease	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	COPD	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ear/eyes/nose/sinus problems	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Muscular/skeletal condition/muscle or bone issues	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Head injury/concussion/TBI	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Altitude sickness	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Psychiatric/psychological or emotional difficulties	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neurological/behavioral disorders	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blood disorders/sickle cell disease	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fainting spells and dizziness	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kidney disease	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seizures or epilepsy	Last seizure date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Abdominal/stomach/digestive problems	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thyroid disease	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Skin issues	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Obstructive sleep apnea/sleep disorders	CPAP: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	List all surgeries and hospitalizations	Last surgery date: _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	List any other medical conditions not covered above	



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Part B2: General Information/Health History

Full name: _____

Date of birth: _____

High-adventure base participants:

Expedition/crew No.: _____
or staff position: _____

Allergies/Medications

DO YOU USE AN EPINEPHRINE AUTOINJECTOR? Exp. date (if yes) _____ YES NO

DO YOU USE AN ASTHMA RESCUE INHALER? Exp. date (if yes) _____ YES NO

Are you allergic to or do you have any adverse reaction to any of the following?

Yes	No	Allergies or Reactions	Explain	Yes	No	Allergies or Reactions	Explain
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medication		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plants	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Food		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect bites/stings	

List all medications currently used, including any over-the-counter medications.

Check here if no medications are routinely taken. If additional space is needed, please list on a separate sheet and attach.

Medication	Dose	Frequency	Reason

YES NO Non-prescription medication administration is authorized with these exceptions: _____

Administration of the above medications is approved for youth by:

_____/_____
Parent/guardian signature MD/DO, NP, or PA signature (if your state requires signature)



Bring enough medications in sufficient quantities and in the original containers. Make sure that they are NOT expired, including inhalers and EpiPens. You SHOULD NOT STOP taking any maintenance medication unless instructed to do so by your doctor.

Immunization

The following immunizations are recommended. Tetanus immunization is required and must have been received within the last 10 years. If you had the disease, check the disease column and list the date. If immunized, check yes and provide the year received.

Yes	No	Had Disease	Immunization	Date(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Tetanus	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Pertussis	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Diphtheria	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Measles/mumps/rubella	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Polio	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Chicken Pox	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Hepatitis A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Hepatitis B	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Meningitis	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Influenza	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other (i.e., HIB)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Exemption to immunizations (form required)	

Please list any additional information about your medical history:

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BOX.
Review for camp or special activity.

Reviewed by: _____

Date: _____

Further approval required: Yes No

Reason: _____

Approved by: _____

Date: _____



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Part C: Pre-Participation Physical

This part must be completed by certified and licensed physicians (MD, DO), nurse practitioners, or physician assistants.

Full name: _____

Date of birth: _____

High-adventure base participants:

Expedition/crew No.: _____

or staff position: _____



You are being asked to certify that this individual has no contraindication for participation in a Scouting experience. For individuals who will be attending a high-adventure program, including one of the national high-adventure bases, please refer to the supplemental information on the following pages or the form provided by your patient. You can also visit www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr to view this information online.

Please fill in the following information:

	Yes	No	Explain
Medical restrictions to participate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Yes	No	Allergies or Reactions	Explain	Yes	No	Allergies or Reactions	Explain
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Medication		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Plants	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Food		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Insect bites/stings	

Height (inches)	Weight (lbs.)	BMI	Blood Pressure	Pulse
			/	

	Normal	Abnormal	Explain Abnormalities
Eyes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ears/nose/throat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Lungs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Heart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Abdomen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Genitalia/hernia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Musculoskeletal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neurological	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Skin issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Examiner's Certification

I certify that I have reviewed the health history and examined this person and find no contraindications for participation in a Scouting experience. This participant (with noted restrictions):

True	False	Explain
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Meets height/weight requirements.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has no uncontrolled heart disease, lung disease, or hypertension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has not had an orthopedic injury, musculoskeletal problems, or orthopedic surgery in the last six months or possesses a letter of clearance from his or her orthopedic surgeon or treating physician.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has no uncontrolled psychiatric disorders.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has had no seizures in the last year.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does not have poorly controlled diabetes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If planning to scuba dive, does not have diabetes, asthma, or seizures.

