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Summer 2021

Dear Participants, Troop Leaders, Parents, and Guardians,

Welcome to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW)! We are glad that you have chosen the Northern Lakes Canoe Base for a summer high adventure wilderness experience. The staff at the canoe base work hard to create a warm and caring atmosphere where participants make new friends and gain courage, confidence, and character. The Girl Scout Promise and Law are the foundation of the wilderness canoe trip program.

As you look forward to your canoe trip, the following pages will help you prepare. Please take time to read through it thoroughly, so you and your participants are well prepared. Included is a check list to help you track everything to do in preparation for a wonderful canoeing adventure from arrival to departure.

We have over 50 years of experience in providing safe, fun wilderness trips that are cherished for a lifetime to girls who have a wide variety of physical abilities and needs. After reading this packet carefully, please contact us with any questions or concerns you have about your daughter, so we can develop strategies for making her trip a success. You can reach us at customercare@girlscoutslp.org or (320)252-2952.

In the Spirit of Adventure,

Melissa & Ann

Melissa Garza
Director of Program Property & Member Support

Ann McNally
Northern Lakes Canoe Base Director

Toll Free: 800 955-6032

www.girlscoutslp.org

Girl Scouting builds girls of
courage, confidence, and
character, who make the
world a better place.



Community Partner

NLCB Canoe Trip Checklist

Please bring all forms completed with you to the Canoe Base, please do not mail ahead of time! **If you do not have internet access, please call our office at (218) 726-4710 to request paper copies of the required forms and we will mail them out to you. **

Forms for participants to complete and bring with you to the NLCB:

- Parent/Participant Authorization and Permission Form**
- Participant Agreement**
- Health History & Exam Form** - Requires a physical exam with a signature from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or registered nurse! Please consider bringing this packet to your doctor so they understand the adventure you are about to go on.
- All About Me Form**
- Balance of payment-** For girls signing up individually, the balance of your fee is due 4 weeks before your trip to Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin Lakes and Pines, 400 2nd Ave S, Waite Park, MN 56387.
For Flex Crews, the balance of your fee is due June 1,2021!

Forms for girls/parents to read and use in planning for the trip:

- This Participant Packet/Guide**
- Packing List** - Follow the list as closely as possible and let us know if you have questions!

Questions - Call 320 252-2952 or customer care@girlscoutslp.org.

During the summer, please also call the canoe base directly anytime: 218-365-6517.

NLCB CANOE TRIP INFORMATION

We're thrilled that you're coming to join us for a wilderness canoe trip in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW). Enclosed are materials to assist you in your pre-trip planning. Please read these materials carefully.

- ***Packing List***

Please make sure everybody coming on the trip follows the packing list as closely as possible. We provide canoes, paddles, PFD's (Personal Flotation Devices), BWCAW permits, all in-camp equipment, tents, packs, food, and cooking gear/mess kits. Bringing appropriate boots, raingear, sleeping bag, and clothes is key to safety and fun!

- ***Arrival/Departure***

All trips leave from Ely, MN. We meet at the United States Forest Service Office in Ely. This is located at 1393 Hwy 169, Ely, MN 55731. It is 1/4 mile east of Ely on Hwy. 169 across from the International Wolf Center. As you drive through town eastbound, you will see Subway on your right and Dairy Queen on your left and then the USFS building a few blocks farther east on your left. Arrival time is 1:00 PM, but know that there is a nice visitor's center, bathrooms, and a picnic table if you arrive earlier. **Drivers will be met by Canoe Base staff, then caravan 25 minutes east to the Northern Lakes Canoe Base where your adventure begins.** Girls who are not associated with a Flex Crew will have the option to say goodbye to their parents at the USFS building and ride to the base in the Girl Scout Van. Please eat lunch before arrival; orientation and skills workshops begin when you arrive at the Canoe Base.

