



**Scouting America  
Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement**



**February 2026**



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## Introduction

Scouting America, a youth development organization that actively uses the outdoors to deliver its values-based program, and Leave No Trace, whose mission “protects the outdoors by teaching and inspiring people to enjoy it responsibly,” are proud to partner together to bring the Leave No Trace Seven Principles to our nation’s youth. *The Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement* includes information that explains the application of outdoor ethics in the Scouting program. It is an indispensable guide on how to interweave Scouting’s time-honored values and traditions with the most current training and application of the Leave No Trace Seven Principles in order to encourage all of our youth members and adult volunteers to make informed ethical decisions while recreating in the outdoors.

Scouting has a long and distinguished tradition of conservation leadership and environmental protection, enshrined in the Outdoor Code and throughout our publications and training programs. The Leave No Trace Seven Principles offers a cutting-edge approach to integrating Scouting’s values-based youth development program into the outdoor environment, providing our members with a principled framework to assist in arriving at proper, ethical decisions in the outdoors. As our members develop their “outdoor citizenship,” they come to understand the need and are willing to accept responsibility for protecting and restoring the outdoor areas we use in our Scouting program.

Scouting America through an agreement, first signed in 2005, is both privileged and authorized to serve as a provider of the Leave No Trace Instructor Courses. The Leave No Trace Instructors we train will have a lasting impact on Scouting’s outdoor program as it strives to teach our youth members the value of making ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes.

## Purpose of Scouting’s Outdoor Program

Outdoor adventure is the promise made to young people when they join Scouting. Boys and girls yearn for the fun outdoor programs like hiking, camping, swimming, boating, climbing, and various high-adventure experiences that stir their imagination and capture their interest. Both youth and their parents generally cite outdoor activity as the most appealing feature of the Scouting program. Parents see Scouting as a way to expose their children to healthy outdoor activity and education. Underlying all this fun and adventure in the outdoors is the real purposes of Scouting’s outdoor program. Outdoor activities provide a vehicle for satisfying Scouting’s mission and achieving its aims. **The mission of Scouting America is to prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.** The aims are **character development, citizenship, personal fitness, and leadership.**

### **Character Development:**

In the outdoors, our youth have opportunities to acquire skills that make them more self-reliant. They can explore our outdoor world and complete challenges they first thought were beyond their ability. Attributes of good character become part of them as they learn to cooperate to meet outdoor challenges.

### **Citizenship:**

Used broadly, citizenship refers to an individual’s sense of belonging and the responsibilities that come with that relationship to others. Youth come to learn of their

obligations to other people, to the society they live in, and to the government that presides over that society. In the outdoors, good communication and teamwork enables them to achieve goals they have set for themselves and their unit. This working together through the unit teaches active citizenship.

### **Personal Fitness:**

Personal Fitness includes the body (well-tuned and healthy), the mind (able to think and solve problems), and the emotions (self-control, courage, and self-respect). Youth are challenged in the outdoors and are pushed physically and mentally to accomplish the many tasks necessary to succeed in the outdoor activity.

### **Leadership:**

Our youth are encouraged to participate in the planning and execution of their unit's outdoor program. They are given the opportunity to participate in both shared and total leadership situations. Understanding the concepts of leadership helps our youth accept the leadership role of others. They learn leadership by taking responsibility and unselfishly serving the needs of the group.

## **A Brief History of Scouting's Outdoor Ethics**

America, a country of wide-open spaces, deep forests, high mountains and a pioneering spirit, took readily to Scouting and its instruction to observe the environment. Lord Baden-Powell's *Scouting for Boys* devoted many of its first chapters to what Scouts do in the outdoors: tracking, woodcraft, camp life, and campaigning, or what we now call hiking or backpacking. Lord Baden-Powell urged Scouts to be observant of the environment, not for the purpose of killing the plants and animals in it, but to learn about how and what they are, how they live, and what uses they have if needed. As Scouting took hold and became more popular, Lord Baden-Powell exhorted Scouts to take care of the outdoors where they camped: "On breaking up camp leave two things behind you: nothing and your thanks."

Earnest Thompson Seton, the first Chief Scout, asked in the first *Boy Scout Handbook* "Do you love the woods? Do you wish to learn the trees as the forester knows them? And the stars not as an astronomer, but as a traveler? Would you like to be an expert camper who can always make himself comfortable out of doors, and a swimmer that fears no waters?" Other early Scouting leaders, including future President Theodore Roosevelt and Daniel Carter Beard, were also closely identified with love of the outdoors, conservation, and care for the land.

The Conservation merit badge was one of the first merit badges adopted by the Boy Scouts of America. The second *Boy Scout Handbook* included a plea from the New York Zoological Society for Scouts to preserve wildlife habitats.

In 1954, Scouting adopted the Outdoor Code, to guide a Scout's behavior in the outdoors, where much Scouting occurs (see [History of the Outdoor Code](#)). But Scouting didn't stop with the Outdoor Code: in the 1970s it supported Project SOAR—Save Our American Resources and "minimum impact" camping. In the 1990 to 2010 period it introduced Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! During this evolution, Scouting stayed true to these principles: a Scout observes the environment, but does not disturb it beyond what is needed. A Scout works to remedy damage to the environment, whether or not he or she caused it. A Scout does these things so that that the environment is preserved for the plants and animals that live there and so that others can enjoy it.

**Links & Downloads:**

History of the Outdoor Code <https://scouting-oec.org/OutdoorCode/index.php>

These principles are captured in the 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; and  
Be conservation-minded.

The Outdoor Code has different, age-appropriate, supporting text for each program.



## The Outdoor Code with supporting text for Scouts BSA

What does the Outdoor Code mean? As a Scout, we know that we must always do our best in all situations. Our honor demands nothing less. As an American, we recognize that the duty to do our best extends to all the lands and special places in the United States and even beyond. What, then, have we pledged our best to do?

As an American, I will do my best to-

- **Be Clean in my outdoor manners.** A Scout treats the outdoors as a heritage. A Scout takes care of the outdoors for the future. A Scout keeps waste like litter, unused food, chemicals, and body wastes out of lakes and streams and either packs it out or disposes of it properly in the backcountry. A Scout never engages in graffiti or vandalism such as carving initials or defacing outdoor areas.
- **Be Careful with fire.** A Scout uses fire only when allowed and only when it is safe and non-damaging to the environment to do so. Often, a Scout may use a stove or a grill instead of making a ground fire. A Scout is also careful of other impacts, such as leaving food out that may disrupt animal eating patterns, contributing to erosion by cutting switchback or whittling or chopping live trees. A Scout is careful of our nation's cultural heritage, leaving artifacts undisturbed and preserving our recreational resources for all to use and enjoy.
- **Be Considerate in the outdoors.** A Scout treats the land and water and everything that lives, grows, and plays on the land and water with respect. This means not just fellow Scouts, but also other visitors and the plants, animals, and ecosystems that make up the land. A Scout observes animals, but does not disturb them or scare them from their nests or foraging. A Scout avoids trampling delicate plants to preserve them for others to view and for the insects and animals that depend upon them.
- **Be Conservation-minded.** A Scout observes the land, animals, and plants in the environment. A Scout seeks to understand how they interact with each other. A Scout is vigilant in watching for injury to the environment and reporting it to those who can stop

it. A Scout never passes litter without picking it up. A Scout works to restore the health of the land so that others also can enjoy, live, and learn from it.



## The Outdoor Code with supporting text for Cub Scouts

As an American, I will do my best to -

- **Be Clean in my outdoor manners.** A Cub Scout takes care of the outdoors and keeps the outdoors clean. A Cub Scout knows that putting marks on buildings, trees, or natural objects causes permanent damage.
- **Be Careful with fire.** A Cub Scout may enjoy a campfire only with adult leaders. A Cub Scout knows not to play with matches and lighters.
- **Be Considerate in the outdoors.** A Cub Scout shares our outdoor places and treats everything on the land and in the water with respect.
- **Be Conservation-minded.** A Cub Scout works to restore the health of the land so others may enjoy, live, and learn from it as a part of the Web of Life.



## The Outdoor Code with supporting text for Venturers

As an American, I will do my best to-

Why does it matter that we have a strong outdoor ethic specifically as Americans? Shouldn't everyone care for the planet equally? Yes, but Americans have a unique relationship with land protection (as well as resource abuse). Federally Designated Wilderness Areas in the U.S. offer the highest level of legal protection out of any parks and protected areas in the world. The strict laws regarding what activity is allowed in these areas is both inspirational and indicative of a shared land ethic amongst our culture. You cannot ride a bike through, cut down trees, or even fly a plane above these areas. We also have our past of unsustainable consumption. Within a few years of Boston being founded, there were no trees growing in a 10-mile radius around the city. We hunted species to extinction for no reason other than sport. Our rivers became so polluted they burned. When we say we agree to do the following "As an American," this comes loaded with meaning. We, as Americans, love our public lands and open spaces, and choose to make a pledge to preserve them.

- **Be Clean in my outdoor manners.** For every outdoor pursuit, there are countless examples of unnecessary practices that degrade and deface our natural spaces. Venturers should be aware that since they are allowed and encouraged to have bigger adventures, they now have a greater responsibility to minimize their impact, treating the outdoors as a heritage that is treasured and preserved for the future. A Venturer keeps waste like litter, unused food, chemicals, and body wastes out of lakes and streams and either packs it out or disposes of it properly in the backcountry. A Venturer never engages in graffiti or vandalism such as carving initials or defacing outdoor areas.
- **Be Careful with fire.** Venturers are capable of going to some very remote locations without a campfire ring on site. It becomes vital that Venturers have the skills to build fires that leave no impact. A Venturer uses fire only when allowed and only when it is safe and non-damaging to the environment to do so. Fire safety and minimal-impact fires are vital outdoor skills that must be developed before Venturers go on an outdoor adventure. Often a Venturer may choose to use a stove or a grill instead of making a ground fire. A Venturer is also careful of other impacts, such as leaving food out that may disrupt animal eating patterns, contributing to erosion by cutting switchbacks or whittling or chopping live trees. A Venturer is careful of our nation's cultural heritage, leaving artifacts undisturbed and preserving our recreational resources for all to use and enjoy.
- **Be Considerate in the outdoors.** The value of a peaceful experience in the wild is easily disrupted by outdoor visitors who lack respect for the impacts their activity causes to other visitors and to the surrounding environment. A Venturer treats the air, land, and water and everything that lives, grows, and plays in or on them with respect. A Venturer strives to preserve the quality of the outdoor experience for all visitors. A Venturer observes animals, but does not disturb them or scare them from their nests or foraging. A Venturer is aware of and avoids trampling delicate plants in order to preserve their place in the ecosystem.
- **Be Conservation-minded.** Venturers have the power to make positive impacts that will benefit their generation and future generations. A Venturer seeks to understand how the land, animals, and plants in the environment interact with one another. A Venturer is vigilant in watching for injury to the environment and is willing to take action to stop it. A Venturer works to restore the health of the land so that others also can enjoy, live, and learn from it.