Examiner's signature: _____ Date: _____

Examiner's printed name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP code: _____

Office phone: _____

Height/Weight Restrictions

If you exceed the maximum weight for height as explained in the following chart and your planned high-adventure activity will take you more than 30 minutes away from an emergency vehicle/accessible roadway, you may not be allowed to participate.

Maximum weight for height:

Height (inches)	Max. Weight						
60	166	65	195	70	226	75	260
61	172	66	201	71	233	76	267
62	178	67	207	72	239	77	274
63	183	68	214	73	246	78	281
64	189	69	220	74	252	79 and over	295



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2019 Printing

Birchbark Expeditions Experience. Participation in any unit high-adventure backcountry/wilderness activities can be physically, mentally, and emotionally demanding. Each high-adventure base offers a unique experience that is not risk-free. Knowledgeable staff will instruct all participants in safety measures to be followed. Be prepared to listen to and carefully follow these safety measures and to accept responsibility for the health and safety of yourself and others.

Birchbark Expeditions Requirements. Each person must be able to carry a 50- to 85-pound pack or canoe from a quartermile to 2 miles several times a day on rough, swampy, and rocky portages and paddle 10 to 15 miles per day, often against a headwind. The portage trails can be very muddy, slippery, and rocky, and those conditions can potentially lead to tripping and falling. All participants must wear boots that cover their ankles while on the trails. Climatic conditions can range from 30 to 100 degrees in summer.

Be Prepared. While participating in Birchbark Expeditions's canoeing and camping backcountry/wilderness areas, life jackets must be worn at all times when on the water. Crew members travel together at all times. Emergency communications via mobile phone, and in more remote locations by satellite phone, are provided by Birchbark Expeditions. Communication and/or emergency evacuation can be hampered by weather, terrain, distance, time of day, equipment malfunction, and other factors, and are not a substitute for taking appropriate precautions and having adequate first-aid knowledge and equipment.

Seizures (Epilepsy). The seizure disorder must be well-controlled by medication. A well-controlled disorder is one in which a year has passed without a seizure. Exceptions to this guideline may be considered on an individual basis and will be based on the specific type of seizure and likely risks to the individual and/or other members of the crew.

Diabetes Mellitus. Both the person with diabetes and one other person in the group need to be able to recognize signs of excessively high or low blood sugar and adjust the dose of insulin. An insulin-dependent person who was diagnosed or who has had a change in delivery system (e.g., insulin pump) in the last six months is advised not to participate. A person with diabetes who has had frequent hospitalizations or who has had problems with low blood sugar should not participate until better control of the diabetes has been achieved.

Asthma. Asthma must be well-controlled before participating. This means: 1) the use of a rescue inhaler (e.g., albuterol) less than once daily; 2) no need for a rescue inhaler at night. Well-controlled asthma may include the use of long-acting bronchodilators, inhaled steroids, or oral medications such as Singulair. You may not be allowed to participate if: 1) you have asthma not controlled by medication; or 2) you have been hospitalized/gone to the emergency room to treat asthma in the past six months; or 3) you have needed treatment by oral steroids (prednisone) in the past six months. You must bring an ample supply of your

medication and a spare rescue inhaler that are not expired. At least one other member of the crew should know how to use the rescue inhaler. Any person who has needed treatment for asthma in the past three years must carry a rescue inhaler on the trek. If you do not bring a rescue inhaler, you must buy one before you will be allowed to participate.

Allergy or Anaphylaxis. People who have had an anaphylactic reaction from any cause will be required to keep appropriate treatment with them. You and at least one other member of your crew must know how to give the treatment. If you do not bring appropriate treatment with you, you will be required to buy it before you will be allowed to participate.

Recent Musculoskeletal Injuries and

Orthopedic Surgery. Participants will put a great deal of strain on their joints. Individuals who have significant musculoskeletal problems (including back problems) or have had orthopedic surgery or injuries within the last six months must have a letter of clearance from their treating physician to be considered for approval, and Birchbark Expeditions should be contacted in advance of participation. Permission is not guaranteed.

Psychological and Emotional Difficulties.