Groups arrive back at the Canoe Base at approximately 2:00 p.m. on the last day of the trip. Parents often wish to see their daughters paddle in and if this is the case, a firm time and directions to the base will be provided to parents when they drop their daughters off. After clean-up and re-packing, the canoeists are ready to leave the canoe base around 3:30. Please let us know if you would prefer us to drive your daughter back to town to meet you at the Forest Service building at 4pm and we can do that.

If you plan to stay in the Ely, the Ely Chamber of Commerce can be of help for more specific information: www.ely.org. There is a large campground at Fall Lake and several hotels in town.

- ***What to expect on Arrival Day***

On your arrival there will be a general welcome and information session. Then your afternoon will be busy with a variety of workshops covering canoe handling, paddling, and portaging. To comply with GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints, all participants will be required to demonstrate swimming ability and ability to handle an overturned canoe. Even after the demonstration, all participants will still be required to wear PFDs whenever they are in a canoe or swimming.

After these workshops, each guide will go over packing personal gear with her crew (a gear shake down), making sure that everyone is bringing the right amount and type of clothes, raingear, sleeping bags, boots, etc.

A hot dinner is prepared on a campfire and eaten at the crew's campsite, while the crew gets to know each other and goes over their route. Then every participant attends an evening training session that covers Leave No Trace principles and the program's safety rules. We have an excellent safety record spanning over 50 years. **There are no exceptions to safety in wilderness travel!**

- **Storage**

There is storage for extra gear (duffel bag, shampoo, and outfit for the ride home) for girls who come on a trip without a troop or council group. Most "Flex Groups" find it is easiest to store their extra gear locked in their cars on base.

We are happy to store your car keys in our secure on-site office.

- **Electronic Devices**

Other than a simple camera and flashlight, girls should not bring *any* electronic devices (phones, i-pods, etc.) to the base. There is no cell service at the canoe base, or a place to charge your devices, and they are not allowed on canoe trips. Adults who travel with a phone may store it with us while on their trip so it does not have to sit in a hot car.

- **On the Trail**

Your canoe trip begins the morning after you arrive. Once on the trail your training won't stop. You'll travel through this beautiful wilderness with only the bare necessities in your pack. On the trip we depend on ourselves, working safely together as a team to travel 5-10 miles most days. Everything we need (canoes, food, shelter, clothing) is moved with us every day as we travel on our route. Everyone paddles the canoe and carries equipment (personal, food, group gear). **Group cooperation is essential!**

- **Trading Post Kits**

There are a few items you can purchase as a "kit" that you can pre-purchase and have delivered. These will be available for purchase in

- **Food Allergies & Dietary Restrictions**

We are a small program run out of a small town, and all food eaten on a canoe trip needs to be carried across every portage. All hot meals prepared in a modest set of pots on a fire or stove. If any participant has food allergies or dietary restrictions beyond being vegetarian, please note them on her health form, and **call us two weeks before the trip, at 218-365-6517**, so we can discuss the nature of the allergy and restrictions with you. While we try to accommodate most dietary restrictions, the options available to us in Ely and within budget can get boring for girls. We suggest that participants with food allergies or dietary restrictions (e.g. gluten free) bring a box or two of their own favorite energy bar, a box of their favorite type of breakfast cereal (e.g. granola), and a package of gluten-free crackers to put peanut butter and cheese on at lunch.

- **Physical Preparedness**

The canoe trips we offer include strenuous outdoor activity day in and day out. However, participants do not need to be in top athletic condition for our trips. We take novices on canoe trips all summer, and they do great. Having said that, whatever you do to stay in shape will help you on your canoe trip. So, get out there and hike, play soccer, dance, climb trees, or skateboard! Please also let us know about a participant's special physical, mental and emotional needs or previous injuries so we can ensure the best possible experience.

- **Health and Safety**

We are proud of our 50+ year history with an excellent safety record. Because our canoe trips take place in a remote wilderness setting that is not easily accessible to medical personnel, we require that our guides are trained in safety, risk management, lifeguarding and wilderness first aid. We also repeatedly emphasize safety rules to girls (e.g. buddy system, wear shoes, no running). The safety of your group is dependent upon your attention to the procedures.

