



TRAIL MARKERS

2024 PHILMONT TREK TIPS

SHIP 1610

NEWS

First Shakedown and Trip

At the regular meeting on Sunday November 5, bring your backpack for an equipment check. We will look at all your stuff including your pack, rain gear, mid layer and base layer insulation, hiking shoes and socks, sleeping bag and pad, and water storage.

Our first backpacking trip is to St. Mary's Wilderness on November 18-19. This is a fun trip, not just a Philmont prep hike. This trip takes the Mine Bank Creek Trail to campsites along Saint Mary's River. Once camp is setup, we'll take a side hike to the falls. The hike to the falls crosses the river several times, so bring your water shoes.

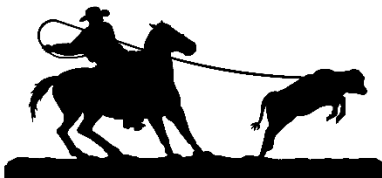
Ute Park Camps Reopening

There are several changes happening in the backcountry for the 2024 season. As the Ute Park burn area recovers, parts of the Ranch affected by fire will be returning to use. Harlan camp will be reopened with shotgun shooting and reloading programs that had temporarily shifted to Santa Claus. Santa Claus itself will revert to being a trail camp. There will be other trail camps opened in the Ute Park Burn Area, specifically in the Deer Lake Mesa, Vaca, and Dean Cow areas. In the Valle Vidal, Ring Place will open again with new program ideas being explored along with the Astronomy program. Carson Meadows and Hunting Lodge will also be rested as a staff camp in 2024 but will be used as trail camps.

Read the newsletter: <https://www.philmontscoutranch.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Newsletter-September-2023-Rev.pdf>

PROGRAM

Western Life



Philmont is an operating western cattle ranch. Cowboys still watch over cattle on horseback and drive them from their winter pasture on the plains to high mountain meadows for summer grazing. While you hike the trails, look for the white-face Hereford cattle. Though not wild, they are best observed from a distance. A cow with a calf may become dangerous if she feels her calf is threatened. To chase or attempt to rope these animals is foolish and can result in serious injury. Watch and photograph them if you wish.

An organized western lore program is offered at Beaubien, Ponil and Clarks Fork. Horse



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riding, campfires, and branding are all part of the western lore program. Philmont cowboys will tell you about New Mexico's cattle industry. Using authentic western lariats, they will show you how to rope. The cowboy's garb and equipment will be named and their uses explained. After a hearty chuck wagon dinner which you help prepare, you'll gather around a campfire under the western sky for an evening of songs, guitar playing, and stories of the Old West at Beaubien or Clarks Fork. Ponil campers may gather at the cantina.

At Crooked Creek, Rich Cabins and Abreu your crew will visit a working homestead. The staff will help you learn early day skills such as railsplitting, shingle making, primitive farming, log structure construction and care of farmyard animals. In keeping with the southwestern spirit of the program, you will be instructed in preparing a special Mexican meal at Abreu. Abreu and Ponil offer the opportunity for a thirst-quenching root beer in a Mexican or Western-style cantina. You can buy root beer for your whole crew or a cup for yourself.

PHYSICAL READINESS

How's Your Workout Plan Going?

Each participant should have already started their training program. At this point, everyone should be doing at least a half hour of weight bearing exercise each day. If you have weight to loose, your goal should be a point each week, or 5 pounds per month.

THE PHILMONT WAY

Bear Bags

Philmont requires crews to use two nylon bear ropes measuring 100' in length and 3/8" in diameter to hang all smellables (A smellable is anything that might attract a bear.). Bear ropes and bear bags are available for crews to check out from Outfitting Services in Base Camp free of charge. Crews are allowed to bring their own bear ropes and bags but the ropes must be the same dimensions as Philmont's (100' x 3/8") and the bags must be able to be tied or clipped to the rope. Pulley systems are not allowed for use at Philmont due to their tendency to get jammed, their weight, and their lack of having two tie-off points. Two tie-off points are required so that if a bear cuts one line, the bags will still be suspended by the second line.

