



FLORIDA SEA BASE | NORTHERN TIER | PHILMONT SCOUT RANCH | THE SUMMIT

The Definition of High Adventure

High Adventure is:

- A challenging experience,
- An experience other than a routine event,
- An activity requiring special preparation and training,
- An activity performed with knowledge and skills beyond average requirements, and
- An activity that is not normally accomplished in man-made structures or in stationary facilities.



Types of High Adventure Treks and Outings:

Scout leaders may offer traditional canoeing or backpacking high-adventure programs, but high adventure often transcends typical Scouting activities. High adventure activities may include:

- All-Terrain Vehicles
- Aquatics Lifesaving
- Backpacking
- Camping
- Canoeing
- Caving (spelunking)
- Climbing / Rappelling
- Cross-country skiing
- Expedition Planning
- Extreme Sports
- First Aid
- Fishing
- Geocaching
- Historical Reenactment / Living History
- Horseback riding and packing
- Hunting
- Kayaking
- Leave No Trace
- Motor boating
- Mountain Biking
- Mountaineering and technical climbing
- Orienteering
- Personal Watercraft
- Project COPE / Ropes Course
- Rock climbing and rappelling
- Sailing
- SCUBA diving
- Sea kayaking
- Search & Rescue
- Shooting Sports / Archery
- Snowshoeing
- Snorkeling
- Space Exploration
- White water kayaking
- Whitewater Rafting
- Wilderness search and rescue
- Wilderness Survival
- Winter (snow) camping
- Winter Sports & Camping
- Zip-Line

Examples of High Adventure Treks and Outings:

- Backpacking trek of 16 map miles or longer and a duration longer than 2 days
- All paddle sport treks (canoeing, rafting & kayaking)
- All snow camping away from a trail head base camp
- All rock climbing, mountaineering, technical climbing, and rappelling
- All caving
- All snorkeling and SCUBA diving
- All mountain biking

Passport to High Adventure

Many older Scouts, Varsity Scouts, Explorers, and Venturers consider high adventure the highlight of their

outdoor Scouting experiences. The *Passport to High Adventure* tells how they can—with guidance from their adult leaders—plan and safely carry out council and unit high-adventure treks using Leave No Trace techniques. Older youth seek out these programs; it's what keeps them high on Scouting. High adventure challenges and inspires them—and their leaders—and broadens their appeal for Scouting. This is why Scoutmasters and Advisors must make high-adventure opportunities a priority, promoting participation by unit members who are qualified for these elite outdoor activities.

Your council may already have a canoeing or backpacking high-adventure program, but high adventure often transcends conventional Scouting activities. Collectively, the councils that have high-adventure programs offer these activities and more:

Bicycle touring	Rappelling
Caving	Rock climbing
Horse packing	Sailing
Mountain biking	Scuba diving
Rafting	Skiing and snowboarding

Materials

Fieldbook, 5th Edition, No. 34006

Passport to High Adventure, No. 34245

Tour and Activity Plan, No. 680-014

Tours and Expeditions, No. 33735A

Guide to Safe Scouting, No. 34416

Annual Health and Medical Record, No. 680-001

Identify the Problems

Invite the participants to relate their personal experiences with planning and training for a trek. Ask them about times they have been unprepared. Have participants declare their one most indispensable piece of literature.

Develop an Itinerary

An itinerary serves as a blueprint of your trek. Once you have the plan on paper, you may discover that it's easy to see what meals you will want to prepare and what equipment you will need to take. You won't be likely to forget essential details like transportation arrangements to and from the area. An alternate plan should be devised for every itinerary in case of interruption by unexpected events.

Create a Trip Plan

When your crew arrives at a consensus of what your itinerary and alternate plans will be, write them down and include a full description of your intended route, where you plan to camp, and what time you will return. A trip plan lets people know where you are going and when you intend to return. Be sure everyone understands the plan, and then stick to it.

Know Where to Find Help

Plan a course of action in advance. Determine the location of the nearest medical facility and how to evacuate an injured member. In case of an emergency, think of the home contact person and who will pay the cost of evacuation if one is necessary. Operate within your training and abilities. Think about emergency

communications and plan for the unexpected. Have an emergency action plan and use *Passport to High Adventure* to help you and your crew have the ultimate high adventure.

