



TRAIL MARKERS

2024 PHILMONT TREK TIPS

SHIP 1610

NEWS

In the April 20 Preparedness Seminar video, the camping director announced that Philmont WILL NOT require Covid testing to participate at this time but encourage you and your crew and all participants to test prior to departure for the ranch.

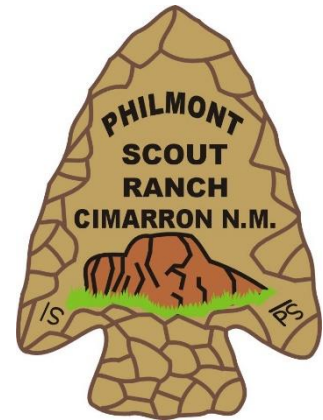
However, if someone develops COVID-19 symptoms while at Philmont, the Philmont staff will perform testing and medical evaluation of the participant. If the participant is found to be positive for COVID-19, the patient will be removed from the trail and isolated by the Philmont medical staff. Philmont will make every effort to have the remaining crew members continue their experience in the safest way possible following CDC guidelines. In some instances, itinerary modifications may be required.

PROGRAM

Arrowhead Award

Crews on Philmont treks (or Cavalcades) may earn a Philmont Arrowhead patch that is worn on the right pocket of the Scout uniform. The requirements for earning this patch are:

1. Attend the opening campfire - "The Philmont Story"
2. Complete a Philmont-approved itinerary (there are some exceptions for medical reasons) with your crew.
3. Complete a 3-hour conservation project at one of several designated sites on Philmont or neighboring properties (with the help of Conservation Department staff) and take advantage of every opportunity to learn about and protect our landscape while practicing the art of backcountry living and travel that minimizes impact to soil, water, plant life, and wildlife.
4. Fulfill the personal commitment to the Philmont Wilderness Pledge.
5. LIVE THE SCOUT OATH AND LAW!





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Fifty-Miler Award



The 50-Miler Award, given by the National Council, BSA, may be earned by members of unit or council contingent groups. Requirements for this award include hiking at least 50 miles and performing a 10-hour conservation project (3 hours or more will be earned at Philmont). All 12-Day Philmont itineraries meet the 50-Miler distance requirement.

The Ship has scheduled two conservation projects to complete the additional 7 hours of service: June 1, 2024 Clean the Bay Day at Fort Monroe (3 hrs) and June 9, 2024 Grandview Beach cleanup (4 hrs).

PHYSICAL READINESS

The Four Keys to Having a Great Time at Philmont:

- Be in Great Shape (THE Most Important!)
- Keep Your Personal Weight Down
- Keep Your Pack Weight Down
- Be Properly Trained

Philmont is TOUGH!

- Altitude - 6,500 to 12,441 Feet
- Rugged, Mountainous Terrain (Sangre de Cristos = the Southern Rockies!)
- Desert Southwest - Can be VERY Dry and Dehydrating
- Trekkers will be BACKPACKING Between 50 and 100 miles over 10 Days, with Packs Weighing Between 35 and 65 lbs

You Are In Denial If You Can't:

- Jog 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles in less than 30 Minutes
- Climb a 10-story building staircase 10 consecutive times, two steps at a time
- Carry a loaded backpack (25% of your weight minimum) for 10 miles on roads or bike paths, in less than 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours

... AND BE ABLE TO DO IT AGAIN TOMORROW & THEN THE NEXT NINE DAYS!

YOU CAN BE READY IN 400 DAYS!



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THE PHILMONT WAY

Equipment

Carefully check the personal and crew equipment lists in the April *Trail Markers*. These are the result of over 70 years of Philmont backcountry planning. They work! Although, there are always possibilities for minor variations, you will be well advised to follow these equipment lists religiously.

An equipment shakedown is a detailed inspection of personal and crew equipment. You will have an equipment shakedown at the Scout Farm campout in January and prior to every Training Backpacking Trip, as well as a shakedown by your Ranger during your Philmont check in.

Each crew member will be assigned specific items of the crew gear to carry in their pack and be responsible for throughout the entire trek. This is one way to reduce loss - the person carrying the bear ropes knows that they were not left on the ground at the bear cable. It also eliminates frustration of not knowing "who has what" when a need comes up while hiking, for example, "Who has the toilet paper?" Don't forget to weigh all crew items so the load can be fairly shared. Your pack weight should not exceed 25 to 30% of your body weight. At Philmont, your Ranger will help you distribute the load so that the "big guys" and "not so big guys" carry appropriate loads.

Philmont Tents

Philmont issues excellent tents (MSR Thunder Ridge), designed specifically for the conditions at Philmont. They are rugged, stable in high winds, scout friendly, provide plenty of room for two adults, and meet the current state of the art weight target of approximately 3 pounds per person. If you have a problem with a Philmont tent, a replacement will be readily available; which is not possible for personal tents. Using Philmont tents is highly recommended; but in the end whether to use the Philmont-supplied tents or to bring your own is a crew decision.

Fantastic Tent Tip: If you use Philmont tents you must supply, and use, a ground cloth. Camping store versions can be \$10 to \$15, and are heavy. Save your crew some money and a lot of weight - use a very lightweight plastic party tablecloth, cut to size 88" x 54". The cost is a dollar or two at any party shop or supermarket. We have to bring our own tent stakes too, but aluminum gutter nails work well.



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LEADERSHIP

Setting Up Campsites

When the crew arrives at the campsite, they need to perform several tasks to make the campsite safe before running off to their program. The general rule of thumb is to take care of crew gear before personal gear. The crew should practice these actions; expertly finishing quickly means more time for fun. The order of campsite setup is as follows:

1. When arriving at a staffed camp, the Crew Leader checks in the crew and gets the campsite assignment. When at trail camps, the crew leader should make the decision which campsite the crew will take.
2. Identify the Bear-muda Triangle: Fire ring, Sump, and Bear cables. Smellables always stay inside the Bear-muda Triangle
3. Create 3 piles of gear around the fire ring.
 - Food - each person should have a food bag they carry the entire trip
 - Crew Gear - dining fly, stoves, pots, bear ropes, bear bags, toilet paper, etc.
 - Personal Smellables - toiletries, medications, etc.
4. Decide what will go in the bear bags and what will go in the "oops" bag.
 - 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 smellable water bottles (a water bottle that has ever had anything other than water in it).
5. Hang Bear Bags
6. Setup dining fly within Bear-muda triangle near the fire ring. Put all crew gear, except smellables, under tarp. Packs do not go under tarp, but should be stacked in a pack line with pack covers on.
7. Now the crew should be able to go do their program.
8. When the crew returns from their program the tents can be erected and sleeping gear setup. The only items allowed inside a tent are a sleeping bag, sleeping pad, sleep clothes, flashlight, book, eyeglasses (no contacts), rain jacket, fleece, boots, socks, camp shoes, and emergency medication such as EpiPens®, inhalers, and diabetic medication. (All emergency medication should be wrapped in a sock and placed inside the right boot.)



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9. Now do all your chores: purify water and fill all water containers, gather firewood if campfire is permitted, setup cooking area inside the Bear-muda triangle, start heating water, retrieve items needed from bear bags (like dinner, personal items, etc.) and rehoist unneeded items.