



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

OUTDOOR ETHICS ORIENTATION

Course Manual

Approved:

BSA Outdoor Ethics and Conservation Subcommittee

Draft

Released For Use:

December 2015

Updates: Jan 2016, Apr 2019, Oct 2023

Outdoor Ethics Orientation Course

Lesson Plan

Lesson Plan (60-90 minutes)

***Remember, this is a course to give participants enough knowledge to engage their units into the pursuit of the Outdoor Ethics awards and help them begin their adventures in OE trainings.**

***Each presentation is 10-15 minutes including activity. Not all sessions may have time for an activity. At least one should be done.

Materials

- Mission Statement posters for BSA, Leave No Trace, and Tread Lightly!.
- Some form of presentation (Display boards, posters, hangs, slides) that show the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, 5 Tread Lightly! principles, and quotes for the Land Ethic
- Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! standard hangtags for each participant(optional)
- Materials needed for the activities (See Appendix)
- Outdoor Ethics Summary Handout (one for each participant)
- Land Ethic Pamphlet (Print download from website)
- Posters with Local naturalists / conservationists / preservationist quotes for the Land Ethic
- Outdoor Ethics Orientation cards

Goal

-The goal of this BSA Outdoor Ethics Orientation Course is to introduce the concept of Outdoor Ethics to a group with little experience in outdoor ethics in a fun and engaging way. It should help youth and adults at all program levels understand the general principles behind Scouting's outdoor ethics program.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the class, lecture, discussion and practical sessions the participants should have:

- Knowledge of the Outdoor Code and Outdoor Ethics
- Knowledge of how Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly! and The Land Ethic / Stewardship support the Outdoor Code
- Knowledge of Outdoor Ethics Awareness and Action Awards Program
- Knowledge to locate additional Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly! and BSA outdoor ethics resources and opportunities for further training

Motivator

Play a smaller variation of Tread Values Game or a suitable activity to lead into a Values /Ethic discussion. Try to keep it to about 5-8 minutes.

Presentation

1, Opening (5 minutes)

- A. Welcome
- B. Flag Ceremony
- C. Recite / Read the Outdoor Code /Use Outdoor Code Opening Ceremony
- D. Introductions- Introduce self and staff

2. Outdoor Ethics = Outdoor Code (15 minutes)

- A. What is Outdoor Ethics? Ethics? Values?
Brain storm (desired outcome might be Leave No Trace, TL! Outdoor Code)
- B. Need for Outdoor Ethics
- C. Teaching the Outdoor Code
- D. Activity: Check website and/or appendix

3, Leave No Trace (15 minutes)

- A. Mission Leave No Trace: <https://lnt.org/about>
- B. Leave No Trace Seven Principles (not an instruction...overall set of guidelines not rules)
- C. Activity
- D. Leave No Trace and how relates to Outdoor Code

4. Tread Lightly! (15 minutes)

- A. Mission TL!: To promote responsible recreation through education.” need to talk about this
- B. 5 Principles of TREAD!
- C. Activity
- D. Tread Lightly! and how it relates to the Outdoor Code

5. Land Ethic / Stewardship (15 minutes)

- A. What is “The Land Ethic” (use the pamphlet to help)
- B. Scouting and Stewardship of the Land
- C. Activity (If time is available suggest - Population Connection: Who polluted the lake)
- D. Stewardship and how it relates to the Outdoor Code

6. BSA Outdoor Ethics Awareness and Action Awards

- A. Explain Awareness Award
- B. Explain who the Outdoor Ethics Instructor facilitator would be
- C. Talk about Action Award show different program versions

7. Conclusion (5-10 minutes)

- ❖ Review the Outdoor Code and ask participants to tell how it is supported by Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly!, and Land Ethic.
- ❖ Fill out evaluation
- ❖ Give course handout
- ❖ Wrap up and pass out cards
- ❖ If time is available it is highly recommended that this course close with the Web of Life.

(The trainer answers any participant questions and then presents each participant with their BSA Outdoor Ethics Orientation cards in a fashion that ends the training session on a high note)

After this course and completion of the on-line online Leave No Trace 101 course and online Tread Lightly 101 Awareness course, participants should have enough knowledge to conduct Outdoor Ethics workshops within their respective units/district/organizations and help youth earn their Outdoor Ethics Awareness Awards.