## The Outdoor Code with supporting text for Sea Scouts

As an American, I will do my best to-

Why does it matter that we have a strong outdoor ethic specifically as Americans? Shouldn't everyone care for the planet equally? Yes, but Americans have a unique relationship with land protection (as well as resource abuse). Federally Designated Wilderness Areas in the U.S. offer the highest level of legal protection out of any parks and protected areas in the world. The strict laws regarding what activity is allowed in these areas is both inspirational and indicative of a shared land ethic amongst our culture. You cannot ride a bike through, cut down trees, or even fly a plane above these areas. We also have our past of unsustainable consumption. Within a few years of Boston being founded, there were no trees growing in a

10-mile radius around the city. We hunted species to extinction for no reason other than sport. Our rivers became so polluted they burned. When we say we agree to do the following "As an American," this comes loaded with meaning. We, as Americans, love our public lands and open spaces, and choose to make a pledge to preserve them.

- **Be Clean in my outdoor manners.** For every outdoor pursuit, there are countless examples of unnecessary practices that degrade and deface our natural spaces. Sea Scouts should be aware that whenever they are out, on land or on water, they have the responsibility to minimize their impact. A Sea Scout treats the outdoors as a heritage that is treasured and preserved for the future. A Sea Scout keeps waste like litter, unused food, chemicals, and body wastes out of our waterways and packs it out to dispose of it properly. A Sea Scout never engages in graffiti or vandalism such as carving initials or defacing outdoor areas.
- **Be Careful with fire.** Fire safety is a vital outdoor skill whether on board a watercraft, or on the land. On land, a Sea Scout uses fire only when allowed and only when it is safe and non-damaging to the environment to do so. Often, a Sea Scout may use a stove or a grill instead of making a ground fire. A Sea Scout employs additional fire safety measures whenever cooking with a stove on a watercraft. A Sea Scout is also careful of other impacts, such as leaving food out that may disrupt animal eating patterns. A Sea Scout is careful of our nation's cultural heritage, leaving artifacts undisturbed and preserving our recreational resources for all to use and enjoy.
- **Be Considerate in the outdoors.** The value of a peaceful experience on the land and on the water is easily disrupted by outdoor visitors who lack respect for the impacts their activity causes to other visitors and to the surrounding environment. A Sea Scout treats the air, land, and water, and everything that lives, grows, and plays in or on them, with respect. A Sea Scout strives to preserve the quality of the outdoor experience for all visitors. A Sea Scout observes animals, but does not disturb them or scare them from their breeding or feeding areas. A Sea Scout is aware of and avoids delicate coastal and riparian areas to preserve them for the plants, insects and animals that depend upon them.
- **Be Conservation-minded.** Sea Scouts have the power to make positive impacts that will benefit their generation and future generations. A Sea Scout seeks to understand how the land, water, animals, and plants in the environment interact with one another. A Sea Scout is vigilant in watching for injury to the environment and is willing to take action to stop it. A Sea Scout works to restore the health of the land and water so that others also can enjoy, live, and learn from it.

A Scout who follows the Code will find that each trip to the outdoors, whether a wilderness area, city park, or someplace in-between, brings rewards of discovery about the plants, animals, insects, and natural processes that make up our environment. As Scouts, we observe how they interrelate—the "web of life." Eventually, we will see when part of the web is damaged and will discover that there are ways that we, as Scouts, can help the land heal and restore itself. That feeling, the feeling we get while restoring the land or environment to what it should be, is deeply satisfying.

Fortunately, Scouting provides tools that help us follow the principles of the Outdoor Code. Some of the best tools are the Leave No Trace Seven Principles that help translate the Outdoor Code into practical decisions that we can make while camping, hiking, boating, or even just visiting the local park or school yard.

## Scouting's Need for Leave No Trace

Scouting's outdoor program is full of fun and adventurous recreational activities like hiking, camping, and paddling; it is very easy to negatively impact the areas where these activities occur. Although a single negative impact resulting from one misstep will often recover quickly, the cumulative effect of the millions of negative impacts has resulted in permanent damage to our outdoor recreational places as well as the degradation of our outdoor experience.

### Examining the Scope of Outdoor Recreation

Let's examine how widespread the outdoor recreation movement is. Roughly 835 million acres, nearly 40% of the 2.27 billion acres of land in the United States is public land, supported by taxpayers and managed by federal, state, or local governments. The following is a list of the major land management agencies and their most recent user statistics.

**US FOREST SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

193M acres consisting of 14K recreational sites and 143K trails - 148M public user visits

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR**

247M acres, 1/10 of USA, with 45K miles of trails and 205K miles of fishing streams - 61.7M public user visits

**US FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR**

150M acres consisting of 20M acres wilderness, 13 National Wild and Scenic Rivers, 72 National Recreation Trails, and 26 wetlands of importance - 47M public user visits

**NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR**

84.4M acres (4.3M acres are private) consisting of 60K miles of National Trail Systems, 12K miles of National Wild Scenic Rivers, and 535K acres of National Shorelines - 331M public user visits

**US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

12M acres consisting of 4.6K miles of trails with 91K camp sites - 353M public user visits

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE PARK DIRECTORS**

10K State Parks totaling 8.5M acres with 38K miles of trails and 240K campsites - 791M public user visits

### Scouting America, the BIG Elephant in the Woods.

Wherever you go on a weekend to participate in outdoors activities, there is a good chance that you will come across a loud youth group, particularly in the spring and fall. Although loud youth groups are not always Scouts, the ones wearing matching hats, t-shirts, patches, or uniforms often are. The jump to the conclusion that all loud youth groups are Scouts is easily made in the public's mind. We are the BIG elephant in the woods and we were

historically responsible for creating considerable impacts to our outdoor places. Scouting now has over 30 years of experience with the Leave No Trace Seven Principles and Scouts have made significant improvements in their outdoor behaviors, but we still can improve.

## SCOUTING AMERICA

### PROPERTIES

4 National High Adventure Bases - 160K acres.

Number of Council Camps: There are 301 camp properties that filed for Intent to operate in 2023 where they operated 455 different “camps”. There are at least 300 other properties that Scouting America’s councils operate that do not operate long term camps (4 nights or longer). It is safe to use 600+ Scouting America properties nationally. Estimated acreage of Council & Scouting America Camps - Unknown. (We estimate 600+ Scout Camps = 750,000 acres.)

### MEMBERSHIP (2023)

1,015,046 Youth Members

41,553 Units

**Scouting America’s estimated annual outdoor use:  
5,000,000 user days each year**

## Understanding the Negative Impacts of our Outdoor Program

Often a negative impact is completely avoidable, particularly when we understand what those potential impacts are.

### Vegetation Impacts

- **Loss of Vegetation** - Loss of vegetation and/or the degradation of plant communities. This is primarily the result of trampling while recreating. The degree to which trampling permanently affects vegetation is dependent on the soil type, the frequency of occurrence, and the resiliency of the plant life.
- **Spread of Invasive Species** - Invasive species threaten endangered animals and plants, and are costly to control. An invasive species is a non-native species that spreads from the point of introduction and becomes abundant, altering their new environment. The introduction and spread of non-native species can be prevented before it becomes a problem.
- **Tree Damage** - The misuse of woods tools at campsites leaves many trees with unnecessary scars and threatens the life of the tree. The cutting or breaking of tree branches for the purpose of creating survival shelters, building camp gadgets, or simply to get it out of the way does lasting damage.

## Soil Impacts

- **Compaction** - Soil compaction, also known as soil structure degradation, is the increase of bulk density or decrease in porosity of soil due to trampling or machinery. Compaction increases soil strength limiting root growth and affecting plant water and nutrient uptake. Staying on established trails and in established campsites is the best way to avoid contributing to unnatural soil compaction.
- **Pulverization or Loss of Organic Litter** - Organic soil health is dependent on the nutrients delivered through the decaying process of organic litter. Organic litter also aids in soil moisture retention by cooling the ground surface and holding moisture in the decomposing biomass. The resulting organic rich soil supports healthy vegetation which protects the soil from erosion.
- **Erosion** - Soil erosion is a naturally occurring process that affects all landforms. Soil erosion is the displacement of the upper layer of soil caused by the dynamic activity of erosive agents, that is, water, ice (glaciers), snow, and air (wind). Outdoor recreational damage occurs when surface vegetation or communities of organisms are trampled beyond recovery. The resulting barren area leaves the soil exposed and vulnerable to then natural erosive agents.

## Wildlife Impacts

- **Wildlife Disturbances** - The interruption of daily feeding or movement patterns disrupts and displaces wildlife often into unknown or threatening environments. This causes increased vulnerability to predators and competitors, along with a break in parent-offspring bonds, decreased forage intake, and reduced reproductive success.
- **Altered Behavior** - When wildlife species directly interact with humans, individual animals may modify their behavior to minimize perceived risks. Such behaviors can become costly for individual animals and their populations. Animals avoiding encounters with humans must budget more time to energetically expensive activities such as traveling and vigilance. This detracts from time spent on other necessary activities, such as searching for food or mates and raising young. Although these changes in overall energy budgets may seem temporary and of little impact, when they occur frequently they can affect the survival and reproduction of individuals, as well as reducing the effective population size of the species.
- **Habitualization and Desensitization** - This process conditions wildlife to interact in seemingly benign ways with humans. As animals learn to relax in the presence of humans they may become bolder in other situations, and if this transfers to their interactions with predators, they are more likely to be injured or killed. The presence of humans can also discourage natural predators, creating temporary safe haven for smaller animals that may make them bolder and more vulnerable when humans leave. Interacting with people can cause significant change in the characteristics of various species over time.
- **Reduced Health and Reproduction** - The byproduct of all of this wildlife behavior modification is the reduction in the overall health and reproduction rates of the wildlife species in the violated habitat. The long-term effect will likely be the loss of species diversification in our recreational areas.

