

High Adventure Trek General Planning Guide

You desire to plan a high adventure trek's for Troop 295 and do not know what to do?

High adventure experiences involve risk and that means that you can get hurt or killed so proper training and planning is paramount. Planning is the key to reducing risk and having a safe and enjoyable outing.



Before planning any high adventure training it is required that you take Boy Scout High Adventure Training or **HAT Basic Backpacking Awareness Course** which covers this material in more detail. Contact the Orange County Council High Adventure Team for training schedules at www.ocbsa.org. You can also contact other councils throughout Southern California for their training schedule.

Planning

To plan a successful High Adventure outing you must first decide what type of outing that the scouts want to do. There are many publications, both Scout and non-Scout to help you plan a wilderness expedition. Many are available at your local Scout Shop, from other Councils, from bookstores, and by mail.

After you have presented to the scouts the event, where they will be going and what they will be doing the next step is to insure that they obtain the appropriate training necessary.

Early in the scout year or even a year or two in advance the unit leader needs to meet with the youth leaders to start planning high adventure outings for the summer. The planning should assess the unit's strengths, resources, and capabilities. Adult and youth leadership experience must be evaluated.

The activity should present a challenge. It should be enjoyable in that it is within the ability of the group to mentally and physically achieve. It should promise the youth participants both fun and adventure.

Check on the available adult and youth leadership that is committed to go on this outing. Check on their experience level and qualification against the troops requirements.

What budget do you have? Items to be considered are: 1) Cost of food, 2) Cost of transportation, 3) Cost of any specialized equipment, and 4) Method of payment (i.e. unit fund raising, participants).

At least one adult member that is going on the high adventure experience should have a current Basic Backpacking Awareness Certification number, sometimes called a HAT number. This number is placed on the Tour Permit.

Get the Forms and Exams Done

Submit a Tour Permit to the council office at least two weeks before you go on the outing. (Local Tour Permit #4426 for trips under 500 miles or National Tour Permit #4419 for trips over 500 miles). The tour permit helps you to plan your outing. It asks if you will be doing swimming/boating. If your answer is yes then one of your adults must be trained in the "Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat" programs and also be CPR and basic first aid certified. It also asks if you have read and have in your possession the "Guide to Safe Scouting." The back of the permit asks about drivers and safety concerns of vehicles. As regards to drivers it also asks about appropriate insurance coverage. For Local Tour Permits, the state requirements are 50/100/50 (Thousands) which breaks down to (50 Each Person/100 Each Accident/50 Property Damage). The Scout National Tour Permit requires 100/500/100 (Thousands) for vehicles with 10 or more passengers.

Make sure all scouts and scouters have had current medical exams and that they have filled out the appropriate forms.

Have, in your possession, "consent to treat minor" forms on all youth (refer to current HAT reference Manual under the section called planning). Make sure that you read these forms. Be familiar with the medical history of all the people going on the outing.

Some people should not be allowed to go to high altitudes. People with angina, with myocardial ischemia, congestive heart problems, hypertension, recurrent cardiac arrhythmias, severe obesity and alveolar hyperventilation, poorly controlled endocrine disorders, Anemia, and sickle cell trait are at risk and should not go to high altitudes.

Certain medications such as sedatives, tranquilizers, alcohol, stimulants, caffeine drinks, and contraceptive tablets (check with physician) should be avoided prior to ascending to high altitudes.

All high adventure outings require vigorous physical activity. Physical conditioning for all youth and adults is a must and can be accomplished by an exercise program, training outings and qualifying outings.

Plan the Trek

Is the trek feasible? A list of elements to be considered:

- Distance and Profile (elevation gains)
- Water sources
- Camp sites
- Expected condition of trail as it may affect the trek
- River and stream crossings
- Snow pack effect on trail this particular year, and
- Difficulty of trail.

Are there special programs or awards associated with this event? A list of elements to consider are:

- Campfires if allowed
- Instructions and Merit Badge study
- Trek and Backpacking Awards
- Peak Badge (award)
- Chapel

Can or would your group do a service project? If yes then look into the following:

- How many man-hours
- What type of project (i.e. reforestation, erosion control, building trails)
- Workout details of project ahead of time with responsible ranger [get all details in writing (i.e. When, Where and What, tools, and who is responsible/in charge of work)], and
- If doing the "50-Miler" award, a service project is required.

Plan for Emergencies by:

- Taking Risk Management training (e.g. First Aid, CPR, HAT and similar courses, and do contingency planning-the what ifs)

- Have trek kits that have:
 - Emergency phone contacts for unit and authorities- have quarters
 - List of trek members' names and phone numbers with both trek leaders and home contact
 - Consent to minors forms
 - Accident Report Forms (two copies), and
 - Insurance and appropriate medical information.