Parents and advisors should be aware that no high-adventure experience is designed to assist participants in overcoming psychological or emotional problems. Experience demonstrates that these problems frequently become worse when a participant is under stress from the physical and mental challenges of a remote wilderness setting. Medication must never be stopped prior to participation and should be continued throughout the entire experience.

Cardiac or Cardiovascular Disease. Adults or youth who have a history of chest pain, myocardial infarction (heart attack), a family history of premature heart disease, or heart surgery including angioplasty may consider a physician-supervised stress test. Even if the stress test results are normal, the testing is done without portage packs or canoes and does not guarantee safety. If the results are abnormal, the individual is advised not to participate.

Medication. Each participant who needs medication must bring enough medication for the duration of the trip, as well as enough to store two supplies in two separate locations. Due to the possibility of packs and equipment getting wet, every attempt is made to store medications in two separate packs in different canoes while travelling.

Weight Limits. Each participant in a Birchbark Expeditions should not exceed the maximum acceptable weight for height in the table shown in Part C of the Annual Health and Medical Record. Those who fall within the recommended weight limits are much more likely to have an enjoyable trek and avoid incurring injuries and other health risks. Extra weight puts strain on the back, joints, and feet. No participant's weight can exceed 295 pounds.

Crew Roster Worksheet

Birchbark Expeditions BSA

Crew Roster Worksheet



Unit/Group: Example: Troop 123, Crew A

Expedition departure date:

Expedition Advisor:

Advisor Email:

Expedition Dashboard Username:

Password:

Participants

#	Name		Adult/ Youth	Tee Shirt Size	Parent/Emergency Contact Telephone #	Special Diet?	Medications? Y/N	Experience Level
	Last	First						
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								

Vehicles

#	Make	Model	Color	State	License Plate Number	Driver Cell Phone #	Address
1							
2							
3							
4							

Only a worksheet - submit your final roster on-line

Crew Position Descriptions

Crew Leader

The Crew Leader is a youth with overall leadership responsibility for the crew before, during and after the expedition. Leading up to the expedition, responsibilities include choosing crew members and roles, organizing skills training meetings and reminder calls. During the expedition, responsibilities include setting and managing the duty roster, making decisions along the expedition on camp site organization, layout and other camping details.



Assistant Crew Leader

Acts as the “right hand man” for the Crew Leader, working closely to implement decisions and able to step in as needed if the crew leader is absent or needs a break. Ideally the Assistant Crew Leader would take the lead for one day during the trek.

Quartermaster

Responsible for designing the crew menu, organizing and inventory of the food stores, bear bag procedures and the contents of the “kettle pack” along with other crew gear.

Navigator

Responsible for designing the crew back country itinerary (with help), creating the crew map set, and navigation during the expedition.

Medic/First Aider

Responsible for reviewing and refreshing the crew first aid kit, keeping the first aid kit readily accessible while in the back country, managing the crew hydration and dealing with small injuries or other first aid requirements.

Chaplain’s Aid

Before the expedition, Chaplain’s Aid is responsible for choosing a set of readings for use at the nightly “thorns and roses”. During the expedition, Chaplain’s Aid is responsible for nightly “thorns and roses”, crew morale, songs, games and entertainment during down times.

Adult Advisors

Adult Advisors are BSA Registered adults, overseeing the safe execution of the crew expedition, providing advice to the Crew Leader and his/her assistants. As the name suggests, adult advisors are to support and advise the crews, not direct/lead.

Duty Roster

“A happy crew is a prepared crew”



Completing a duty roster before departing on your expedition allows the crew leader to save a lot of time trying to remember who did what and when, avoiding the inevitable “I already did that” or even worse the “hey, how come Bobby hasn’t done dishes yet?”

Take a few minutes to pre-assign the various camp tasks, sharing this information with the crew before your back country departure:

Day	Bear Bags and Tarp Set-up	Water Purification	Prepare Meals	Clean-up after Meals
Sunday (in Base-camp)				
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Crew Swim Certification

TROOP/CREW _____

To Do:

- PRINT LEGIBLY
- COPIES TO: Leaders, Home, Birchbark Expeditions BSA

My signature after each name certifies that the following Adults and Youth have passed the BSA 100 yard swim test.
(Signature of BSA Lifeguard or Equivalent - Date)