8. Closeout

- Report training to your Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate or representative.
- Turn in Training Attendance Report to council registrar or training records person:
BSA Outdoor Ethics Orientation training codes:
 - Youth - S110
 - Adults - S111

Outdoor Ethics Orientation Instructor Guidelines

Outdoor Ethics Orientation **Guidelines/Information for Instructors**

***This guide is to help orient all trainers on Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly!, or the Land Ethic and where to get resources. This guide is to be read before the orientation class. The class is outlined in the lesson plan. **There is not enough time to go thoroughly into each program area or read the guide during the class. That is the** purpose of the BSA Leave No Trace Basics classes. This course is to get participants started on their adventures in Outdoor Ethics.

Course Length: 60 to 70 minutes

Instructor: Leave No Trace Level 1, 2, or 3 Instructors; Master Tread Trainer or Tread Trainers; anyone who has taken the Outdoor Ethics Orientation Course and has completed the online Leave No Trace courses at www.int.org and the Tread Lightly! 101 at www.treadlightly.org. **All trainers should have taken the on-line courses to familiarize themselves with the information covered.**

Materials:

- Flip chart or white board
- BSA *Teaching Leave No Trace* (#21-117, can be downloaded from www.scouting.org)
- Leave No Trace and/or Tread Lightly! Standard Hang Tag (optional)
- Leave No Trace *North American Skills and Ethics* pamphlet (free download)
- Land Ethic Pamphlet (free download from Aldo Leopold Foundation website)
- Mission Statement posters for BSA, Leave No Trace, and Tread Lightly!.
- Some form of presentation (Display boards, posters, hangs, slides) that show the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, TREAD principles, and quotes for the Land Ethic
- Activities: See Appendix for suggested activities
- Materials for any activities planned

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Outdoor Ethic = Outdoor Code

What is Outdoor Ethics you may ask?

- Ethics is what you do when no one is watching.
- The body of moral principles or values governing or distinctive of a particular culture or group.

“...ethics is what you do in the dark, before the game warden shows up, before someone tells you to shape up! Shame is what you feel when they catch you doing something wrong; guilt is what you feel when you do something you know is wrong, period. One requires law enforcement. The other requires only the presence of that still, small voice...” - Paul Quinnett

In scouting we have had an Outdoor Ethic since the late 1940’s we call it the Outdoor Code. We have not had the programs to make the Outdoor Code come alive until recently.

The **Outdoor Code**, supported by the **Leave No Trace Seven Principles**, supplemented by **Tread Lightly!** principles and by the **Land Ethic**, represents an integrated Outdoor Ethic that is true to Scouting’s history and tradition of service.

Scout Law	Outdoor Code	Leave No Trace	Tread Lightly!	Land Ethic
Courteous	Clean in outdoor manners	Dispose of waste properly		Sportsmanship
Clean		Leave what you find		
Trustworthy		Careful with fire		
Thrifty	Considerate in the outdoors	Leave what you find	Respect the rights of others	Perception
Friendly				Husbandry
Courteous				Perception
Kind	Conservation-minded	Respect wildlife	Avoid sensitive areas	Sportsmanship
Helpful		Be considerate of other visitors		
Thrifty		Plan ahead and prepare		Travel responsibly
Reverent		Travel and camp on durable surfaces	Educate yourself	Land Ethic
			Avoid sensitive areas	
			Do your part	

Building upon this foundation, the Cub Scout, Scouts BSA, Venturing, and Sea Scout programs all include outdoor stewardship and care for the environment, as part of their programs. Through the Outdoor Code we can take responsibility for our own impacts. We can provide leadership to those around us to reduce their impacts by making good choices. Together, we can preserve and conserve our rich environmental heritage.

Overview of the Outdoor Code

Outdoor ethics is deeply ingrained within the BSA program.

As an American, I will do my best to be:

Clean in my outdoor manners—we will clean up after ourselves using pack it in, pack it out techniques. We avoid leaving graffiti, fire rings, camp gadgets, and other signs of our presence.