Every day, two scouts are assigned bear bag duty. They are responsible for dividing bear bags from oops bags. Typically, all food other than the night's dinner will go in the bear bags along with anything else that will not be needed until morning. The oops bag typically has the night's dinner, the cleaning supply bag, personal smellables, the first aid kit, and



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smellable water bottles (a water bottle that has ever had anything other than water in it)..

To hang the bags,

- Always check that there are at least two tie-off points behind you before throwing the rope.
- Never attach a rock, carabiner, water bottle, or anything of weight to the rope prior to throwing over. The reasons for this are: 1) the weight could wrap around the cable and the rope will get stuck; 2) the weight could swing back around and hit someone; and 3) the carabiner could clip onto the cable.
- The rope should have a loop exactly in the middle. Fold the rope back so that you are throwing a 50 ft. double-line. Throw the end with the loop and make sure to hold the tail ends.
- Once the bear rope is over the cable, attach a weight-bearing carabiner to the loop you threw over the cable.
- Tie the bear bags to alternating sides of the loop by using lark's head knots.
- Pull the second bear rope (now referred to as the "oops" line) halfway through the carabiner.
- When all the bear bags are tied to the rope, have 6-8 Scouts pull on the free end of the rope to raise the bags. It is important that no one stands underneath the bear bags at any time in case they fall.
- When the tops of the bags are approximately 4" lower than the line, separate the two ropes and tie off to two separate trees. Use sticks between the bark of the tree and the rope to prevent girdling (permanent damage that kills the tree). Wrap the rope around the sticks and trunk of the tree at least three times and tuck the excess rope into the wrapped rope. The reasoning for tying off to separate trees is because if a bear knocks down or cuts one of the lines, there is still a second rope suspending the bags as a backup.
- If you will not be cooking dinner within the next 30 minutes, hang the "oops" bag.
- Tie-off the "oops" bag near the center loop of the "oops" line by using a lark's head knot. Pull the "oops" line to raise the "oops" bag to the bear bags and tie the two ends of the "oops" line to two unused trees. (If there are no unused trees, you may tie the "oops" line to the same trees the bear line is tied to. Make sure to leave at least a foot of separation between the "oops" and bear lines.) Wrap the rope around the sticks and trunk of the trees just like with the bear rope and tuck the excess



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rope away.

- The bear bags should be more than a person's wingspan away from the closest tree (at least 6 ft.) and high enough that the tallest person in the crew cannot touch them while jumping (about 10 ft.). These spacing requirements are intact so that a bear cannot climb the tree or stand on their hind legs and reach the bags.

LEADERSHIP

Leave No Trace



The Leave No Trace principle, or LNT, is a set of rules and guidelines implemented at Philmont in order to maintain the natural aspect of the ranch. The most commonly referenced part of LNT is "Take nothing but pictures, leave nothing but footprints". This is to stress not to leave any sign to later campers that you have been at the area, such as graffiti or litter, as well as not to take anything from the area, such as archaeological artifacts or natural things such as plants or rocks. LNT is greatly stressed at Philmont, though not so much in some areas where it is impractical to completely follow, such as fire rings and horseriding based camps. One easily identifiable aspect of LNT is the implementation of sumps in the backcountry, which are used so as to prevent rampant littering of cooking and cleaning waste. Also used are bear bag lines, which are a better alternative to bear boxes, as they do not mar the landscape as much.

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:

Outdoor Ethics Awareness Award

Recite from memory and explain the meaning of the [Outdoor Code](#).

Watch the National Park Service Leave No Trace [video](#).

Complete the Leave No Trace 101 online [course](#). Print the certificate.

Complete the Tread Lightly! online [course](#). Print the certificate.

Participate in an outdoor ethics course, workshop, or training activity facilitated by a person who has completed the BSA outdoor ethics orientation course or is a BSA outdoor ethics trainer or master.



Is Anybody Not Ready - Hike On!

www.ship1610.org/philmont