	NAME	Adult / Youth	Date of Birth	Passed Swim Test BSA Lifeguard Signature - Date
	Jim Scoutmaster SAMPLE	A	01-01-1990	Joe Lifeguard (signed) 03-01-2012 (date)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

Crew Trip Itinerary Planning Worksheet

TROOP /
CREW _____

NAME OF ROUTE _____

Route #

Trip Dates _____

(from "Canoe Routes of Algonquin")
(e.g.: "Down the Otterslides" - Canoe-Otterslides Loop Route #8)

**Algonquin Park
Backcountry Reservation
Booking Number
#** _____

Adult Ldr _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

(Booking Number will be issued when Itinerary
is booked by Birchbark Expeditions BSA)

Start Trip from Access Point # _____	Name of Access Point _____ <small>(e.g.: Canoe Lake)</small>
---	--

DAY	DATE	LAKES TRAVELLED DURING DAY	EVENING DESTINATION LAKE	PORTAGES	MILES TRAVELLED
Sunday		XXXXX	Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp at Whitefish Lake	XXXXX	XXXXX
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday			Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp at Whitefish Lake		
Saturday		Home!			

End Trip at Access Point # _____	Name of Access Point _____ <small>(e.g.: Canoe Lake)</small>
---	--

**Submit your itinerary plans at: February Route Planning Meeting
Or via email: birchbark@wnyscouting.org**

Post-Trip Evaluation

Troop/Crew _____
Canoe Trip Dates _____

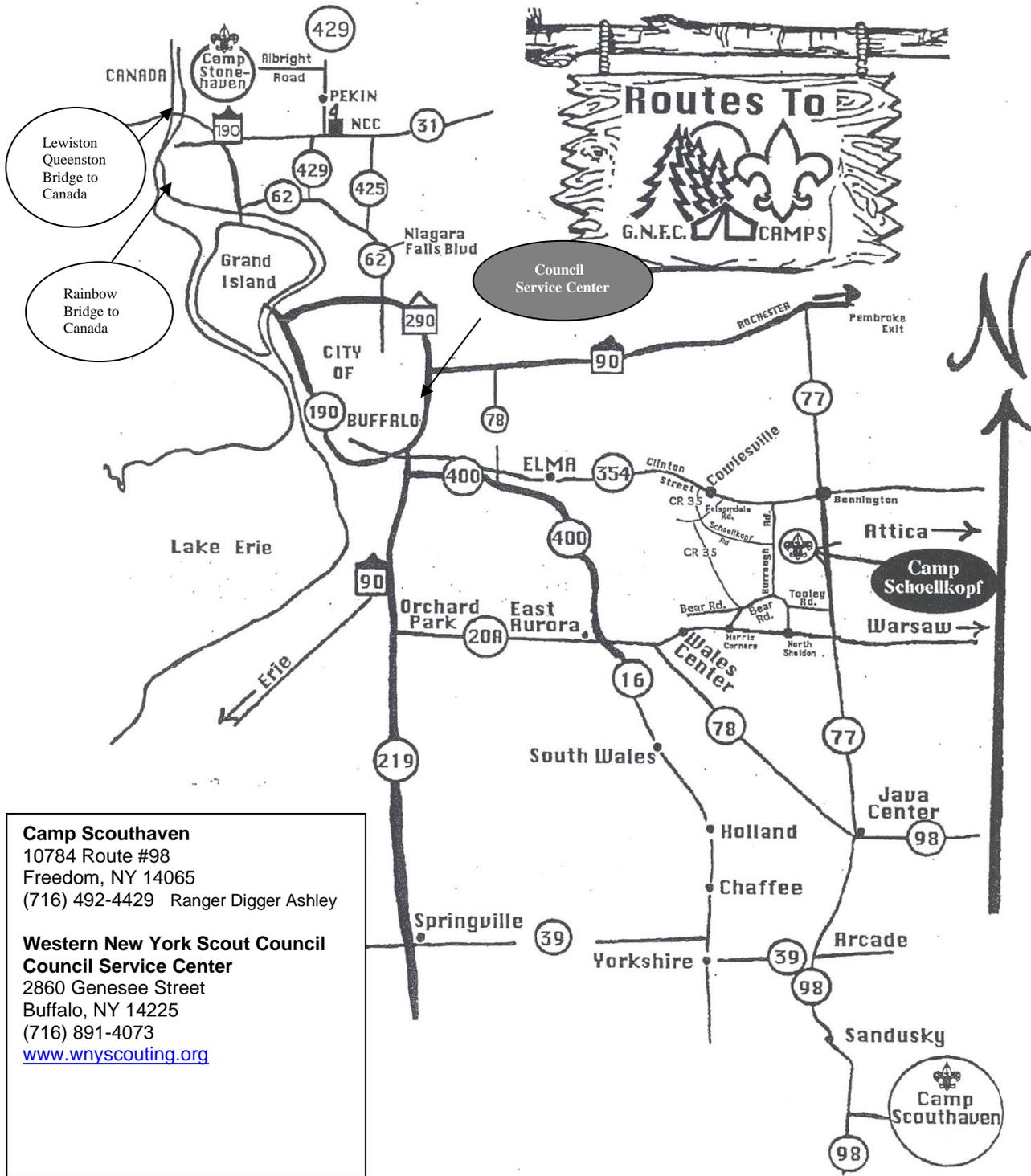
Leader Name _____
Number of Youths/Adults _____
Guide's name _____