Careful with fire—fire is an important tool, but one that can be devastating if it gets out of hand. We think about the need for fire, how best to use it, and how to minimize its impacts.

Considerate in the outdoors—we will think about others as well as ourselves and how our presence impacts them. We think about not just our impact on other humans, but also on wildlife and the environment.

Conservation minded—we will think about our impacts on the environment. We take steps to correct and redress damage to the environment.

Scouts and Venturers who embrace the Outdoor Code often find that they wish to give back and help protect the environment that has given them so much. Some may find that they are "wild with love for the green outdoors—the trees, the tree-top singers, the wood-herbs, and the nightly things that left their tracks in the mud," in the words of Ernest Thompson Seton, the first Chief Scout. These Scouts and Venturers have begun to feel what Aldo Leopold called the "Land Ethic." The Land Ethic extends our concern beyond our fellow Scouts and Venturers, our families and friends, and even humanity itself to the entire environmental community of which we are a part—the deserts, forests, fish, wildlife, plants, rocks, oceans, and web of life encompassing them—what Leopold called "the Land."

Outdoor ethics is not just for youth. Adult volunteers are encouraged to seek training in basic outdoor skills and even take specialized courses. Many councils have Outdoor Ethics Advocates who provide leadership to their local units in learning and practicing good outdoor ethics.

Leave No Trace

Instilling values in young people and preparing them to make moral and ethical choices throughout their lifetime is the mission of the Boy Scouts of America. Leave No Trace helps reinforce that mission, and reminds us to respect the rights of other users of the outdoors as well as future generations. Appreciation for our natural environment and a knowledge of the interrelationships of nature bolster our respect and reverence toward the environment and nature.

The Leave No Trace Seven Principles

Leave No Trace is awareness and attitude rather than a set of rules. It applies in your backyard or local park (Front Country) as much as in the backcountry. We should all practice Leave No Trace in our thinking and actions--wherever we go.

Leave No Trace provides a framework for outdoor recreation decision making, which is summarized in the following seven principles:

-Backcountry

- ***Plan Ahead and Prepare:*** Poorly prepared people, when presented with unexpected situations, often resort to high-impact solutions that degrade the outdoors or put themselves at risk. Proper planning leads to less impact.
- ***Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces:*** Damage to land occurs when surface vegetation or communities of organisms are trampled beyond repair. The resulting barren area leads to unusable trails, campsites and soil erosion.
- ***Dispose of Waste Properly:*** Though most trash and litter in the backcountry is not significant in terms of the long term ecological health of an area, it does rank high as a problem in the minds of many backcountry visitors. Trash and litter are primarily social impacts which can greatly detract from the naturalness of an area. Further, backcountry users create body waste and waste water which requires proper disposal according to Leave No Trace.
- ***Leave What You Find:*** Leave No Trace directs people to minimize site alterations, such as digging tent trenches, hammering nails into trees, permanently clearing an area of rocks or twigs, and removing items.
- ***Minimize Campfire Impacts:*** Because the naturalness of many areas has been degraded by overuse of fires, Leave No Trace teaches to seek alternatives to fires or use low-impact fires.
- ***Respect Wildlife:*** Minimizing impact on wildlife and ecosystems.
- ***Be Considerate of Other Visitors:*** Following hiking etiquette and maintaining quiet allows visitors to go through the wilderness with minimal impact on other users.

-Leave No Trace Principles for Kids

- Know Before You Go
- Choose the Right Path
- Trash your Trash
- Leave It as You Find It
- Be Careful with Fire
- Respect Wildlife
- Be Kind to Other Visitors

To learn about Cub Scout age activities and the kid's Leave No Trace Principles, go to the PEAK website at lnt.org/teach/peak

For more information and some activities, refer to Boy Scouts of America's *Teaching Leave No Trace*.(21-117)

Training continuum of Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace Level 2 Instructor
Leave No Trace Level 1 Instructor
BSA Leave No Trace Basics
Awareness

Leave No Trace and how it applies to the Outdoor Code:

The Leave No Trace Seven Principles provide a strong, science-based set of tools to apply the Outdoor Code to Scouting's fundamental outdoor activities

- Provide a way to translate the aspirational goals of the Outdoor Code into concrete actions on the land
- This practical guidance is of tremendous importance to our youth and leaders

Tread Lightly!

