

TROOP 4 MAINE ADVENTURE – WILDERNESS CAMPING INFORMATION FOR SCOUTS

FOOD INVENTORY

All food is packed in a large duffel bags and coolers for each patrol of approximately 14 people. Within each duffel bag, the meals are grouped into smaller bags. The SPL will assign you to your group.

FOOD PORTIONS

Your food bags and coolers contain a wide variety of food, and there is enough to keep you well fed all week. However, there are limits on each item. You're on your honor to determine your fair share of each item.

ORDERING ADDITIONAL FOOD

If you truly believe your group is running out of food, start fishing. If that doesn't work, there's crawfish that hide under the river banks. If you're still running out of food, have someone from your group speak to Mr. Bedard before we arrive at the trading post of Chesuncook Village on day 4. We may have an opportunity for some limited re-supply. However, we will not re-supply if your group simply prefers different food, and available supplies in town may be very limited.

SEALING FOOD

At some point (maybe many points) your food bag will get wet; either by rain, water in your canoe, or by getting tossed in the drink. All individual food portions are at least double sealed via zip lock bags and garbage bags. It's important to carefully reseal all unused portions and quickly return them to the main food bag or cooler. Treat your food bag and cooler with extreme care. Try not to let the bag sit in a pool of water in your canoe while paddling. Prop it up a bit with some other gear or a couple sticks, so that water is not constantly sloshing against it. Don't toss the bag around, and protect it from the weather as much as possible. If the inner plastic bags begin to tear badly, replace them. The canvas outer bag offers no water protection. There is no chance to resupply ice, so keep the coolers closed and out of the sun as much as possible.

FUEL

Do not store fuel or camp stoves in the food bag. Even if tightly sealed, these items can leak fuel and contaminate your entire food supply.

FOOD PACKING

Within the main bag, your food is grouped into several bags in a logical fashion. These bags are marked. Open only the bags that you need, and keep things organized. If the weather is nasty, you're going to want to find things quickly.

GARBAGE

Let's try to keep the amount of garbage we haul to an absolute minimum. We should be able to burn most garbage except for the few cans we are bringing. Before you leave your campsite, pick out whatever pieces of garbage didn't burn and add it to your group's garbage bag. Be sure to leave a clean camp site when you leave. To keep the garbage volume down, crush any cans before adding them to the bag.

UNUSED FOOD

As much as you may love the menu we've planned, there's likely to be leftover food at some point. Don't throw any leftover food in the lake, river or woods. Doing so not only attracts bugs and stinks up the site, but worse, it will attract critters... especially big critters. Bears can smell out a few scraps from far away. Try to keep unused cooked food to a minimum. Adjust your recipes downward if you find that the portions are too big. If you're left with unused cooked food, burn it in a very hot fire, or better yet, pass the pot around and try hard to eat it all. If you can't make a hot fire to destroy extra food, bury it very very far from your campsite (~1/4 mile or more).

HANGING YOUR FOOD

Be sure to protect your food supply after you arrive in camp, and hang your food bag as soon as your meal is over. Even if you are just hanging around the campsite, your food is not necessarily safe on the ground. The critters around these campsites are very clever and have lots of practice. Red squirrels can

be bold and chew through your food bag when even though you're standing close by. The troop has brought sufficient rope to suspend your food bags off the ground. When hanging your bag, keep the bag away from tree trunks. Also, do not store food in your backpack or in your tent while you are in camp. Keep any personal food in a baggie marked with your name, and add it to the main food bag when you pull into camp. You should stock your personal food baggie each morning with any snacks that you want from the main food bag, so that your group won't have to keep on opening the main food bag, which can be a hassle.

CLEAN HANDS

Even though it looks like we are in the sparkling clean wilderness, there are lots of things that can contaminate our food and make us very sick, including animal and people waste and the critters that live in this stuff (bacteria, water borne cysts, parasites). The health of all us living in these close quarters depends on us staying clean. Wash your hands thoroughly after going to the bathroom, and especially before handling any food or cooking. Use the good old fashioned soap that you brought. In addition, the troop has brought antibacterial lotion (e.g., Purell) which kills most disease causing germs. Use a quick application of this lotion before handling food or cooking.