We would like your input! And, we need your input so we can become more responsive to our troops and crews, as we seek to deliver the best high adventure program the BSA has to offer. Thanks for your help. Hand it in or mail it to the address below.

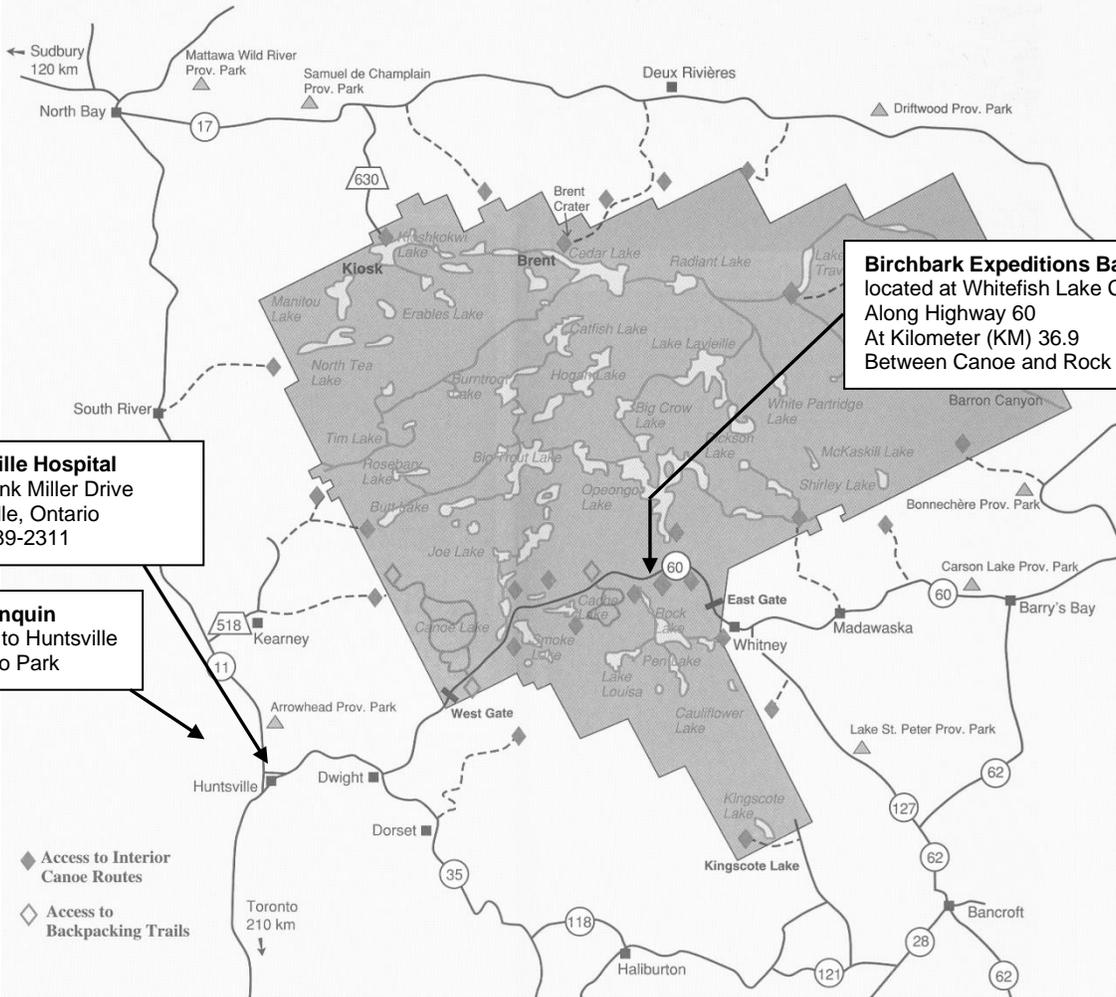
<p>How was your trip? Give us a quote!</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Trip Planning. Did you receive adequate help in planning a canoe trip that met the needs of YOUR group?</p> <p>Was the Interior canoe trip exciting and challenging for your crew? Did it meet your expectations?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Cost. How much did you pay for your trip? Was it affordable?</p> <p>Do you feel you got good value for your money?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Sainte Marie among-the-Hurons How would you rate the tour of Sainte-Marie?</p> <p>Is historical touring is a valuable part of a high adventure?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Food. What was your favorite meal? / What was your worst?</p> <p>Were the portions adequate?</p> <p>Anything you would like to see on next year's menu?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Water purification. Which system do you prefer? Why?</p>	<p>Your Guide. Did your guide add value to your trip? How so?</p> <p>What characteristics should a good Guide possess?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Base Camp. Any comments on Paddle Practice, Swamping, Other Units?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Your Interior Canoe Trip. Were you adequately prepared for your canoe trip?</p> <p>Did you cook with gas stoves or the Kelly Kettle? Why / why not?</p> <p>Did you execute the portages in one or two trips?</p> <p>Who in your crew was able to portage a canoe by him/herself?</p> <p>How many miles did you travel?</p> <p>What were the major lakes you travelled on?</p> <p>What time did you rise in the morning?</p> <p>Any tips for future crews?</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Departure from Algonquin. Is Friday or Saturday the best day to leave for home? Why do you feel that way?</p>
--	---