Learn the Ins and Outs

The best high-adventure treks are planned, led, and carried out by youth. The purpose of Scouting is to help youth grow and mature, and learn how to be prepared. This happens when youths are responsible for their own plans and for making their own decisions. There is great strength in being prepared and in knowledge and knowing:

- How to dress properly in the outdoors and knowing about appropriate outdoor clothing such as polypropylene and polar fleece
- About proper nutrition—a balance between simple and complex carbohydrates, proteins, and fats
- How to pace a crew to help prevent overheating and sweating
- That drinking lots of properly disinfected water is crucial to your well-being
- How to conserve the environment and preserve the experience for future trekkers
- Where to go to enjoy the fresh air and the simpler life

Be Fit

To enjoy a trek, you must be fit. Part of preparing for marvelous outdoor experiences means undertaking a physical conditioning program to enhance your aerobic capacity and to tone your muscles. Being fit means feeling good about yourself not only physically, but mentally and emotionally, too. Point out that when accidents do occur, they frequently are related to unknown physical conditions or the unexpected result of some known physical problem. Good safety requires that the person in charge understand the risks or consequences of situations and circumstances such as individual limitations and inclement weather.

The Leader's Responsibilities during High-Adventure Activities

The role of the adult leader is to counsel and advise youth members. If necessary, this leader should be prepared to



discipline without verbal or physical abuse. The adult leader should:

Make arrangements for transportation, overnight stops, and meals enroute to and from the high-adventure activity.

Assist Scouts with fund-raising efforts.

Ensure the safety and well-being of every youth member.

Address youth conflicts.

Serve as counselor and coach by providing appropriate guidance to the group and youth members.

Attitude
Interest
Physical capabilities
Duration of the trip



Youth Protection

All adult leaders must have completed BSA Youth Protection training before participating in any Scouting event or activity involving youth members. Your local council has materials about this required training.

Planning Group Adventures

Determine Crew Size

For safety reasons, every crew should have at least four members but never more than 12. Crew size must be within the group size limit specified by the land management agency.

Consider Crew Member Capabilities

Before planning a high-adventure trek or any outdoor adventure, it is crucial to consider the capabilities of each crew member. Ask questions like:

Who should go?

What are their ages?

How much camping experience does each crew member have?

How does the crew deal with tough problems?

Match the Adventure to the Group

There are two ways to match a group with an outing. Older Scouts, Explorers, and Venturers can choose an outing and then find companions who have the necessary skills; or, they can go with friends and match the adventure and tailor the activities to fit the strengths and weaknesses of everyone involved. Keep the following in mind:

Experience and knowledge
Leadership
Teamwork
Maturity

Determine the Distance

The distance a crew can travel depends on the terrain, each crew member's physical condition, the nature of the gear, and the reasons for taking a trek. How rugged is the country? A mile of flat trail is far different from a mile that gains a thousand feet in elevation. In planning a trek, estimate the length of time required to travel from place to place. Plan your distances conservatively. Opt for a reasonable trek pace when starting out. Pace can always be gradually increased, if desired.

Plan Where to Go

Once the group has considered the capabilities and interests of each crew member, the trek distance, and length of time, the next step calls for decision making—where to go, and when. A majority-rules vote works well since the group's destination presents endless possibilities. The descriptions in *Passport to High Adventure* will help the crew decide which council high-adventure program might best fit its needs and desires. Also consider the alternatives: national parks, national forests, U.S. Bureau of Land Management areas, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuges, state recreation areas, or privately administered lands are just a few.



Build Your Own High Adventure

High Adventure trips are generally thought of as long-term camping experiences in remote or otherwise remarkable areas for experienced Scouts and Scouters.

There are four heavily promoted National High Adventure Bases - Florida Sea Base, Northern Tier (Minnesota), Summit (West Virginia) and Philmont Scout Ranch (New Mexico). In addition many Councils have established High Adventure Programs. The other option is developing and leading your own high adventure trips.