BATHROOM

Contamination from feces is the number one cause of getting sick while camping, especially backcountry camping where limited campsites are frequented by many hikers and canoers. Over time, these campsites get a lot of people going to the bathroom in the same area. To make it worse, our water supply is often in these same campsite areas. To minimize our chance of getting sick, we need to follow good hygiene rules. The following rule is pulled right from the forest website.

Dispose of human waste by digging a hole 6"-8" deep at least 150 feet from water or campsites. Cover with leaves and soil.

The troop has brought small 6" garden shovels so you can dig these small holes. If you don't have a shovel, a stick will do. This probably goes without saying, but remember to keep these shovels out of the main food bag.

SHOWER

The troop has brought sun shower bags. Fill them up, sit them on a rock in the sun, and in an hour or so, you have warm water to shower up. Use them occasionally, especially before our visit to the trading post Town of Chesuncook Village, which is rumored to be the home to the Canadian High School Cheerleaders Association Summer Camp.

WATER

It is wise to consider ALL water to be contaminated with parasites or bacteria. Giardia is the most common organism in this area. If infected, you will begin to experience symptoms in 7-10 days, including diarrhea, stomach cramps, bloating, gas, fatigue and weight loss. Don't take a chance. Make sure all your drinking water has been purified with the troop's water filtration equipment, no matter how crystal clear the water may appear.

MEDICAL

The troop is bringing detailed medical information on every scout in case of emergency. We are also well trained in wilderness first aid, CPR, etc, and we are bringing a good supply of first aid equipment. If you are taking medication on the trip, you must notify the Scoutmaster at the planning meeting on Aug 5th.

DISH WASHING

Your main food bag includes all the standard dish cleaning equipment that you're used to, with the exception that there are no paper towels. Instead, cotton hand towels are provided. Rinse and dry these towels at the end of every day. Use a bit of dish soap to clean them occasionally. Do NOT dump your gray dish water in the river/lake. Do not even dump it near the campsite. Even dish water smells tasty enough to attract unwanted critters and beasts in the middle of the night. At one previous troop trip in New York, we had bears lapping up a pot of our dirty dish water. Dump the dirty water far (100 yards or more) from camp.

PEANUT ALLERGY / PRECAUTIONS

We have 2 members of our troop with severe peanut allergy. Therefore, one food bag will be set up a bit different. For the affected group, all peanut related items, or items that have even a small chance of being peanut contaminated (nuts, peanut butter, granola bars, etc), will be stored in a separate snack bag, away from the main food bag. **THROUGHOUT THE TRIP, DO NOT STORE THIS SNACK BAG WITH OR IN THE MAIN FOOD BAG. KEEP IT AWAY. THIS BAG WILL BE CLEARLY MARKED AS CONTAINING PEANUTS.** The troop leaders will speak to the affected group to make sure everyone is aware of the seriousness of this allergy, and to make sure you all understand what you can do to help us minimize the risk of an allergic reaction.

MAPS

Your leaders will have official and very detailed maps of the area. See them if you want to get a detailed look at our route. However, each scout is also receiving a slightly smaller, but still adequately detailed map. This is a paper map that will fall apart easily if wet. Keep it in a zip-lock bag.

Leadership

As on all our trips, we are using the troop/patrol method of leadership. Positions will be assigned at the Aug 5th preparation meeting. The adult leaders are there to offer guidance, ensure a safe environment, and help with merit badge counseling, but other than that, they are on vacation, and are there to be led by you. It is up to the scouts to do all the leading. For heavy jobs, adults will do their fair share (and no more) of the work, but are counting on direction from the scout leadership. Come prepared to truly run this wilderness adventure.