Mail completed form to:
Birchbark Expeditions c/o WNYSC BSA
2860 Genesee Street
Buffalo, NY 14225

Maps to WNYSC Council Camps



Map to Whitefish Camp in Algonquin Provincial Park





WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

United States

- **Western New York Scout Council, BSA Service Center**
2860 Genesee Street, Buffalo, NY 14225-3131
W: (716) 891-4073
www.wnyscouting.org
- **Chris Matthewson, WNYSC Staff Advisor**
chris.matthewson@scouting.org
W: (716) 512-6212 C: (716) 462-9770
- **Alan Percy**
Program Co-Chair, Birchbark Expeditions
birchbark@wnyscouting.org
H: (716) 662-0925 C: (716) 830-5966
- **Hank Stopinski**
Program Co-Chair, Birchbark Expeditions
birchbark@wnyscouting.org
C: (716) 270-3143
- **Camp Scouthaven, BSA**
Route #98, Freedom, NY 14065
(716) 492-4429

Phone Numbers

To Do:

- Keep this phone list in your wallet
- Give a copy to each parent

Canada

- **Algonquin Provincial Park**
PO Box 219, Hwy #60
Whitney, Ontario, Canada K0J 2M0
www.algonquinpark.on.ca
(705) 633-5572 Information Line
(705) 633-5583 Gate Park Staff West (8:30-4:30 pm)
(613) 637-2780 Administration East Gate (8:30-4:30)
- **Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)**
(You will need to know the planned location of the crew when calling – refer to the crew itinerary)
1 (888) 310-1122 or +1 (613) 283-2313
- **Birchbark Expeditions Base Camp**
Located at Whitefish Lake Campground
Algonquin Provincial Park
The Base has no phone. For emergencies call:
WNYSC Scout Service Center, Algonquin Park, or
Ontario Provincial Police
- **Huntsville Hospital**
100 Frank Miller Drive
Huntsville, Ontario, Canada P1H 1H7
(705) 789-2311



WESTERN NEW YORK SCOUT COUNCIL
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Algonquin Park Procedures

“Although Algonquin Park does not operate search and rescue patrols, they will respond if they are contacted. During the summer months there are 20 rangers working throughout the Interior, and there is an aircraft that they use for various management purposes. There are also other campers, so help is usually close at hand. Three signals of any kind, either audible or visible, constitute the universal call for help. Also, if a Park aircraft is in your vicinity, a smoke fire could help to attract the pilot’s attention.