## Geological Impacts

- **Defacing** - The altering of the natural geology of our recreational spaces by carving, scratching, marking, or painting is nothing less than malicious. Chalk marks left uncleaned on a climbing face or charred rock from an ill-conceived fire pit are easily avoided impacts.
- **Destruction of Rock Formations** - We all remember the story of the Scout leaders who toppled the 200 million year old rock formation in Utah's Goblin Valley State Park. This of course was an extreme example of malice, but many geological formations are fragile. For example, simply touching formations found in caves can too-often cause lasting damage.
- **Removal of Unique Specimens** - The character of an area is often defined by the diversity of its geological specimens. The removal of unique specimens disrupts those perceptions and alters the spirit of discovery that many visitors enjoy when recreating in the outdoors.

## Water Resource Impacts

- **Turbidity** - Turbidity is caused by particles suspended or dissolved in water that scatter light, making the water appear cloudy or murky. Unnatural levels of particulate matter in water can reduce the amount of dissolved oxygen and raise the surface water temperature, which can affect all levels of the aquatic ecosystem.
- **Sedimentation** - Sedimentation occurs when eroded material in water settles out of the water onto the surface bed. Sedimentation in lakes, rivers, and streams is a significant contributor to the decline in populations of aquatic organisms. This pervasive alteration of a local food chain produces negative cascading effects through depleted food availability to zooplankton, insects, freshwater mollusks, and fish.
- **Dirty Water** - Water infused with pollutants or material that is unnaturally derived threatens humans as well as wildlife.
- **Reduced Animal Access** - Water is a necessity of life and wildlife depend on access to it for survival. Outdoor enthusiasts frequently enjoy campsites and travel breaks completely monopolizing a clearing that provides the needed water access.

## Social Impacts

- **Overcrowding** - With user visitation numbers still rising, overcrowding is one of the biggest challenges facing land management agencies. This overcrowding leads to the expansion of campsites, trails, and other locations where visitors seek ways to maintain a private experience.
- **Conflicts** - Campsite, trail, and waterway conflicts can and do occur among different user groups and among different users within the same user group. No actual contact among users need occur for conflict to be felt. Conflict has been found to be related to activity style (mode of travel, level of technology, etc.), focus of trip, expectations, attitudes toward and perceptions of the environment, level of tolerance for others, and varied norms held by different users.
- **Noise** - The protection of the natural soundscape of our outdoor spaces is a key factor in preserving the quality of the outdoor experience. Noise not only affects the visitor experience but also wildlife behavior. **Let Nature's Sounds Prevail.**

## Cultural Resource Impacts

- **Theft of Artifacts** - Collecting has long been a part of the Scouting program and it can become very difficult to leave behind an arrowhead, pot shard, or other object of historical significance. Removing or disturbing archeological artifacts, which are protected by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, degrades the historical integrity of our recreational areas. It is illegal to remove or disturb artifacts such as arrowheads, and even antique bottles.
- **Damage to Archaeological Sites** - The Archaeological Resources Protection Act also protects archaeological and historic structures from damage or defacing.

## Scouting Impacts

Scouting has some negative behaviors that have plagued our reputation over the years. Most of these are easily avoided.

- **Wild Behavior** - Scouts running wild outside of campsite boundaries, disturbing wildlife, destroying vegetation, and disrupting other visitors.
- **Large Groups** - Scout groups not following group size restrictions is a common complaint of land managers.
- **Noise** - Noise is the biggest complaint of visitors who encounter a Scout group when camping. Loud outbursts while playing, campfire festivities, or just the general din of constant human voices can ruin another visitor's expectation of solitude.
- **Inappropriate Play** - Climbing trees, throwing objects, or misusing equipment often leads to damage to the environment.
- **Poor Skills** - Scout programs are quick to take youth outdoors without developing in advance the skills necessary to minimize environmental and social impacts.

All of these impacts should be considered whenever and wherever Scouts enjoy their outdoor program. Specific Scouting activities considered as having too much impact for some areas might be more appropriate in areas where such activities are allowed.

If Scouts learn to make good judgments and follow the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, they can greatly lessen the impact to our outdoor places. Many impacts can simply be eliminated or avoided. Some impacts require diligence and skill to minimize or reduce. Restated, the goal is clear:

**Eliminate the Avoidable Impacts  
Minimize the Unavoidable Impacts**

## Age and Program Appropriate Outdoor Activities

Outdoor adventure is a key element of youth development in Scouting America programs. Just as young people grow, learn, and mature in a continuing progression of experience so, too, do the camping and outdoor programs of Scouting America. Scouting America offers a continuum of experiences based on the age, interest, and ability level of youth.

The [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) prepares members of Scouting America to conduct activities in a safe and prudent manner. Supplementing the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) is the [Age-appropriate Guidelines for Scouting Activities](#). These guidelines help to explain which activity or level of activity is suitable for the expected physical, mental, and emotional maturity of our youth as they grow through our Scouting programs.

“When should we teach outdoor ethics in Scouting?” The decision of when to introduce, teach, or practice certain Leave No Trace skills and ethical decisions must reflect a balance between helping our Scouts develop an appreciation of the natural environment and helping them learn to protect it. If we do not help our Scouts develop an adequate appreciation of nature, then the central ethical message of Leave No Trace may not “take” over the long term.

The Leave No Trace principles of **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces** and **Minimize Campfire Impacts** both involve a balancing of several factors:

- Lesser knowledge of Leave No Trace = potentially greater impacts, so confine activities to more resistant or less sensitive environments.
- Knowledgeable supervision = potentially reduced impacts, allowing activities in more sensitive environments or activities with inherently higher risk.
- Group size = smaller groups typically cause less damage, allowing activities in more sensitive environments.

These factors may have synergistic effects as well: large groups with knowledge/skills/discipline and knowledgeable supervision can have much less impact (both environmental and social) than a small group without the knowledge and skills. This point is explained in detail in the next chapter, Leave No Trace for Large Groups.

The Leave No Trace principles of **Leave What You Find**, **Respect Wildlife**, and **Be Considerate of Other Visitors** require careful balancing of the need to develop an appreciation of nature in youth versus the need to preserve that nature. A good example is leaf collecting. Collecting a leaf with a young Scout may be the window that opens up the wonders of the natural world, sparking a life-long interest in the environment. This opportunity should not be lightly dismissed. In this situation, it may be appropriate to direct the young Scout in collecting appropriate leaves for the collection to encourage the interest. With an older Scout or Venturer, it may be more appropriate to direct them toward digital photographs or sketches.

The Leave No Trace principle of **Dispose of Waste Properly** is perhaps the most sensitive to age and cultural acceptance issues. In general, the following stages of waste handling are recommended:

Food Waste and Gray Water (subject to local guidelines and regulations)

- Begin with use of provided facilities
- Move to pack it in, pack it out for solid waste and filtering and dispersion techniques for liquid wastes
- End with pack it in, pack it out for all waste products (sometimes needed for liquids as well as solid food wastes in mass camping situations)

Human waste (subject to local guidelines and regulations)

- Begin with use of provided facilities. This is **always** the first choice when available.
- Move to use of a group portable toilet
- Move to digging a cathole and leaving waste and toilet paper in cathole
- Move to digging a cathole and packing out the toilet paper
- End with packing out all solid waste products using waste disposal bags, personal waste tubes, and other solutions.

The objective is to encourage the Scout unit to use the most effective technique consistent with health and safety concerns and their knowledge and comfort level. Knowledge of the group is critical, overemphasis of intensive skills can result in rejection of the Leave No Trace concept. Instructors should seek to educate the participants, but should not risk turning them off the Leave No Trace Seven Principles.

#### **Links & Downloads:**

Guide to Safe Scouting

<https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/> (online version)

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/pdf/34416.pdf> (pdf)

Age-Appropriate Guidelines for Scouting Activities

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-685.pdf> (pdf)













## Land Use Considerations for Scouting Programs

Similar to Scouting activity decisions based on age and program, considerations on the appropriate lands to use follow a progression based on the skills and abilities of the group.








1. Private lands (where the land owner allows high-impact activities by your group)
2. Scouting America camp properties (generally designed for group use with areas that allow for high-impact activities)
3. Local public land (State/County parks are designed for high levels of public use )
4. National - Parks, Scenic Trails, or Scenic Waterways (very heavily used public lands)
5. National Forest or other large multi-use public lands
6. Wilderness Area (less visitation because special protection is needed)