Make sure that you have the appropriate permits (fire and wilderness permit) and campsite reservations well in advance. In general, applications are accepted as of March 1 (postmark date). You can make reservations at state parks by calling 1-800-444-PARK or go online at <www.reserveamerica.com>.

For National Forests, Primitive and Wilderness Areas you can get a copy of the Wilderness Permit request form from any Forest Service ranger station or office.

Get Maps

Have appropriate map(s) of the area that you are visiting. Make copies for all members that are going on the outing. All **USGS** maps can be ordered online at <www.usgs.gov> or <www.mapping.usgs.gov> or by mail at USGS, Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225. You can phone 800-872-6277.

Most **Forest Service** maps are available for purchase online at <www.r5.fs.fed.us> or by mail at US Forest Service, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250, By phone they can be reached at 202-205-1760.

For information on **National Park Service** maps, write to the National Park Service, NPS Room 1013, Washington, DC 20240. They can also be reached online at <www.nps.gov> or by phone at 202-208-4747.

The **Bureau of Land Management** (BLM) also produces maps and you can obtain information by writing to Office of Public Affairs, 1849 C street Room 406-LS, Washington, DC 20240 or phone at 202-452-5125.

Commercial maps are available from the following sources:

Trails Illustrated, P. O. Box 4357, Evergreen, CO 80437. 800-962-1643 by phone or www.wildfur.com/trails/trail-head.html

Topozone -- This website has all USGS topos available for view and download. www.topozone.com

Get Equipped

Agree on what individual and group equipment will be required for the outing. Also decide how group equipment will be distributed.

Explore the grocery stores for foods that can be used for high adventure outings. Beware of "Low Calorie." When planning menus look at quantities, costs, breakdown, packaging, and how food will be distributed. Be sure to check if anyone has any special food requirements.

Plan for emergencies by having First Aid, HAT and similar courses taken ahead of time. Have a contingency plan if something goes wrong (plan B or C). Have emergency phone contacts for all members of outing and authorities in the area where you are going (Have a supply of quarters).

Have two copies of accident report form in case they are needed. Always have insurance and appropriate medical information at the ready.

High Adventure Backpacking Check List

- € Parents notified of hiking route.
- € Adequate transportation to and from hiking area.
- € All drivers meet minimum safe limits as shown on BSA Local Tour Permit.
- € All cars have minimum California insurance coverage as shown on BSA Local Tour Permit
- € Adequate menu for hike providing balanced diet for everyone
- € Everyone shall meet the unit's group/personal equipment list requirements
- € Tour permits requested and received.
- € U.S. Forestry fire permits obtained if required.
- € Northern California fire permit issued on a year-to-year basis if no dangerous fire conditions exist.
- € Leader knows location of closest Ranger Station, its phone, and where closest Hospital or emergency center is located
- € Leader knows who to contact for help: (a) Sheriff's dept. (b) Highway Patrol (c) Mountain Rescue (d) Others
- € Itinerary written out so one can be given to: someone at: (a) Unit level at home (b) Ranger (c) Filed with awards application if required.
- € Any and all special permits requested for and obtained prior to taking the trek (i.e., Wilderness, National Park, etc.)
- € Adequate group First Aid Kit for trek.

- € Have plans for advancement on hike been established and included in the hike plan.
- € Type of hike: rain, snow, sunny desert, mountain, beach etc. Are you prepared for these?
- € What troop/group equipment do we need for this hike.
- € What patrol/crew equipment do we need for this hike.
- € Are we within the maximum group size for the area the hike is in?
- € Do we have two 21 year or older adults minimum for the group (recommended one adult for each 10 youths minimum 2 adults per group
- € Roster with name, address, phone number of each member going on trek and who to notify in case of an emergency.
- € Does each youth have an Emergency Medical Release form signed by his parents or guardian — one on his person and one in his personal First Aid Kit in pack?
- € Does unit have Emergency Medical Release forms for each youth in the unit/group in the unit/group First Aid Kit?
- € Leader or some other adult has a standard and current First Aid and CPR Card.
- € Have two means to purify water (i.e. Pump and chemical). Have a back up if one fails.
- € Leader or other adult completed a BSA approved Basic Backpack Awareness course.
- € Any special equipment needed for this trek (i.e. snow shoes, climbing rope, ice axe, etc.)?
- € No one on the trek is carrying or has firearms or alcoholic beverages in his or her possession.
- € All pets left at home.
- € Everyone is familiar and checked out on the usage of the unit/group backpacking equipment (stove, cell phone, GPS etc.)
- € All members of trek are current registered members of Scouting programs in BSA.
- € All members of the trek have durable individual identification on them.
- € All members of the trek are familiar with the Council's Emergency Notification Plan and Form.
- € All members of the trek have had a medical exam (maximum 4 months prior to the long term trek)
- € All members of trek requiring medication have two supplies of medication (one they carry and one supplied to trek leader).