Any participant who has a history that makes anaphylaxis a concern should bring **two** Epi-pens with her. This, and any other medications (including permission to give over the counter medications) need to be listed on the Health History Form.

Possible Risks include (but are not limited to) motor vehicle accidents; severe weather conditions such as rain, hail, lightening, heat or cold and high winds; forest fires; medical conditions such as heart attack, appendicitis, hypothermia, severe allergies and asthma or diabetes or related conditions, communicable diseases including potential exposure to COVID 19, insect borne diseases such as West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease; accidents such as cuts, burns or falls; risk associated with being on large, cold lakes; and encounters with wildlife.

- ***Insurance***

Girl Scout Membership provides a basic accident and sickness insurance for any Girl Scout events lasting two nights or less. The Northern Lakes Canoe Base program fees include a secondary Girl Scout accident and sickness insurance coverage for events lasting more than 2 nights, through Mutual of Omaha (Plan 3E). This policy is secondary to a family policy.

- ***A special note for adult participants***

We are so excited you are joining us for a trip! In addition to the gear outlined on the packing list, we encourage you to bring a **lightweight sleeping pad and maybe an inflatable camping pillow** to make your night on the rocky ground a little more comfortable. We also provide **coffee** each morning on base and in the woods. Know that our guides are fully trained and experienced at guiding Girl Scout canoe trips, but they will warmly welcome the knowledge and experience you bring with you.

- ***Questions or Concerns***

Call 218-726-4710 year-round or 218-365-6517 to reach the canoe base directly during the summer season (June 15-Aug 15). If the canoe base line is not answered, it means the director is off site and you will be directed leave a message or call her cell phone. Feel free to call either number any time during the summer.

Alternatively, you can also email:

Girl Scouts Lakes & Pines: customercare@girlscoutslp.org

Director of Program, Property & Member Support: Mgarza@girlscoutslp.org

Canoe Base Director: Amcnally@girlscoutslp.org

ATTENTION PARENTS AND PARTICIPANTS

The following NLCB procedures are important for the parents and participants of the BWCAW trips to know and understand. Thank you for your cooperation!

SAFETY Safety is incorporated into everything we do. **THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO SAFETY IN WILDERNESS TRAVEL!** We expect total cooperation with all safety rules to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip for all. Safety rules are explained in pre-trip training at Ely.

ALCOHOL, SMOKING, AND DRUGS We abide by all state and federal laws concerning drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Any girl possessing alcohol, or a controlled substance will be sent home at the soonest possible time, with the parents paying for the transportation. No refund will be made. No smoking is allowed during the event and the Canoe Base is a non-smoking property.

PFDs (Lifejackets) To comply with GSUSA *Safety Activity Checkpoint* guidelines: before using any small craft, all participants must have a swimming review and a "tip test." Swim reviews are done to indicate to the guide a girl's swimming ability. PFD's will still be worn during the trip by all participants.

MEDIA RELEASE This is a general media release. Your signature on the form grants GSUSA/GSMWLP BWCA Trip Program permission to use photographs of you/your child in its printed materials, news releases, and/or audio-visual presentations without receipt of any remuneration. Such photographs will be used exclusively by GSUSA/GSMWLP in its educational, fundraising and public relations efforts as a non-profit, private organization.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES In the event that emergency care is needed, you and/or your daughter/ward will be transported to the nearest hospital and treated. You, the parent/guardian or emergency contact, would be contacted at this time. An alternative contact person must also be listed in case the parent/guardian cannot be reached. This must be a blood relative, if possible.

As a parent/guardian, you must not send your daughter/ward on this trip if she, 1) is not feeling well, 2) has a pre-existing medical condition that would limit her participation (call with questions or concerns), **or** 3) would expose other participants to a transmittable medical condition.