An Overview of Tread Lightly!

Tread Lightly! is a national nonprofit membership based organization with a mission *to promote responsible recreation through education*. Launched as a public awareness program in the mid-1980s by the U.S. Forest Service, management of the program was transitioned into the private sector through a Memorandum of Understanding in October, 1990. Tread Lightly!'s educational message, along with its training and restoration initiatives are strategically designed to instill an ethic of responsibility in outdoor enthusiasts and the industries that serve them.

The program is long-term in scope with a goal to balance the needs of the people who enjoy outdoor recreation with our need to maintain a healthy environment. Tread Lightly! offers unique programs and services designed to help remedy current recreation issues.

The TREAD Principles:

- **Travel** -Responsibly on land by staying on designated roads, trails and area. Go over, not around, obstacles to avoid widening the trails. Cross streams only at designated fords. When possible, avoid wet, muddy trails. On water, stay on designated waterways and launch your watercraft in designated areas.
- **Respect the Rights of Others** including private property owners, all recreational trail users, campers and others so they can enjoy their recreational activities undisturbed. Leave gates as you found them. Yield right of way to those passing your or going uphill. On water, respect anglers, swimmers, skiers, boaters, divers and those on or near shore.

- **Educate -Yourself** prior to your trip by obtaining travel maps and regulations from public agencies. Plan for your trip, take recreation skills classes and know how to operate your equipment safely.
- **Avoid -Sensitive Areas** on land such as meadows, lake shores, wetlands and streams. Stay on designated routes. This protects wildlife habitats and sensitive soils from damage. Don't disturb historical, archeological or paleontological sites. On water, avoid operating your watercraft in shallow waters or near shorelines at high speeds.
- **Do -Your Part** by modeling appropriate behavior, leaving the area better than you found it, properly disposing of waste, minimizing the use of fire, avoiding the spread of invasive species and repairing degraded areas.

To learn about Lightfoot and Tread Lightly! for Cub Scouts, visit TL! Kids at <http://tlkids.org/>.

Training Continuum of Tread Lightly!

Master Tread Trainers
Tread Trainers
Awareness

Tread Lightly! And how it applies to the Outdoor Code:

Scouting's activities and youth demand for dynamic and relevant program require us to address motorized recreation (mountain cycles, motor driven "toys")

- This is Tread Lightly!'s focus
- The activity-based pamphlets and videos provide readily accessible guides to ethical decision making and skills for the recreational equipment Scouts use.
- Tread Lightly adds to our understanding of outdoor ethics with its focus on
 - Educate yourself
 - Do your part—which echoes Scouting's tradition of service

The Land Ethic

"The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land." - Aldo Leopold

"We abuse the land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see the land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."
– Aldo Leopold

The concept of the Land Ethic was developed by Aldo Leopold in *A Sand County Almanac*. In this book, Aldo Leopold reflected upon his interaction with the land and how it had enriched him, but also how our society tends to trivialize or dismiss the role of the land. The following quotations provide a brief introduction to the Land Ethic concept as envisioned by Leopold:

"An ethic [that] presupposes the mental image of the land as a biotic mechanism. We can be ethical only in relation to something that we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in." ... [Think of the land as an energy circuit, with energy flowing from the soils to the plants to animals and back.] This thumbnail sketch of the land as an energy circuit conveys three basic ideas:

1. That land is not merely soil;
2. That the native plants and animals kept the energy circuit open; others may or may not;
3. That man-made changes are of a different order than evolutionary changes, and have effects more comprehensive than intended or foreseen. These ideas, collectively, raise two issues: Can the land adjust itself to the new order? Can the desired alterations be accomplished with less impact?

Leopold sums up his thoughts with the following observation:

"A land ethic, then, reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity."

"Wilderness is a necessity ... They will see what I meant in time. There must be places for human beings to satisfy their souls. Food and drink is not all. There is the spiritual. In some it is only a germ, of course, but the germ will grow."