***Know the Skills and Abilities of your group.***

# Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement

<b>AGE APPROPRIATE GUIDELINES FOR SCOUTING ACTIVITIES</b> Age- and rank-appropriate guidelines have been developed based on many factors. When planning activities outside of program materials or handbooks, ask this question: <i>Is the activity appropriate for the age and for Scouting?</i> Not every activity needs to be conducted.		 <b>LIONS</b> (WITH ADULT PARTNER) Kindergarten	 <b>TIGERS</b> (WITH ADULT PARTNER) First Grade	 <b>WOLF/BEAR SCOUTS</b> Second and Third Grades	 <b>WEBELOS</b> Fourth Grade	 <b>ARROW OF LIGHT SCOUTS</b> Fifth Grade	 <b>SCOUTS BSA</b>	 <b>OLDER SCOUTS BSA, SEA SCOUTS, VENTURERS</b> <small>*Older Scouts BSA* are age 13 and have completed eighth grade or 14 years old and up.</small>
 <b>Outdoor Skills</b>								
Hunting	Prohibited							
Mountaineering/Scrambling/Cross-Country Travel								√
Search and Rescue Missions								√
Search and Rescue Practice							√	√
Fueled Devices (Stoves and lanterns)							√	√
Hiking—Multiple Day							√	√
Mountain Boards							√	√
Orienteering							√	√
Wilderness Survival Training							√	√
Fire Building					√	√	√	√
Pioneering					√	√	√	√
Cooking Outdoors					√	√	√	√
Horseback Riding				√	√	√	√	√
Map and Compass			Map only	√	√	√	√	√
Pioneering Towers (Check requirements for height restrictions.)				Council/district events only	√	√	√	√
Rope Bridges (Check requirements for height restrictions.)				Council/district events only	√	√	√	√
Conservation Projects	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Fishing	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Hiking—Day	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
 <b>Tools</b> (See SAFE Project Tool Use Guidelines: <a href="https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/healthandsafety/pdf/680-028.pdf">filestore.scouting.org/filestore/healthandsafety/pdf/680-028.pdf</a> )								
Power Tools—Chain Saws, Log Splitters, Wood Chippers, Power Saws	Adult use only							
Power Tools								See SAFE Project Tool Use
Axes							√	√
Bow Saws					√	√	√	√
Pocketknife					Cub Scouts must earn the knife safety Adventure for their rank and must recertify each year.		√	√
Hand Tools		√	√	√	√	√	√	√
 <b>Trekking</b>								
Horse Treks								√
Backpacking—Overnight, Backcountry							√	√
Bike Treks—Multiple Overnights							√	√
Ski Touring—Multiple Days and Nights Carrying Gear							√	√
 <b>Range and Target Activities</b> (Policy as of 9/01/2024. See <i>Range and Target Activities Manual</i> for program details. Activities outside program literature is prohibited.)								
Pistols – NRA FIRST Steps Program Only								Council-sponsored events and day camps, short-term camps, long-term camps
Specialty Programs – Cowboy Action								Council-sponsored events and day camps, short-term camps, long-term camps
Specialty Programs – Airsoft							√	√
Specialty Programs – Chalkball								Council-sponsored events and day camps, short-term camps, long-term camps
.22 Bolt Action Rifle							√	√
Shotguns							√	√
Muzzleloaders – Rifle and Shotgun Only							√	√
Archery – Field								Council-sponsored events and day camps, short-term camps, long-term camps
Archery – Target, Action (moving targets)							√	√
Pellet Rifle						Council-sponsored long-term camps	√	√
BB Guns							√	√
Slingshots/Wrist Rockets							√	√
Catapults/Trebuchets								Projectiles must be soft and small (no larger than a tennis ball).
 <b>Camping</b> (See Guide to Safe Scouting: <a href="https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss">www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss</a> )								
Unit-Coordinated Camping				Camping as a pack at council's designated locations	Camping as a den or pack at council's designated locations	Camping as a den or pack at council's designated location. May camp with Scouts BSA troops at troop- or council-sponsored short-term camps.	√	√
Council-Coordinated Camping	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

# Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement

<b>AGE APPROPRIATE GUIDELINES FOR SCOUTING ACTIVITIES</b>								
Age- and rank-appropriate guidelines have been developed based on many factors. When planning activities outside of program materials or handbooks, ask this question: <i>Is the activity appropriate for the age and for Scouting?</i> Not every activity needs to be conducted.		<b>LIONS</b> (WITH ADULT PARTNER) Kindergarten	<b>TIGERS</b> (WITH ADULT PARTNER) First Grade	<b>WOLF/BEAR SCOUTS</b> Second and Third Grades	<b>WEBELOS</b> Fourth Grade	<b>ARROW OF LIGHT SCOUTS</b> Fifth Grade	<b>SCOUTS BSA</b>	<b>OLDER SCOUTS BSA, SEA SCOUTS, VENTURERS</b> <small>*Older Scouts BSA* are age 13 and have completed eighth grade or 14 years old and up.</small>
<b>Vehicles</b>								
All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV)							Approved council use only; no unit use	
Personal Water Craft (PWC)							Approved council use only; no unit use	
BMX Biking			√	√	√	√	√	√
Mountain Biking			√	√	√	√	√	√
Bike—Day Trip	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>COPE and Climbing</b>								
Caving (other than simple novice activities)								√
Lead Climbing								√
Snow and Ice Climbing								√
Belaying						√	√	√
Natural Rock Climbing/Top Rope Belayed						√	√	√
Amusements—Aerial Adventure Parks						√	√	√
Amusements—Canopy Tours						√	√	√
Amusements—Zip Lines						√	√	√
Rappelling				√	√	√	√	√
COPE	Age-appropriate initiative games						√	√
Bouldering	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Climbing (age-appropriate man-made facility)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>Aquatics</b> (See <i>Safe Swim Defense</i> , and <i>Safety Afloat</i> for restrictions based on skills, such as swimming ability, rather than age.)								
Aerial Towed Activities (kitesurfing, parasails)	Prohibited							
Cliff Jumping, High Dives	Prohibited							
Triathlon: Swim Races in Open Water								Sanctioned events
Paddle Sports: Youth Operated on Class III or Above Whitewater								√
Paddle Sports: Whitewater With Professional Guide on Board						√	√	√
Paddle Sports: Youth Operated on Class I or II Whitewater						√	√	√
Motorboats: Youth Operated (check state regulations)						√	√	√
Overnight Cruise on Live-Aboard Vessel						√	√	√
Sailboats and Sailboards: Youth Operated						√	√	√
Snorkeling in Open Water						√	√	√
Scuba						√	√	√
Surfing						√	√	√
Towed Activities (waterskiing, knee boarding, floats)						√	√	√
Tubing (floating in gently flowing water)			√	√	√	√	√	√
Paddle Sports: Youth Operated on Calm or Gently Flowing Water	Passengers only			Paddle sports include canoes, kayaks, pedal boats, rafts, rowboats, SUP				
Commercial Marine Transport (ferries, excursion ships)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Day Rides on Large Private Craft With Trained Adult Operator	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Swimming	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Snorkeling in Confined Water	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Water Parks, Slides, and Floating Attractions	Appropriate age varies by feature							

This document is continually updated.

Please use this link to download the most up to date information:

<https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/HealthSafety/pdf/680-685.pdf> (pdf)

# Leave No Trace Principles for Kids

Cub Scouts learn to use the **Leave No Trace Principles for Kids**

## 1. KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Be Prepared! Don't forget clothes that protect you from cold, heat, and rain.
- Use maps to show you where you'll be going so you won't get lost.
- Learn about the area you visit. Read books and talk to people before you go. The more you know, the more fun you'll have.

## 2. CHOOSE THE RIGHT PATH

- Stay on the main trail to protect nature, and don't wander off by yourself.
- Steer clear of flowers or small trees. Once hurt, they may not grow back.
- Use existing camp areas and camp at least 100 big steps from roads, trails, and water.

## 3. TRASH YOUR TRASH

- Pack it in, pack it out. Put litter, even crumbs, in trash cans or carry it home.
- Use bathrooms or outhouses when available. If you have to "go," act like a cat and bury poop in a small hole 4-8 inches deep and 100 big steps from water.
- Place your toilet paper in a plastic bag and put the bag in a garbage can back home.
- Keep water clean. Do not put soap, food, or poop in lakes or streams.

## 4. LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Leave plants, rocks, and historical items as you find them so the next person can enjoy them. Treat living plants with respect. Hacking or peeling plants can kill them.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Don't dig trenches or build structures in your campsite.

## 5. BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE

- Use a camp stove for cooking. It's easier to cook on and clean up than a fire.
- Be sure it's OK to build a campfire in the area you're visiting. Use an existing fire ring to protect the ground from heat. Keep your fire small. Remember, campfires aren't for trash or food.
- Do not snap branches off live, dead, or downed trees. Instead, collect loose sticks from the ground.
- Burn all wood to ash, and be sure that the fire is completely out and cold before you leave.

## 6. RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Observe animals from a distance and never approach, feed, or follow them. Human food is unhealthy for all animals, and feeding them starts bad habits.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing your meals and trash.
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.

## 7. BE KIND TO OTHERS

- Make sure the fun you have in the outdoors does not bother anyone else. Remember that other visitors are there to enjoy the outdoors.
- Listen to nature. Avoid making loud noises or yelling. You will see more animals if you are quiet.

## Leave No Trace for Large Groups

Scouting's outdoor program is an ideal experiential learning environment for youth to learn the skills needed to enjoy a lifetime of outdoor adventures. Our advancement programs, character and leadership development, and volunteer trainings in outdoor group settings allow for a disciplined approach to this skill development. Essentially, it is nearly impossible to do Scouting without participating in the outdoors with a group. Over the years Scouting groups, easily identified as large groups of noisy kids in uniforms, have built a bad reputation for reckless behaviors in the outdoors. Even though Scouting has had a long history of conservation and environmental education, this reality, along with many other factors, led to the inclusion of outdoor ethics in all of our programs.

Research indicates that the techniques a group uses and how it behaves in the out-of-doors are often more important than its size in determining how the group will affect the land and other visitors. With this understanding, Leave No Trace produced the "[Group Use Brochure](#)" to help provide guidance to everyone who recreates in the outdoors with a large group.

### Links & Downloads:

<https://Int.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/GroupUseBrochure.pdf>

Here are some Scouting specific recommendations:

### Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the skills and abilities of your group and match them to the unit's activity goals.
- Follow the adventure planning process at <https://tap.scouting.org>
- Contact the landowner or land-managing agency well before an outing to learn the regulations for that area, **including group size limits**, and to discuss ways Scouts can fulfill the expectations of property owners or land managers.
- Respect the group size limits. A size limit of 10 means that your group never congregates in numbers greater than 10. If your unit is larger than the area's group size limit, break into smaller sub-groups. Maintain those smaller sub-groups at all times while traveling and camping.
- Conduct pre-trip training for your group that stresses proper behavior, rules, and skills for all of the conditions that may be encountered.
- Ensure that the group has sufficient adult leadership with the outdoor skills needed to successfully lead the group in the selected outdoor activity.
- Train all participants in the skills and ethics of Leave No Trace.

### Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

For most Scouting activities, the best Leave No Trace practice is to stick to trails and established campsites. Only when a group has proven they have the Leave No Trace skills necessary to travel in pristine areas with minimal impact should older Scouts and Venturers consider exploring off the beaten path.

- Choose a site large enough for your group or divide into smaller groups and use multiple established sites.
- Limit activity outside of the established campsite to protect the fragile, or non-durable surfaces, and the vegetation surrounding the campsite.
- Concentrate all activities on the most durable or previously disturbed surfaces and avoid trampling plants.

- Gather as a large group only where permitted and on durable surfaces.
- Always avoid creating informal, or social, trails between neighboring campsites, or to engage in activities in areas not supported by a trail system.

## Dispose of Waste Properly

Pack it in, pack it out. Scouts have a responsibility to leave the outdoor areas they visit better than they found them. In addition to carrying out all the trash and food waste derived from what they brought to the outdoors, Scouts pick up and carry out trash left behind by other visitors.