There are several factors that make developing our own trips attractive:

- **Cost** - our trip is just about half of the current fee for our Council-led contingents to the BSA bases.
- **Planning and Preparing** - building your own high adventure program is more involved than the somewhat canned experiences available at the BSA

Bases. This calls for crew members to be much more involved with the process and therefore makes the trip all that much more worthwhile. Scouts derive great satisfaction and valuable experience when they do it for themselves.

- **Flexibility** - We can schedule trips in a much more flexible time frame and suit the challenge to the participants. We can also plan our pre-trip shakedowns and meetings to suit our schedules.
- **Crew Dynamics** - Council contingents fill predetermined crew sizes. The good news is that you may get to spend a week or so with Scouts or leaders you don't know. This may be a chance to make new friends or a real ordeal. Filling a crew from a single Troop where everyone is familiar with one another makes the outcome more predictable.

The necessary specialized skills, knowledge and experience are not that difficult to develop. Consulting with other Scouters, searching the web and reading up on the place and activity your Troop chooses is half the fun.

Here are some resources to get you started:

- **Fieldbook**: Scouting's Manual of Basic and Advanced Skills for Outdoor Adventure - The fifth-edition covers hiking, camping, canoeing, mountain travel, ultralight backpacking, wilderness navigation, whitewater kayaking and much more.
- **Selden's High Adventure Resources** - Some of the links are dated but this collection of information is bound to be useful. There is a great collection trip logs on the web from Troops and Crews that have designed their own high adventure experiences.
- **AMC Guide to Outdoor Leadership** - A solidly well-written and thorough guide that merits close study by anyone leading groups in the outdoors.
- **Expedition Canoeing** - No other book was more helpful in making our canoe adventures a success.

Finding other troops that are going - Getting on their waiting list

A resourceful scout appreciates word of mouth and networking. Ask around, come to Roundtable, visit other campsites at Camporees and Summer Camp. Crews form early but schedules and life change things. Openings happen right up to the time a crew starts to head for the trek.

Gear - rent, borrow, or buy

Backpacks, lightweight backpacking tents, sleeping bags

and warm clothes: you can rent just about anything you need to hike, camp, canoe, backpack and snowshoe. What you can't borrow - rent. What you can't rent - buy.

One of the best things about hiking is that it doesn't take a lot of money or specialized gear to do it. Some sturdy shoes, a backpack with a few basic essentials and warm or waterproof clothes are often all that's needed for a day in the woods. Many of the basics can be found at thrift stores, or purchased second-hand. Watch for REI's garage sales.

Other equipment, like backpacking packs, stoves, snowshoes, tents or sleeping bags may require more of an investment. If you're not in a position to buy new gear or not sure you want to commit to a new aspect of the outdoors just yet, you have the option to rent some gear. Renting is a great way to explore a new sport, get a feel for different brands or kinds of gear, or equip fast-growing kids.

Below are a few resources for renting or borrowing gear in Lake County area. Check in with your favorite local sporting goods store to see if they rent gear. Other Troops and Crews have been on High Adventure trips ask them where they got their gear. They may even loan you some.

Companies and stores that rent hiking, camping and snowshoeing gear

- REI (Northbrook, 888 Willow Rd, (847) 480-1938; Oakbrook Terrace, 17W160 22nd St, (630) 574-7700). Each REI rents a slightly different set of gear, ranging from tents, backpacks and sleeping bags to snowshoes and mountaineering gear. See the checklist or give their rental desk a call for more information.

Each of the National BSA High Adventure Camps have some rental gear, mostly crew gear. Personal gear is available in the Camp stores. Local Outfitters from the area around High Adventure areas have more and usually have what is specially needed for their area.

I checked with BassPro, Gander Mountain and Cabalas' - They don't offer rentals but they do have a fair selection of gear. If you have the time, checkout the internet for gear. Check out:

- http://www.cabelas.com/catalog/browse/_/N-1100668
- <http://www.campmor.com/>
- <http://www.sierratradingpost.com/>
- <http://www.sportsmansguide.com/>