-- John Muir

The Land Ethic teaches us that we should consider our actions in light of their impact on the living, breathing community that is the land, and that we should select the alternative available that does the least impact to that community. The Land Ethic grows strongest when we have experienced the Land, grown to love and respect it, and have labored to enhance or restore it or, as Leopold would have put it, when we have practiced "conservation" defined as restoring the capacity of the Land for self-renewal. We understand the Land Ethic and when we think of right in relation to the Land as follows:

"A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

Are you ready to face the challenge of looking at the Land in this fashion? If so, then you understand the Land Ethic.

The Land Ethic and how it applies to the Outdoor Code

As mentioned earlier, the Land Ethic teaches us that we should consider our actions in light of their impact on the living, breathing community that is the land. Many people do not realize it, but Scouting was one of the first organizations to recognize that the conservation of our world's natural resources is vitally important. Ernest Thompson Seton, William T. Hornaday and Chief Scout Citizen and President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt felt very strongly about the need to protect our nation's natural resources. The BSA adopted the Outdoor Code in the middle of the 20th Century to help clarify this message and its principles still ring true today. The Outdoor Code speaks to being Clean in Our Outdoor Manners and stresses the importance of

being Conservation Minded. These relate to the Land Ethic in that being Conservation Minded means adopting good practices towards our use of soil, water, minerals, grasslands, wildlife and energy. We will always encourage others to do so as well.

The importance of the BSA being a leader in Outdoor Ethics = Stewardship

"The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth.

All things are connected like the blood that unites us all.

Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it.

Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

- Ted Perry, the screenwriter for *Home*, a 1972 film about ecology

Early Scout leaders included:

- Theodore Roosevelt - "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value."
- Ernest Thompson Seton – "I believe that natural history has lost much by the vague general treatment that is so common."
- Gifford Pinchot – "Conservation means the wise use of the earth and its resources for the lasting good of men." "World-wide practice of Conservation and the fair and continued access by all nations to the resources they need are the two indispensable foundations of continuous plenty and of permanent peace."
- "If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them more than the miracles of technology. We must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it." - President Lyndon Johnson at signing of Wilderness Act, 1964

Scouting represents one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, with 2.7 million youth members and over 1 million adult volunteers. Scouting's goal is to train youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of outdoor based activities. As a result, the usage of our nation's outdoor areas by Scouting units is widespread. It is important that all members of the Scouting program understand and implement proper ways to enjoy our nation's outdoor resources without leaving an impact. In other words, Scouts must be stewards of the land in practice and in theory. Learning and educating others in these proper methods is a key part of Scouting's outdoor strategy. Without proper understanding of how to use the land in a low impact fashion, Scout units as well as other outdoor users, could risk the loss of access to these beautiful places.

BSA's Outdoor Ethics Awareness and Action Awards

- Awareness
- Action

For specific requirements for each program of scouting, see
www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/outdoor-ethics/awards/

Additional/Optional Reference Materials and Resources

- *101 Ways to Teach Leave No Trace*,
- Leave No Trace “PEAK Packs”
- Leave No Trace
- Quotes from various *Boys' Life* magazine articles
- “Outdoor Ethics for Scouting’s Second Century” by Eric Hiser
- Tread Lightly! video series
- *Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold
- *Leave No Trace* pamphlet Series
- *Tread Lightly!* pamphlet Series
- National Parks *Leave No Trace* DVD
- Project WILD, Project WET, Project Learning Tree

Web sites:

- scouting.org/outdoor-programs/outdoor-ethics/ - BSA Outdoor Ethics
- LNT.org - Leave No Trace
- treadlightly.org - Tread Lightly!
- www.aldoleopold.org - The Aldo Leopold Foundation
- <http://tlkids.org> – Tread for kids
- Int.org/teach/peak – Leave No Trace for kids
- leavenotracedude.com – site for Leave No Trace activities
- <http://www.handsontheland.org/educator-resources.html> (Great activity guides for K-5 and 6-12)

Each of these topics have more than enough information for at least an hour. These could be classes for a University of Scouting or a Round Table Presentation (i e The Land Ethic and the Outdoor Code)

Revision: October 16, 2023