- Protect all water sources from pollutants.
- Whenever possible use existing facilities or latrines for human waste.
- Follow the practices defined by the land managers when facilities are not available.
- Trash and food waste is never disposed of in human waste facilities.
- Trash and food waste is never burned in a campfire.
- To bath or wash cooking and dining equipment, use minimal amounts of biodegradable soap and only the necessary amount of sanitizing solution.
- Always bath and wash 200' (70 adult paces) from water sources.
- Filter or strain out all food waste from all gray water, this includes sanitizing and rinse water, before disposing. Pack out the food waste.
- Follow the practices defined by the land managers to properly dispose of filtered gray water. In some cases you may be required to carry it out.
- When no gray water drainage system is available and you are permitted to dispose of the gray water in the field, broadcast the filtered gray water at least 200' from water sources and avoid fragile vegetation.
- Protect wildlife by securing all food waste.

## Leave What You Find

Historically Scouts were actively encouraged to collect and identify natural items as part of the advancement program. In today's Scouting culture, Scouts are encouraged to photograph or sketch those natural objects and leave them behind for others to discover. Maintaining the integrity of the natural world for everyone to experience far outweighs the minimal benefits to the individual who collects a natural object.

- Do not collect natural trophies for personal or group use. Leave natural items as you found them for all to enjoy.
- Marking and / or otherwise damaging natural or cultural objects is never acceptable.
- Avoid transporting invasive species. Clean equipment after each use. Do not transport firewood.
- Take apart any camp gadgets or modifications and restore the site.

## Minimize Campfire Impacts

Campfires are a central part of the Scouting experience. Campfires are generally not a concern when executed legally, safely, and in established locations. The creating of new campfire sites, scarring the land, killing vegetation, and sterilizing the soil when other options exist is the primary concern. Scouts can easily achieve their outdoor goals by planning activities which don't require campfires for success or by choosing locations in areas where established fire rings exist.

When deciding to have a campfire:

- Communicate to everyone the Unit Fireguard Plan.
- Always follow the fire regulations of the area you visit.

- Make sure your fire site is durable, especially if it's to serve as a gathering area.
- Use only wood found or available for purchase in the area you visit.
- If collecting firewood, use only dead and downed wood, drawn from a large area to disperse the impacts of removing too much downed wood from a single small area.
- Avoid the need for wood tools by only using wood that can easily be broken by hand.
- Burn firewood completely to white ash. Pack out charred remains.
- Leave the campfire ring clean.
- Plan ahead and bring a fire pan or build a mound fire when no campfire ring exists and the need for a campfire is essential.
- Plan on using camping or backpacking stoves for cooking. Always test your cooking equipment and train everyone on its safe use before embarking on your adventure.

### **Links & Downloads:**

Unit Fireguard Plan

<https://www.scoutshop.org/unit-fireguard-plan-chart-616620.html#.WnlwjraZPOQ>

## **Respect Wildlife**

Finding an opportunity to view wildlife in the field is always an unexpected joy of Scouting's outdoor program and helping wildlife stay wild ensures that Scouts will have plenty of these opportunities in the future. Everywhere Scouts go, wildlife is threatened and we need to make every effort to ensure their health and well-being.

- Don't disturb animals. If you see their behavior change due to your presence, you are too close. Change your travel path, move away and lower your voice.
- Observe animals from a distance. Use the "rule of thumb". If you stick out your thumb and cannot completely block out the animal, then you are too close.
- Feeding wild animals is always unacceptable.
- Pick up all food scraps, even tiny crumbs, and pack them out with your garbage so animals don't come to associate humans with food.
- Carry the equipment you will need to store your food out of reach of animals. This may require bear canisters, ropes for hanging food, or simple plastic food containers to keep rodents away. Follow the regulations or recommendations of the land managers.

## **Be Considerate of Others**

Scouting groups have profound social impacts on other visitors. This impact can be mitigated by behavior. A courteous, well-behaved Scout group can do wonders to minimize the potential negative issues associated with large groups.

- Be aware and considerate of others.
- Don't hog the trail. Step off the trail to allow others to pass.
- Find a durable surface off the trail for breaks.
- Minimize the noise created by the group.
- Maintain the appropriate group size at all times.
- Visit and enjoy, but don't monopolize water sources, viewpoints, or other areas of interest.
- Be mindful when engaging in games and play that you are not negatively impacting the environment or unduly disturbing the other visitors in the area.

## Outdoor Ethics in Advancement and Awards



Every Scouting activity moves young people toward the basic aims of: character development, citizenship training, leadership, and mental and physical fitness.

Advancement is the process by which youth members of Scouting America progress from rank to rank. It is one of the eight methods used by Scout leaders to help youth fulfill the aims of Scouting America.

Everything done to advance—to earn ranks and other awards and recognition—is designed to educate or to otherwise expand horizons. This is the case from the time a member joins, and then moves through, the programs of Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, and Venturing or Sea Scouts. Outdoor ethics is fully integrated in the advancement program of our Cub Scout and Scouts BSA programs.

Outdoor Ethics in the advancement program is designed to help our members personally grow their understanding that their actions and behaviors matter when participating in our outdoor program and by extension throughout their lifetime. This growth of ethical development is critical to Scouting’s mission.

The following summary of award requirements by program shows exactly where Outdoor Ethics is included (**Bold** for emphasis) in the requirement or where it can be inferred or part of the discussion (**Bold Italic**).

# Cub Scout Advancement



The requirements for the Cub Scout Adventures along with guidance for Cub Scout Den Leaders can be found here:

<https://www.scouting.org/programs/cub-scouts/adventures/>

## Lion

### LION REQUIRED ADVENTURES - MOUNTAIN LION REQUIREMENTS:



1. Identify the Cub Scout Six Essentials. Show what you do with each item. **(Know Before You Go)**
2. Take a walk outside spending for at least 20 minutes exploring the outdoors with your Cub Scout Six Essentials. While outside, identify things that you see with your Lion adult partner that are natural and things that are manmade.
3. Discover what S.A.W. (Stay, Answer, Whistle) means. **(Know Before You Go)**
4. Identify common animals that are found where you live. Separate those animals into domesticated and wild. **(Respect Wildlife)**

### LION ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CHAMPIONS OF NATURE LION:



1. Discover the difference between natural resources and man-made items.
2. Discover the difference between organic, paper, plastic, metal and glass waste. **(Trash Your Trash)**
3. Discover recycling. **(Trash Your Trash)**
4. Participate in a conservation service project.

### LION ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - GO FISH, LET'S CAMP LION, ON A ROLL, PICK MY PATH, & TIME TO SWIM

**(No specific outdoor ethics requirements, however, outdoor ethics could be in the conversation as Cub Scouts develop outdoor skills)**



## Tiger

### TIGER REQUIRED ADVENTURE - TIGERS IN THE WILD:



1. Identify the Cub Scout Six Essentials. Show what you do with each item. **(Know Before You Go)**
2. With your den leader or Tiger adult partner, learn about the **Outdoor Code**.
3. Take a walk outside spending for at least 20 minutes exploring the outdoors with your Cub Scout Six Essentials. While outside, identify things that you see with your Tiger adult partner that are natural and things that are manmade.
4. Identify common animals that are found where you live. Learn which of those animals is domesticated and which animal is wild. Draw a picture of your favorite animal. **(Respect Wildlife)**
5. Look for a tree where you live. Describe how this tree is helpful.

### TIGER ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CHAMPIONS FOR NATURE:



1. Discover the difference between renewable natural resources and non-renewable natural resources. **(Trash Your Trash)**
2. Learn about the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.
3. Discover what happens to the garbage in your community.
4. Participate in a conservation service project.

### TIGER ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - FISH ON, FLOATS AND BOATS, LET'S CAMP TIGER, ROLLING TIGER, & TIGERS IN THE WATER

**(No specific outdoor ethics requirements, however, outdoor ethics could be in the conversation as Cub Scouts develop outdoor skills)**



## Wolf

### WOLF REQUIRED ADVENTURE - PAWS ON THE PATH:



1. Identify the Cub Scout Six Essentials. Show what you do with each item. **(Know Before You Go)**
2. Learn about the buddy system and how it works in the outdoors. Pick a buddy for your walk. **(Know Before You Go)**
3. Identify appropriate clothes and shoes for your walk outside. Do your best to wear them on your walk. **(Know Before You Go)**
4. Learn about the **Outdoor Code** and **Leave No Trace Principles for Kids**.
5. Take a walk outside for at least 30 minutes to explore nature in your surroundings. Describe four different animals, domestic or wild, that you could see on your walk. **(Respect Wildlife)**

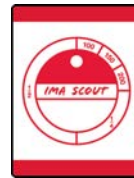
### WOLF ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CHAMPIONS FOR NATURE WOLF:



1. Discover the difference between renewable natural resources and nonrenewable natural resources.
2. Learn about the three R's: reduce, reuse, recycle. **(Trash Your Trash)**
3. Discover what happens to the recyclables in your community.
4. Participate in a conservation project.

### WOLF ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - A WOLF GOES FISHING, AIR OF THE WOLF, DIGGING IN THE PAST, FINDING YOUR WAY, LET'S CAMP WOLF, PAWS FOR WATER, PEDAL WITH THE PACK, & SPIRIT OF THE WATER

*(No specific outdoor ethics requirements, however, outdoor ethics could be in the conversation as Cub Scouts develop outdoor skills)*



## Bear

### BEAR REQUIRED ADVENTURE - HABITAT REQUIREMENTS:



1. Prepare for a one-mile walk by gathering the Cub Scout Six Essentials and weather appropriate clothing and shoes
2. **"Know Before You Go"** Identify the location of your walk on a map and confirm your one-mile route.
3. **"Choose the Right Path"** Learn about the path and surrounding area you will be walking on.
4. **"Trash Your Trash"** Make a plan for what you will do with your personal trash or trash you find along the trail.
5. **"Leave What You Find"** Take pictures along your walk or bring a sketchbook to draw five things that you want to remember on your walk.
6. **"Be Careful with Fire"** Determine the fire danger rating along your path.
7. **"Respect Wildlife"** From a safe distance, identify as you look up, down, and around you, six signs of any mammals, birds, insects, reptiles.
8. **"Be Kind to Other Visitors"** Identify what you need to do as a den to be kind to others on the path.
9. Go on your one-mile walk while practicing your **Leave No Trace Principles for Kids**.

