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## Outdoor Ethics Programs

### Overview

**Outdoor Ethics** is the umbrella term for how a Scout relates to the outdoors.

- The **Outdoor Code** is Scouting's aspirational statement of Outdoor Ethics.
- To support the Outdoor Code with proven principles and skills, Scouting has incorporated **Leave No Trace**, for non-motorized outdoor activities, and **Tread Lightly!**, for motorized activities and shooting sports.
- The **Land Ethic** challenges us to be committed to conservation and stewardship of our environment.

### Outdoor Code

- **As an American, I will do my best to:**
  - Be clean in my outdoor manners.
  - Be careful with fire.
  - Be considerate in the outdoors.
  - Be conservation-minded.

[\(more details & history\)](#)

- [Presentation](#) - History of how Scouting's Outdoor Ethics have evolved since Lord Baden-Powell and Scouting's early start, through the conservation and environmental eras to today.
- [Presentation](#) - Summary of how the Outdoor Code, Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly and the Land Ethic relate to each other in Scouting's Outdoor Ethics.
- For a more detailed overview, please see [BSA Outdoor Ethics](#).

### Many Aspects of the BSA's Outdoor Ethics Programs

**Scouting is moving aggressively to reclaim a leading role in outdoor ethics education.**

Outdoor Ethics, especially Leave No Trace, is gradually becoming pervasive in the BSA's outdoor programs, training and publications.

The significant progress over the past decade is a result of the hard work and guidance of the BSA's Outdoor Ethics Task force, with strong support from our partners, the BSA's national program leadership, and the various BSA program, advancement, training, awards, uniform, supply, ... teams.

#### BSA Outdoor Ethics Task Force

Originally formed in 2005 as the BSA's Leave No Trace Task Force, the Outdoor Ethics Task Force (OE TF) is responsible for and actively working on many of the outdoor ethics aspects listed on this page.

#### Leave No Trace

Scouting has embraced the Leave No Trace program as a core of our Outdoor Ethics.



The [Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics](#) is a key partner.

- Their Principles of Leave No Trace provide a strong, science-based set of practical tools to guide our outdoor activities.
- They have strong teaching emphasis with excellent supporting materials.
- Their system of Master Educators and Trainers provides a model for educating our Scouts and Scouters.
- Their Skills and Ethics pamphlets are key practical guides to ethical decision making and skills for many Scouting outdoor environments and activities.

#### Tread Lightly!

The focus of Tread Lightly! is mechanized outdoor recreation, so the BSA has partnered with the [Tread Lightly!](#)

#### Outdoor Ethics Training

Training is the biggest component of our outdoor ethics program (based on the number of people involved).

The BSA is an approved provider of Leave No Trace Master Educator courses. These courses are organized and staffed under the supervision of the OE TF. We have been offering 10+ Leave No Trace Master Educator courses a year across the nation, and dozens of Trainer courses, making us the second largest provider of Leave No Trace training.

We also work with Tread Lightly! to provide Trainer and Master Trainer courses.

See our [Training page](#) for more details on the courses.  
See our [Master Educator Courses](#) and [Calendar](#) to find upcoming courses.

#### Scouting's Outdoor Training

Leave No Trace is pervasive the new Introduction to Outdoor Leadership Skills (IOLS) training.

Success can only be partial at the syllabus level, we must staff outdoor leadership courses with effective teachers, trained in outdoor ethics, preferably with at least Leave No Trace Trainer level understanding!

We MUST CAPTURE the hearts and minds of youth leaders in NAYLE and NYLT and adults in Wood Badge and IOLS!

#### Conservation and Stewardship

Conservation and Service have been a key part of Scouting's heritage since the beginning.



These components of Scouting's Outdoor Ethics are organizationally a separate part of the BSA's Outdoor Programs function.  
[More Information](#)

#### BSA Publications

From the first inclusion of Leave No Trace in the 1998 **Boy Scout Handbook**, to a full chapter in the 2010 revision, ...

The NEW 2014 **Fieldbook** has a new Environmental Protection Section with chapters on Leave No Trace and Stewardship, and dozens of references in the chapters!

#### Jamborees & Events

Charlie Thorpe and his team have set up educational activity booths at National Jamborees, World Jamborees and events such as NOAC - the National Order of the Arrow Conference.

#### Camps and Properties

Many Councils are incorporating Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! into their camp programs to support the sustainability of their camps and properties.  
(Let's collect and provide access to these resources on this website.)

organization to provide outdoor ethics guidance for our motorized activities and shooting sports.

- The TREAD Principles provide practical ethical guidance.
- They have great resources covering a wide range of outdoor activities.
- Their Tread Trainer and Master Tread Trainer courses support developing effective instructors.
- Their "Do Your Part" Principle encourages service and stewardship.

**tread lightly!**<sup>®</sup>  
ON LAND AND WATER



### The Land Ethic

Our responsibility to understand, appreciate and respect our wildlands is part of being "conservation-minded".

"**The Land Ethic**", introduced in Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, reflects our historic commitment to conservation and service, but also challenges us to assume personal responsibility for minimizing our impacts and for active stewardship in the outdoors.

[Leopold's Land Ethic](#) (2 page fact sheet)

### OE Awards

The [Outdoor Ethics Awareness and Action Awards](#) encourage youth and adults to learn more about outdoor ethics and to take action.

### Outdoor Ethics Guide Youth Leadership Position

This youth leadership position qualifies as a leadership position for upper ranks.

[More Information](#)



Outdoor Ethics Guide replaced the Leave No Trace Trainer position of responsibility on Jan 1, 2016.

### Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate

The OE TF knew they couldn't personally bring Outdoor Ethics to all 600+ councils of the BSA.

The Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate (COEA) is an "official" council level volunteer position.

Key responsibilities are Training, Recruiting, Promotion, and Reporting.

- [COEA Position Description](#)
- [Find your COEA](#)

### Yahoo Groups

Our discussion forums for scouting outdoor ethics topics:

- [Outdoor Ethics BSA](#) for everyone involved in learning and teaching outdoor ethics in scouting.
- [BSA LNT Master Educators](#)

### Website

The BSA's [Outdoor Ethics Task Force](#) provides this website as a resource to everyone who is teaching, learning and promoting Outdoor Ethics in Scouting.

Questions, issues, and requests specifically related to the website can be directed to the [webmaster](#).

See our [contacts page](#) for your other Outdoor Ethics questions.