“If darkness is approaching, make camp along a lakeshore or in a clearing; the more visible you are, the easier you will be to find. If you are traveling with a group, stay together, and reassure the other members of your party. Do not wander aimlessly off into the bush. Traveling at night is especially foolish and should not be attempted.

“Serious injury or sickness may require more immediate action on your part. In some circumstances, it may be advisable to leave the injured person and paddle out for assistance. If you are forced to leave someone behind, make them as comfortable as possible, leave someone with them who can continue to signal for help, and be sure that you know exactly where they are.”

(The above Algonquin Park Procedures are from “Canoe Routes of Algonquin Provincial Park” map.)

Note: This information, “In Case of Emergency,” is also found in the Voyageur Handbook

In Case of Emergency

To Do: PHONE

- Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) (613) 283-2313
- Algonquin Park Headquarters – East Gate
8:30 am to 4:30 pm 613-637-2780
- Gr. Niagara Frontier Council BSA 716-891-4073
- Parents of Scout involved

Boy Scout Procedures

At times during your Algonquin trip you will be a day or two from help. Please exercise sound judgment and take the prudent course of action.

- Follow procedures outlined in the Algonquin Park canoe routes map (see adjoining column).
- Cell phones generally do not work in the Park, because of the mountainous terrain and lack of transmitting towers. *Sometimes* they do work.
- Crew leaders provide routine first aid. Get additional help from other groups.
- For emergencies requiring medical or police attention, you must get to the nearest Algonquin Provincial Park Access Point office, where Access Point office staff will assist you.
- As you paddle out, try the cell phone on lakes near Hwy 60 where reception *may* be obtained.
- Note the locations of Youth Camps and cottages. They may be able to offer assistance.
- After Hours Park staff may not be present at Access Points after 8:00 pm.
- If you reach a phone after hours, then call the Ontario Provincial Police at 1-888-310-1122.
- Then call the Western New York Scout Council to explain your situation 716-891-4073.

If an air evacuation is required, it is considered an air ambulance. You may wish to confirm with your health insurance carrier about coverage. Carry your health forms with you so benefits can be verified and treatment can be administered.

If an evacuation is necessary, it is best to be near the shore of a body of water large enough to land a float plane. You will need to use good judgment about deciding to transport an injured party with your crew, or to wait until professional help arrives.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How are special food requirements handled?

A: If a scout has special dietary requirements, please let us know at the time of registration. We'll work to accommodate any special needs.

Q: Is the program open to girls/women?

A: Birchbark Expeditions is a co-ed program, open to boys, girl, men and women. The program strictly adheres to the BSA Youth Protection and Adult Leadership policies.

Q: What's needed for transportation?

A: Crews will need to provide their own transportation to/from basecamp and within the park. Most crews use two personal vehicles or a single large van/bus per crew. If you would like to use any other arrangement, please contact us to accommodate alternate logistics.

Q: Why does Birchbark recommend three people per canoe?

A: By traveling with two scouts and one adult in each canoe, we can usually execute “one trip portages”, moving the canoe and two canoe packs over the portage in one trip. This dramatically reduce the portage carry distances and makes for a much more enjoyable experience. An additional benefit is that we can use larger expedition canoes that travel faster and with less effort (especially when dealing with windy conditions)

Q: What are the portage trails like?

A: The very busy and popular portage trails are somewhat improved, but most portages are simple foot paths that have been cleared of downed trees/branches. They vary in length from a few meters to well over 2 kilometers. Your itinerary planning will include the portages that your crew will have to traverse and their difficulty.

Q: Can we bring our own canoes/tents/crew gear?