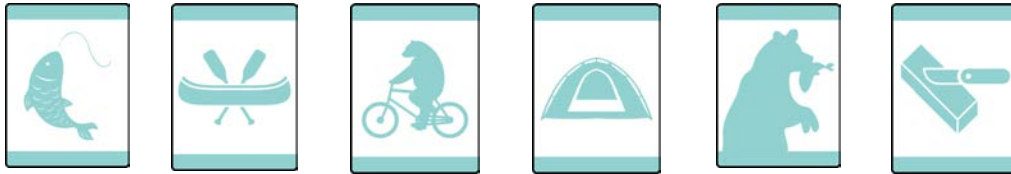
### BEAR ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CHAMPIONS FOR NATURE BEAR:



1. Discover natural resources.
2. Discover what happens to the wastewater in your community.
3. Investigate soil.
4. Investigate air pollution.
5. Participate in a conservation service project.

**BEAR ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - A BEAR GOES FISHING, BEARS AFLOAT, BEARS ON BIKES, LET'S CAMP BEAR, SALMON RUN. & WHITTLLING**

*(No specific outdoor ethics requirements, however, outdoor ethics could be in the conversation as Cub Scouts develop outdoor skills)*



**Webelos**

**WEBELOS REQUIRED ADVENTURE -WEBELOS WALKABOUT :**



1. Prepare for a 2-mile walk outside. Gather your Cub Scout Six Essentials and weather appropriate clothing and shoes. **(Know before You Go)**
2. Plan a 2-mile route for your walk. **(Know before You Go)**
3. Check the weather forecast for the time of your planned 2-mile walk. **(Know before You Go)**
4. Review the four points of BSA SAFE Checklist and how you will apply them on your 2-mile walk.
5. Demonstrate first aid for each of the following events that could occur on your 2-mile walk: blister, sprained ankle, sunburn, dehydration and heat related illness. **(Know before You Go)**
6. With your den, pack, or family, go on your 2-mile walk while practicing the **Leave No Trace Principles for Kids** and **Outdoor Code**.
7. After your 2-mile walk, discuss with your den what went well and what you would do differently next time.

**WEBELOS ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CHAMPIONS FOR NATURE WEBELOS:**



1. Discover the four components that make up a habitat: food, water, shelter, space.
2. Pick an animal that is currently threatened or endangered to complete requirements 3, 4, and 5.
3. Identify the characteristics that classify an animal as a threatened or endangered species.
4. Explore what caused this animal to be threatened or endangered.
5. Research what is currently being done to protect the animal.
6. Participate in a conservation service project.

**WEBELOS ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - AQUANAUT, CATCH THE BIG ONE, EARTH ROCKS, LET'S CAMP WEBELOS, MATH ON THE TRAIL, PADDLE ONWARD, PEDAL AWAY, & TECH ON THE TRAIL:**

*(No specific outdoor ethics requirements, however, outdoor ethics could be in the conversation as Webelos develop outdoor skills)*



## Arrow of Light

### ARROW OF LIGHT REQUIRED ADVENTURE - OUTDOOR ADVENTURER:



1. Learn about the Scout Basic Essentials.
2. Determine what you will bring on an overnight campout — including a tent and sleeping bag/gear — and how you will carry your gear.
3. Review the four points of the BSA SAFE Checklist and how you will apply them. on the campout.
4. Locate the campsite where you will be camping on a map.
5. With your patrol or a Scouts BSA troop, participate in a campout.
6. Upon arrival at the campout determine where to set up your campsite: kitchen, eating area, tents, and firepit. Help the patrol set up the patrol gear before setting up your own tent.
7. Explain how to keep food safe and the kitchen area sanitary at the campsite. Demonstrate your knowledge during the campout.
8. After your campout, discuss with your patrol what went well and what you would do differently next time. Include how you followed the **Outdoor Code** and **Leave Not Trace Principles for Kids**.

### ARROW OF LIGHT ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CHAMPIONS FOR NATURE AOL:



1. Identify foods grown or processed in your state.
2. Determine the benefits of purchasing food that is locally grown or processed.
3. Explore the concept of a food desert.
4. Explore the concept of a food oasis.
5. Learn how individuals can reduce food waste.
6. Participate in a conservation service project.

### ARROW OF LIGHT ELECTIVE ADVENTURES - CYCLING, ESTIMATIONS, FISHING, HIGH TECH OUTDOORS, INTO THE WILD, INTO THE WOODS, KNIFE SAFETY, PADDLE CRAFT, & SWIMMING:

*(No specific outdoor ethics requirements, however, outdoor ethics could be in the conversation as Webelos develop outdoor skills)*





## Scouts BSA Advancement

### Scout



Requirement:

1.e **Repeat from memory the Outdoor Code.** List the **Leave No Trace Seven Principles.** Explain the difference between the two.

5. Tell what you need to know about using a pocketknife safely and **responsibly.**

### Tenderfoot



Requirement:

1.c. Explain how you demonstrated the **Outdoor Code** and **Leave No Trace** on campouts or outings.

5.c. Explain the rules of safe and **responsible** hiking, both on the highway and cross-country, during the day and at night.

### 2nd Class



Requirement:

1.b. Recite the **Leave No Trace Seven Principles** from memory. Explain how you follow them on **all** outings.

2.c. Using a **minimum-impact method**, and at an approved outdoor location and time, use the tinder, kindling, and fuel wood from Second Class requirement 2b to demonstrate how to build a fire. Unless prohibited by local fire restrictions, light the fire. After allowing the flames to burn safely for at least two minutes, **safely extinguish the flames with minimal impact** to the fire site. **Properly dispose of the ashes and any charred remains.**

## 1st Class



Requirement:

1.b. Explain the **potential impacts** of camping, both on the environment and on other outdoor users. Explain why the **Outdoor Code** and the **Leave No Trace Seven Principles** are important for protecting the outdoors.

2.d. Demonstrate the procedures to follow in the safe handling and storage of fresh meats, dairy products, eggs, vegetables, and other perishable food products. Show how to **properly dispose of camp garbage, cans, plastic containers, waste water, and other rubbish.**



## Star, Life, and Eagle Awards



Requirement:

4. ...serve actively in your troop for four months (Star) or six months (Life & Eagle) in one or more of the following positions of responsibility:

..., **outdoor ethics guide**, ...

## Outdoor Ethics Guide

For more information on this troop leadership position go to: <https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/outdoor-ethics-guide/>



The purpose of this handbook is to guide units in developing a culture that effectively demonstrates responsible outdoor choices which reduce impacts of Scouting activities. The handbook identifies the responsibilities of the outdoor ethics guide, provides ideas on how to carry out this role, and lists resources. **It also provides methods for leaders to support Scouts selected for this position** and a way to evaluate success.

## Merit Badges

The following merit badges have specific outdoor ethics requirements:

- [Architecture](#)
- [Backpacking](#)
- [Camping](#)
- [Climbing](#)
- [Fishing](#)
- [Fly Fishing](#)
- [Geocaching](#)
- [Hiking](#)
- [Cooking](#)
- [Signs, Signals, and Codes](#)



## Scouts BSA Outdoor Ethics Awards

### Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award

Scouts and Scouters interested in learning more about outdoor ethics and Leave No Trace should begin by exploring the Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award. The requirements are as follows:



1. Recite from memory and explain the meaning of the **Outdoor Code**.
2. Watch the National Park Service Leave No Trace video.
3. Complete the Leave No Trace 101 Course online. Print the certificate.
4. Complete the Tread Lightly! 101 Online Awareness Course. Print the certificate.
5. Participate in an outdoor ethics course, workshop, or training activity facilitated by a person who has completed the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course or is a Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor.

### Outdoor Ethics Action Award

The Outdoor Ethics Action Award challenges Scouts and Scouters to take affirmative steps to improve their outdoor skills. The requirements for the Outdoor Ethics Action Award are as follows:



#### Scout Action Award Requirements

1. Do the following:
  - Unless already completed, earn the Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award.
  - Complete the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course or the Scouting America Leave No Trace Basics course.
  - Explain how each of the four points of the Outdoor Code guides your actions when outdoors.
2. Do the following:
  - Read Chapter 7 of the Scouts BSA Handbook on Outdoor Ethics.
  - Teach a skill related to the Outdoor Code or Leave No Trace to another Scout in your troop or another Scouting unit.
3. Complete one of the following:

## Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement

- Successfully complete a term as your troop Outdoor Ethics Guide.
  - Participate in an outing that emphasizes the Leave No Trace Seven Principles or relevant Tread Lightly! principles. All members of the troop participating in the outing should use the outdoor ethics and the specific skills needed to minimize impacts from their use of the outdoors.
4. Follow the Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace Seven Principles on your outings. For each of 3 separate outings, write a paragraph explaining how you followed the Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace. Share it with your unit leader or an individual who has completed the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course. If your outing included motorized activities, also explain how you followed the Tread Lightly! principles for those activities.
  5. On a troop outing, help your troop on a service activity that addresses recreational impacts related to the type of outing. The project should be approved in advance by the landowner or land manager and lead to permanent or long-term improvements.
  6. Participate in a report at a court of honor or similar family event on the service activity in Requirement 5.

### **Scouter Action Award Requirements**

1. Do the following:
  - Earn the Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award.
  - Complete the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course.
  - Discuss with your troop how each of the four points of the Outdoor Code guides your actions when outdoors.
2. Read the North American Skills & Ethics booklet to learn about the Leave No Trace Seven Principles. Review the principles of Tread Lightly! Review Chapter 7 of the Scouts BSA Handbook and Fieldbook chapters about Leave No Trace, using stoves and campfires, hygiene and waste disposal, and traveling and camping in special environments.
3. Facilitate your troop's leadership in planning and leading an outing that emphasizes the Leave No Trace Seven Principles. All members of the troop participating in the outing should use outdoor ethics and the specific skills to minimize impacts from their use of the outdoors. If the outing includes motorized activities, also facilitate the emphasis on the Tread Lightly! principles for those activities.
4. Help plan and participate in at least three outings where your troop can follow the Outdoor Code and practice the Leave No Trace Seven Principles. Facilitate a discussion at the end of the outings.
5. Assist your unit in arranging for a service project emphasizing outdoor ethics with a local landowner or land manager. The project must be approved by the landowner or land manager in advance. Participate in that project. The project should lead to permanent or long-term improvements.
6. Make, or facilitate youth in making, a presentation at a roundtable or similar gathering about what your troop did for Requirement 4.
7. Help at least three Scouts earn the youth Outdoor Ethics Action Award.