It can be very difficult to reach crews on a canoe trip in a wilderness area. Crews may be away from a point of contact for up to ten days at a time. If there is a family emergency, the canoe base will take reasonable action to locate the participant and crew.

Mutual of Omaha, Girl Scout insurance is **supplemental and secondary** insurance. Billing goes first to the participant's parent/guardians' insurance

company, then to Mutual of Omaha. Mutual of Omaha, Girl Scout Insurance is not replacement for a participant's personal medical insurance.

A parent/guardian is liable for all medical fees if girl is taken to the clinic/hospital for any pre-existing illness or medical condition. If a participant must be airlifted out of the BWCAW, due to a pre-existing illness or medical condition, the parents/guardians, or their insurance, are responsible for payment. Please know that in the event of an air evacuation, the parents/guardians will need to provide a credit card number to ensure payment for the flight or ensure that Girl Scouts of Minnesota and Wisconsin Lakes and Pines will be reimbursed in full. Please keep in mind that air evacuation is the only option for removal from the wilderness!



A Short History of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) is in Northern Minnesota's Superior National Forest, which is part of our nation's Wilderness Preservation System. This park of lakes, streams, and rocky forest is over one million acres in size and extends nearly 150 miles along the United States border adjacent to Canada's Quetico Provincial Park. This region has been described as the world's greatest canoe country.

Why? For one thing, canoes have furrowed the lake waters and feet have plodded the portage trails between lakes for 1,000 years. Before the appearance of European people 300 years ago, the Lakota (Sioux) and Anishinaabe (Chippewa) people traveled proudly over the portages and paddled their graceful birch bark canoes on the sparkling clear waters in these North Woods. They followed the seasons and harvested the riches of the wilderness: wild rice, fish, blueberries, medicinal herbs, skins, and wild game. They took only what they needed and left just their footprints behind.



The first white people to arrive were the French *voyageurs*, who for a hundred years traveled the same lakes and portage trails the natives had traveled for centuries. They were a hardy breed of men, short of stature but strong of build. They came to gather furs. In the spring of the year, they left Montreal in huge bark freight canoes loaded with trade goods: axes, blankets, traps, tobacco, beads, and rum. By midsummer they had to travel 1,000 miles to the end of Lake Superior where they exchanged these goods for furs brought from the interior by other voyageurs. The natives trapped, and the voyageurs traded and carried the furs out of the wilderness. With eight to twelve voyageurs per canoe and over a ton of furs, they paddled seventy strokes a minute, fifty minutes an hour, fifteen hours a day! They raced against the winter and dodged death in the rapids.

Their clothing was bright and gaudy and included a wide woven sash wound about the waist. This carried their precious pipe and tobacco and helped to prevent hernias which resulted from the great weight they carried over rough portages. So important was the fur trade to the early history of the U.S. and Canada, that the border was established to share the most easily traveled canoe routes. This same border divides the two countries today.

The next people to utilize the North Woods were loggers in search of pine and spruce for the building of Minneapolis, Saint Louis, and Chicago. Their axes rang through the woods for a hundred years until they were forced west to find new uncut forests.



By the beginning of the 20th century, a new idea about the value of wilderness took shape: this land should be preserved for its own sake before it is too late. The wilderness was part of the American heritage--conservation was born. In 1909 President Roosevelt established the Superior National Forest so there would be wood and recreational areas for future generations. Part of this forest was isolated in 1958 for strictly recreational use. No roads were allowed and only emergency aircraft were allowed in this "backcountry area." It was named the Boundary Waters Canoe Area.

Today, modern *voyageurs* like the Girl Scouts visit this area to canoe, portage, and camp in the spirit of the French voyageurs of 200 years ago. They scuff the stones of the same portages and skim swiftly along the same lakes to harvest the riches of the land: peace, quiet, and solitude. And, somewhat like those of the past, visitors take photos and memories, leaving only footprints behind.