A: While it's possible, it's often not practical. Birchbark Expeditions provides a complete set of crew gear that includes expedition-grade Eureka tents that are similar to the tents used by many troops, new “Pocket Rocket” stoves and fuel, water purification system, a set of nesting pots, a tarp, utensils and much more. Drop a note to one of the Birchbark Guides at birchbark@wnyscouting.org and we'll discuss your situation and specific needs.

Q: How extensive of a first aid kit does our crew need for the expedition?

A: It's recommended that each crew bring a backcountry first aid kit with supplies for up to eight people for five days. In most cases, this should be no larger than a loaf of bread. Like all other gear taken on the water, it should be packed in a waterproof zip-lock or dry bag.

Q: Is there cellular phone coverage in Algonquin/the Adirondacks? How to you reach out in an emergency?

A: While at base camp, there is usually mobile phone service. Once in the back country, there is no cellular service, however your Birchbark Expedition guide will have a satellite communicator that can be used to summon help in emergency situations.

Q: Will we see a moose? Beaver? Bears?

A: Moose sightings are fairly common, usually found in grassy bays and quiet parts of the park. Beaver sightings are not as common, but you will see plenty of beaver dams and their houses. We rarely see bears in the backcountry, but they have become a problem in and around the public campgrounds.

Q: What is a 'portage'?

A: Taking a "portage" or the process of "portaging" is moving from one body of water to another over land. This usually occurs when there is a dam, white water or rapids that would otherwise prevent paddling directly from one lake to another. Portages can vary from a few feet to close to 2 miles, depending on the itinerary selected by the crew. Most are rocky trails and can have steep ascents/descents. The best practices for making a portage are taught during the Shakedown training session, including tips to ensure each portage is walked only once.

Q: What 'special' personal gear would a participant need?

A: Participants are provided a complete list of personal gear that is recommended for a Birchbark Expedition, which includes a few canoeing-specific items: a very compact 40 degree sleeping bag with waterproof compression sack, closed-toe sandals (Keens are an example), and a medium-size dry sack. Most of the remaining items are common with the needs for backpacking/hiking.

Q: What "facilities" are provided in the park interior?

A: While in basecamp, you will have access to flushing facilities and showers. In the park interior (aka the backcountry), each campsite provides a "thunder box" set back some distance in the woods. A thunder box is latrine made from a 1 meter square wooden box with a hole and a wooden lid. The name comes from the sound of the lid slamming after each use. For mixed gender crews, we recommend taking an additional tarp that can be hung to provide some privacy.

Q: Explain the "ideal crew" and what if we have more/fewer participants?

A: The ideal crew would be six youth and two adults, plus a guide making 9 participants (the maximum that the Parks Canada allows in one camp site). Groups larger than this would be divided into two "sister" crews, which can shadow each other on the same trek or go their own way. We find that making two crews based on ability levels allows each crew to choose an itinerary that better fits their abilities. Small crews (5, 6 or 7 participants) can be accommodated, but with fewer people to carry canoes and crew gear, may require two-trip portages. Contact us at birchbark@wnyscouting.org to discuss your specific situation.

Q: We have a lot of parents interested so is it possible if the crews have more than 3 adults?

A: Crews can have any number of adults, but we do recommend that the adults don't outnumber the scouts. Doing so, changes the dynamics of the group and often shifts the decision making away from the scouts. The trip is supposed to be led by the scouts with the adults acting as advisors to facilitate their expedition.

Q: With COVID-19 causing travel restrictions, what are the cancelation terms?

A: If WNYSC is forced to cancel due to COVID, crews will have the choice of 100% refund or transferred to the following year. If the crew cancels due to COVID before July 1st - 100% refund or transferred to the following year. If cancelation is July 1st or later - 50% refund or 100% transferred to the following year.

Q: How bad are the bugs in Algonquin during a Birchbark Expeditions?

A: One of benefits of going to Algonquin in late July and August is that most of the bugs are done for the season. There are no Black Flies, and the mosquitoes are manageable with proper clothing and bug repellent

Q: How about using a hammock instead of a tent?

A: Hammock camping is great in the park, there are plenty of trees!

Q: Can we fish during our trek and do we need a fishing license?

A: Yes, once you get to each night's camp site, there will be plenty of time to fish. Adults and youth 16 and older will need a license to fish in Ontario – see: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/fishing-licence-non-residents-canada> Licenses can be purchased in Huntsville, ONT.