## Scouts BSA Awards

(These awards contain an outdoor ethics component)

- Totin' Chip
  - <https://www.scouting.org/awards/awards-central/totin-chip/>
- Firem'n Chit
  - <https://www.scouting.org/awards/awards-central/firemn-chit/>
- National Outdoor Awards & National Medal for Outdoor Achievement
  - <https://www.scouting.org/programs/scouts-bsa/advancement-and-awards/nea/>
- Wilderness Pledge Achievement Award
  - <https://www.philmontscoutranch.org/philmonttreks/awards/wildernesspledgeachievementrequirements/>
- Summit Sustainability Award
  - <https://44qx633l2wnm2ire6p28zc8u-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Scout-Camp-Leaders-Guide.pdf>
- National Outdoor Challenge Award (Unit Award)
  - [https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/430-016\\_WB.pdf](https://filestore.scouting.org/filestore/Outdoor%20Program/pdf/430-016_WB.pdf)



## Venturing Core Awards

### Venturing & Discovery Awards

There are no outdoor ethic requirements in Venturing Award or the Discovery Award.

### Pathfinder Award

Requirement 4. Complete ONE of the following:



1. ....
2. Participate in or serve on staff for [leadership training](#) such as National Youth Leadership Training, National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, Order of the Arrow National Leadership Seminar, or Wood Badge (for Venturers 18 or older). You may also participate in non-Scouting America leadership training courses such as those delivered by the National Outdoor Leadership School, if approved by your Advisor. **(A Scouting America Leave No Trace Level 2 Instructor Course satisfies this requirement)**

### Summit Award

Requirement 4. Complete TWO of the following:



1. ....
2. Participate in or serve on staff for [leadership training](#) such as National Youth Leadership Training, National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience, Order of the Arrow National Leadership Seminar, or Wood Badge (for Venturers 18 or older). You may also participate in non-Scouting America leadership training courses such as those delivered by the National Outdoor Leadership School, if approved by your Advisor. **(A Scouting America Leave No Trace Level 2 Instructor Course satisfies this requirement)**
3. ...

## Venturing Specialty Awards

### Ranger Award



Core Requirement 6  
Leave No Trace

- A. Recite and explain the Leave No Trace Seven Principles.
- B. Participate in three separate camping/backpacking trips demonstrating that you know and use the Leave No Trace Seven Principles.
- C. Make a tabletop display or presentation on the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, and how they affect the environment and attitude of campers, for your crew, another crew, a Cub Scout or Scouts BSA unit, or another group, or teach a Leave No Trace Awareness course.

## Venturing Outdoor Ethics Awards

### Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award

Venturers and Venturing Advisors interested in learning more about outdoor ethics and Leave No Trace should begin by exploring the Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award. The requirements are as follows:



1. Recite from memory and explain the meaning of the Outdoor Code.
2. Watch the National Park Service Leave No Trace video.
3. Complete the Leave No Trace 101 Course online. Print the certificate.
4. Complete the Tread Lightly! 101 Online Awareness Course. Print the certificate.
5. Participate in an outdoor ethics course, workshop, or training activity facilitated by a person who has completed the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course or is a Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor.

### Outdoor Ethics Action Award

The Outdoor Ethics Action Award challenges Venturers and Venturing Advisors to take affirmative steps to improve their outdoor skills—so that they can leave no trace and achieve the goals of the Outdoor Code. The requirements are as follows:



#### Venturer Action Award Requirements

1. Do the following:
  - Unless already completed, earn the Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award.
  - Complete the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course or the Scouting America Leave No Trace Basics course.
  - Explain how you live up to each of the four points of the Outdoor Code during an outing or adventure.
2. Do the following:

## Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement

- Read the Fieldbook chapters about Leave No Trace, using stoves and campfires, hygiene and waste disposal, and traveling and camping in special environments. Review the discussion of Leave No Trace in the Ranger Guidebook, and the foreword and chapters on Conservation Aesthetic, Wilderness, and Land Ethic in *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold. Explain in your own words what Leopold meant when he stated, “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it does otherwise.”
  - Lead a group approved by your unit leader in an activity that explores differing ethical viewpoints using materials from Scouting’s outdoor ethics page, Leave No Trace, or Tread Lightly!
3. Complete one of the following:
- Become a Leave No Trace Level 1 Instructor, Tread Lightly! Tread Trainer, or successfully complete a term as a crew officer with responsibility for outdoor ethics training.
  - Research the complete set of Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! skills related to a planned outdoor adventure. Working with your crew leadership, prepare for the adventure, including learning the skills needed to minimize impacts. Practice the skills at least once before heading out on your adventure. While on your adventure, all members of the crew participating in the adventure should use the outdoor skills and ethics necessary to minimize impacts from their use of the outdoors.
  - Follow the Outdoor Code and the Leave No Trace Seven Principles on your outings. For each of 3 separate outings, write a paragraph explaining how you followed the Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace. Share it with your unit leader or an individual who has completed the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course. If your outing included motorized activities, also explain how you followed the Tread Lightly! principles for those activities.
4. Do the following:
- Meet with a land owner or manager responsible for an outdoor recreational area or habitat that you use and/or enjoy and discuss the steps that you and your crew can take to reduce adverse impacts on the recreational ecosystem.
  - With your crew leadership, help plan and participate in a campaign to reduce the adverse impacts on the recreational ecosystem. The campaign should include both service elements (e.g., land ethic—service to the land) and outdoor ethics educational components to help educate the public about how to minimize impacts to the area.
  - Help plan and lead either a traditional or a social media event to educate the general public on the importance of protecting the area addressed in Requirement 5 and how they can help.

### **Venturing Advisor Action Award Requirements**

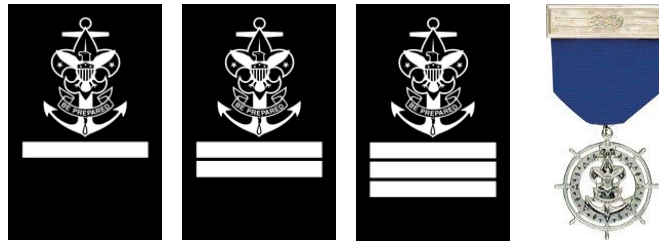
1. Do the following:
- Earn the Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award.
  - Complete the Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Orientation course.
  - Participate in a discussion with your crew of how each of the four points of the Outdoor Code guides your actions when outdoors.
2. Do the following:
- Read the North American Skills & Ethics booklet to learn about the principles of Leave No Trace. Review the principles of Tread Lightly! Review Fieldbook chapters about Leave No Trace, using stoves and campfires, hygiene and waste disposal, and traveling and camping in special environments. Review the

## Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement

discussion of Leave No Trace in the Ranger Guidebook, and the foreword and chapters on Conservation Aesthetic, Wilderness, and Land Ethic in *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold. Explain in your own words what Leopold meant when he stated, “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it does otherwise.”

- Serve as an Advisor for your crew in an activity that explores differing ethical viewpoints using materials from Scouting’s outdoor ethics page, Leave No Trace, or Tread Lightly!
3. Complete one of the following:
    - Become a Leave No Trace level 1 Instructor or Tread Lightly! Tread Trainer.
    - Advise your crew’s leadership in planning and leading an outing that emphasizes the Leave No Trace Seven Principles. All members of the crew participating in the outing should use outdoor ethics and the specific skills to minimize impacts from their use of the outdoors. If the outing includes motorized activities, also facilitate the emphasis on the Tread Lightly! principles for those activities.
  4. Advise your crew’s planning and participation in at least three outings where your crew can follow the Outdoor Code and practice the Leave No Trace Seven Principles. Participate in a discussion at the end of the outings.
  5. Advise your Venturers in arranging for a service project and educational campaign emphasizing outdoor ethics with a local landowner or land manager responsible for an outdoor recreational area or habitat that your crew uses and/or enjoys. The project must be approved by the land owner or manager in advance. Participate in that project. The project should lead to permanent or long-term improvements.
  6. Advise your Venturers in the completion of a traditional or social media event to educate the general public on the importance of protecting the area addressed in Requirement 5 and how they can help.
  7. Help at least three Venturers earn the youth Outdoor Ethics Action Award.

## Other Scouting Programs

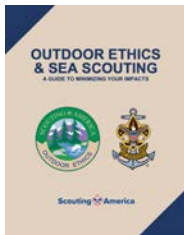


### Sea Scouting

#### Apprentice, Ordinary, Able, & Quartermaster Awards

Ordinary, Able, & Quartermaster have extensive environmental requirements. There are also electives that include Level 1 Instructor Courses and the Outdoor Ethics Awareness & Action Awards.

#### Sea Scouting Outdoor Ethics Awards



Sea Scouts are welcomed to earn the Outdoor Ethics Awareness and Action awards by following the Venturing Requirements.

[Outdoor Ethics & Sea Scouting, A Guide to Minimizing Your Impacts: https://scouting-oec.org/files/Outdoor%20Ethics%20and%20Sea%20Scouting.pdf](https://scouting-oec.org/files/Outdoor%20Ethics%20and%20Sea%20Scouting.pdf): A Sea Scout Ship may have a Specialist serving as the Ship's Outdoor Ethics Guide.

### Exploring



Exploring exists to teach important life and career skills to young people through immersive career experiences and mentorship provided by community and business leaders. Together, they equip young people with character, leadership, and life skills that can be used both today and in their future careers.

Exploring has no outdoor skill development programs which teach outdoor ethics. Outdoor ethics plays an important role in many career fields including outdoor recreation management and natural resource management.

# Bringing Outdoor Ethics to Scouting

Whether you serve at a unit level or a district and council level there are many ways to bring your outdoor ethics training to the Scouting Program.

## Outdoor Ethics Administration in Scouting

The National Council of Scouting America is a volunteer-led, professionally-supported non-profit organization with the goal of training youth in responsible citizenship, character development, and self-reliance through participation in a wide range of outdoor activities, and educational programs. Scouting America has an agreement with Leave No Trace to teach the Leave No Trace Seven Principles appropriate to our program offerings. The National Council formed the “Outdoor Ethics Committee” from trained volunteers to oversee and monitor the implementation of these programs. In October 2021, the National Outdoor Programs and Properties Committee merged the Outdoor Ethics Committee and the Conservation Committee. The merger of these two long standing committees will allow Scouting America to provide a strong network of dedicated volunteers focused on the goal of supporting our councils. The chair of this committee serves on the National Outdoor Program and Properties Committee and works directly with the Director of Outdoor Programs and Properties. The volunteers on the committee have a range of responsibilities including training, outreach, and program support.

### **OUTDOOR ETHICS & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Scouting America’s Outdoor Ethics and Conservation Subcommittee is to encourage, enhance, and support the inclusion of outdoor ethics, conservation, and ecology in all Scouting programs, and to provide guidance to sustainably manage the natural resources of our treasured properties for current and future generations of Scouting youth.

The Outdoor Ethics Program Operations Group of the Outdoor Ethics & Conservation Subcommittee follows Scouting America’s Council Service Territory (CST) support model and provides an Outdoor Ethics CST Team Lead to serve every CST. Their responsibilities are to support the locally appointed Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate for each of the councils in their service territory.

The Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate is an appointed volunteer position that coordinates outdoor ethics in the Scouting program for the council’s youth and adult members. Council supported outdoor ethics activities are meant to enrich a member’s Scouting experience, help reduce our impact on the land consistent with Scouting’s Outdoor Code, and help ensure continuing access to public lands for Scouting purposes. Many councils organize formal Council or District Outdoor Ethics Committees or less-formal Council Outdoor Ethics Teams.

[Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate Responsibilities](http://scouting-oec.org/files/COEA_Responsibilities.pdf)  
[http://scouting-oec.org/files/COEA\\_Responsibilities.pdf](http://scouting-oec.org/files/COEA_Responsibilities.pdf)

You can find contact information for your Council Outdoor Ethics Advocate and your Outdoor Ethics CST Team Lead by following this link:  
<http://scouting-oec.org/contacts/COEAs.php>

## Nationally Approved Outdoor Ethics Training Programs

As a Leave No Trace Instructor, one of the most important ways you can support outdoor ethics in Scouting is to teach or help teach one of the many nationally approved outdoor ethics training programs. Each course is described below with a link to the syllabus.

### **SCOUTING AMERICA OUTDOOR ETHICS ORIENTATION**

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

[Outdoor Ethics Orientation : https://scouting-oec.org/files/OEO\\_Draft.pdf](https://scouting-oec.org/files/OEO_Draft.pdf)

### **OUTDOOR ETHICS FOR SCOUTS BSA**

This is an 8 minute on-line training program provided by Scouting U. for Scouts BSA. You can find this program by visiting the training pages at [my.scouting.org](https://my.scouting.org)

### **SCOUTING AMERICA LEAVE NO TRACE BASICS**

This 3-4 hour class is designed to help youth and adults at all program levels to understand the Leave No Trace Seven Principles and how to apply them in Scouting's outdoor program.

[Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Basics : https://scouting-oec.org/files/Leave%20No%20Trace%20Basics%20Course%20Guide.pdf](https://scouting-oec.org/files/Leave%20No%20Trace%20Basics%20Course%20Guide.pdf)



### **LEAVE NO TRACE SKILLS COURSE**

This 16-hour course provides in-depth experiential training of the skills and ethics of Leave No Trace. It is highly recommended for youth serving as Outdoor Ethics Guides. Leave No Trace Skills Course graduates are prepared to discuss the Leave No Trace principles with others and to practice low-impact skills and techniques on future endeavors.

### **SCOUTING AMERICA LEAVE NO TRACE LEVEL 1 INSTRUCTOR COURSE**

This 16-hour course trains adults 18 and over to serve as Leave No Trace Instructors. It is highly recommended training for members of the council and district outdoor program and training teams, and for council camp program staff. Leave No Trace Level 1 Instructors are

## Scouting America Leave No Trace Instructor Supplement

qualified to teach the 16-hour Leave No Trace Skills Course as well as the Scouting America Leave No Trace Basics and Orientation courses.

[Scouting America Level 1 Instructor Manual: https://scouting-oec.org/files/Leave%20No%20Trace%20Level%201%20Instructor%20Course%20Manual.pdf](https://scouting-oec.org/files/Leave%20No%20Trace%20Level%201%20Instructor%20Course%20Manual.pdf)

### **SCOUTING AMERICA LEAVE NO TRACE LEVEL 2 INSTRUCTOR COURSE**

This 5 days/nights course is for developing top-level Instructors who are qualified to teach the Leave No Trace Level 1 Instructor course, the 16-hour Leave No Trace Skills course, and the Scouting America Leave No Trace Basics & Orientation courses.

## Outdoor Ethics in Scouting America Training Programs

Many of Scouting's formal training programs have content dedicated to outdoor ethics instruction. Leave No Trace Instructors are ideal candidates to serve on council and district training teams to assist in delivering these programs.

### **BALOO - BASIC ADULT LEADER OUTDOOR ORIENTATION**



This one-and-a-half day course is designed as an introduction to the Cub Scout outdoor program for leaders interested in adding a camping component to their Pack activities. BALOO training consists of an online pre-requisite component in addition to an overnight hands-on practical. Scouting America's Cub Scout level camping policies will be taught along with the discovery of the necessary tools to help units carry out a successful camping experience. Completion of this course is mandatory for a MINIMUM OF ONE adult on a Pack overnighter. The practical component includes a session on outdoor ethics.

[https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/510-03318-BALOO\\_web\\_v2.pdf](https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/510-03318-BALOO_web_v2.pdf)  
(Outdoor Ethics, page 50)

### **IOLS - INTRODUCTION TO OUTDOOR LEADER SKILLS**



This hands-on program gives adult leaders a practical introduction to the patrol method of a youth-led troop by teaching many of the practical outdoor skills they need to lead Scouts in the out-of-doors. In addition, the teaching methods, activities, and games model the variety of teaching used in effective and engaging Scouting programs. The skills sessions presented in Introduction to Outdoor Leader Skills closely follow the Scouts BSA Handbook. Outdoor Ethics is one of the many sessions included in this training.

[https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/3364018OLskills\\_Aug.pdf](https://www.scouting.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/3364018OLskills_Aug.pdf)  
(Outdoor Ethics, page 33)

### **WOODBADGE**



Wood Badge is an advanced, national leadership course open to Scouting volunteers and professionals. Scouters from Cub Scouting, Scouts BSA, Venturing, Sea Scouts, and Explorers, and district and council Scouters all are welcome and belong here. The purpose of Wood Badge is to develop skilled leaders who can strengthen Scouting units in achieving the mission of Scouting America. Outdoor Ethics is one of the many sessions included in this training.

The Woodbadge syllabus is restricted.

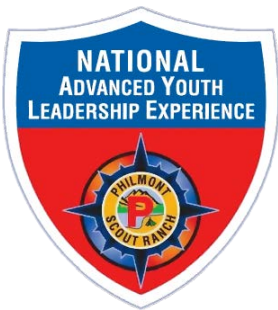
### **NYLT - NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING**



National Youth Leadership Training is an exciting, action-packed program designed for councils to provide youth members with leadership skills and experience they can use in their home troops and in other situations demanding leadership of self and others. Leave No Trace is mentioned throughout the syllabus and Troop Guides lead a skills session on outdoor ethics.

The NYLT syllabus is restricted.

### **NYALE - NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE**



National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience is an exciting program that enhances leadership skills and expands upon the team-building and ethical decision-making skills learned in National Youth Leadership Training. NAYLE emphasizes leadership, teamwork, and selfless service, using the core elements of NYLT to help youth strengthen these skills. The NAYLE course is now available at all four national high-adventure bases. Outdoor Ethics is one of the many sessions.

The NAYLE syllabus is restricted.

### **COUNCIL & DISTRICT PROGRAMS**

There are plenty of opportunities for Leave No Trace Instructors to share their expertise in Scouting. Presentations or program activities can be led for a whole host of popular scouting events.

For example:

- Roundtables
- Universities of Scouting
- Resident and Daytime Summer Camps
- Camporees
- Cub Scout Weekends
- Family Camping Weekends

**UNIT SUPPORT**

Many Scouting units would welcome a Leave No Trace Instructor to make presentations or to lead outdoor ethics activities. Scouts BSA units who have youth serving as the Outdoor Ethics Guide benefit from trained mentors to support the youth leader.

## Scouting Outdoor Ethics Resources

There are plenty of resources that support outdoor ethics in Scouting. This is a list of the most common.

### **LEAVE NO TRACE**

Website: [LNT.Org](http://LNT.Org)

Shop [shop.LNT.Org](http://shop.LNT.Org) for [educational materials](#)

#### [\*101 Ways to Teach Leave No Trace\*](#)

Principle-specific activities to effectively teach in engaging ways.

#### [\*Bigfoot's Playbook\*](#)

A Youth Educator's Guide to Leave No Trace Activities, Games, and Experiential Curriculum  
[Bigfoot's Playbook Activity Materials](#)

#### [\*Teaching Leave No Trace - Activity Guide\*](#)

[\*Leave No Trace In The Outdoors\*](#) - Jeffrey Marion, PhD

### **SCOUTING AMERICA**

Webpage: [Outdoor Programs - Outdoor Ethics / Leave No Trace](#)

Resources: <https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/outdoor-ethics/resources/>

Outdoor Ethics Training in Scouting America <https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/outdoor-ethics/training/>

Scouting America Outdoor Ethics Awareness and Action Awards <https://www.scouting.org/outdoor-programs/outdoor-ethics/awards/>

Council Outdoor Ethics Contacts <https://scouting-oec.org/contacts/OEcontacts.php>

Outdoor Ethics & Conservation

News & Events <https://scouting-oec.org/news/>

Roundtables <https://scouting-oec.org/training/VirtualRoundtables.php>

[\*Teaching Leave No Trace - Activity Guide\*](#) on-line version

[\*Teaching Leave No Trace - Activity Guide\*](#) PDF version

[Troop Program Feature: Outdoor Ethics](#)

[Outdoor Ethics Guide Handbook](#)

More Resources: <https://scouting-oec.org/resources/moreResources.php>

### **LEAVE NO TRACE VIDEOS**

Leave No Trace Basics [YouTube](#)

How to Effectively Communicate Leave No Trace Practices [YouTube](#)

National Park Service Online Video (Low Res): [Download from NPS](#) | [YouTube](#)

## **REVISION HISTORY**

February 21, 2026 Weblink updates. Added "Outdoor Ethics & Sea Scouting" to Sea Scout section.



