

**TOPIC = CAMP SITE SELECTION**

**I. RESOURCES**

- a. Guide to safe scouting.
  - who can participate and what can they do.
  - trail safety.
  - safety from lightning.
- b. BSA field book.
- c. Camping merit badge booklet.
- d. Scoutmasters handbook.

**II. REMEMBER THE 5 W'S**

- 1. where are you going.
- 2. when are you coming back.
- 3. who is going.
- 4. why are you going.
- 5. what are you taking with you.

**III. REMEMBER THE OUTDOOR CODE**

## **CHOOSING THE RIGHT SITE**

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

A good campsite offers plenty to do and see, will be easy on the land, allowing you to leave no trace.

- What do you want to see and do.
- What are the safety considerations.
- How much time do you have.
- Right site will bring success.
- Get permission on private property and permits on state or federal property.
- Always plan and consider the site in advance.

### **GENERAL LOCATION**

- ◆ Best to use existing sites and locations.
- ◆ Open areas East & South facing will get more sunlight and generally drier
- ◆ Beware of shade from mountains, cliffs, and big trees.
- ◆ Cold, damp air tends to settle so valleys tend to be cool and wetter than higher locations or on a hill.
- ◆ Look at the weather, higher locations can be windier and more risk of lightning strikes.

### **SIZE AND SHAPE**

- need enough room for all tents and activities.
- meal prep and cooking area for all patrols.
- should be usable as is.

## PROTECTION

- Consider direction of wind and any pending storms.
- Is there any large solitary trees in site that may attract lightning.
- Mountain tops and high ridges are lightning attractions.
- Beware of dead trees and limbs.
- Avoid avalanche chutes or large water run-offs or mudslide areas.

## ACCESS TO WATER (several gallons per day / per scout)

- Must have water source for drinking, cooking & clean-up.
- Must purify all water before utilizing.
- Winter can melt snow, other times want to be within easy walking distance of lake, stream, or river.
- Tents should be at least 200 Ft. from water and out of run-off paths. This will prevent pollution of the water supply when you cook and wash..

## INSECTS AND ANIMALS

- Stay away from marshes, bogs, or stagnant water to avoid mosquitoes and biting flies.
- Higher open campsites general will provide a breeze and avoid some insects.
- Check area for beehives, hornets nest, and ant hills.
- Be aware of feed areas for animals and their dens.
- Use "bear bags" for food, and NO FOOD in tent.

## GROUND COVER

- Avoid trampling or killing vegetation whenever possible.
- Tent on naturally bare earth, gravelly soil, sand or pine needles.
- Leaves, pine needles and other natural ground covers prevent muddy soil in rain or snow.
- Camp at the edge of grassy field, avoid trampling the grass, and will have shade and protection from wind if in the trees around the field.

## DRAINAGE

- Want a site that is relatively flat, but has a slight slope to allow rain water to run off.
- Avoid areas of natural drainage and run offs.
- Check above the site to make sure your not in a dry river bed.

## PRIVACY

- Pleasure of camping is being away from the crowds.
- Be out of sight and sound of any trails and other campers.

## **MAKING CAMP**

Once you pick your site, you are now ready to make camp and establish locations for cooking, sleeping, storing the gear, and disposing of waste.

### **DINING FLY / COOKING**

- First thing to set up.
- Serves as kitchen and determines set up of camp.
- Can use a tarp or dining fly to sleep under in good weather.
- Provides shelter for all gear while setting up.
- Face the fly away from the wind.
- If in area with bears should be located 30 or 40 yards down wind from tents.  
(do all cooking and eating in this area)
- Utilize existing fire rings if building ground fires.
- If no fire ring or wood available utilize lightweight backpack stoves.

## TENTS / SLEEPING

- NO flames, matches, candles, propane lanterns in tents
- Check area for sticks and stones to avoid poking holes in bottom of tent
- Spread out ground cloth (not bigger than tent floor)
- Usually pitch tent with back towards the wind
- May consider different direction depending on scenery
- Don't make tent drum tight as rain will cause some shrinkage
- Foam pad, newspapers, blanket etc to make comfortable
- Air mattress ok in summer, cold in winter, no insulation
- Air out bedding / sleeping bag every day
- Consider a hammock as an option

## FOOD STORAGE

- Between meals and overnight store all food in a bag hung from tree
- Protects from squirrels, mice, raccoons, dogs etc
- All "Smellables" out of tents
- Use the two bag technique or single bag tied up high

## SANITATION

- Short stays and small groups can utilize a “cat hole”, bury waste and toilet paper
- Works because top layer of soil has microorganisms that decompose
- Be at least 200 feet from campsite, trail, or water source
- Heel of boot and trowel, dig 6 inches deep then cover over
- Larger groups have to dig a trench latrine
- Must be at least 6 inches wide, 6 inches deep and several feet long, if need larger remember only the top 6 inches or so have the microorganisms, so dig longer than several feet.
- Dig a small wash hole for waste water and clean up / no food scraps
- Use biodegradable soap.
- Leave nothing but human waste – animals will dig up garbage – other man made materials take too long to decompose.

HOW LONG DOES WASTE LAST???  
(source BSA Field Book)

- ⇒. Aluminum cans and tabs ---- 80 - 100 years
- ⇒. Vibram soles ---- 50 – 80 years
- ⇒. Leather ---- up to 50 years
- ⇒. Nylon Fabric ---- 30 – 40 years
- ⇒. Plastic film ---- 20 – 30 years
- ⇒. Plastic Bags ---- 10 – 20 years
- ⇒. Wool Socks ---- 1 – 5 years
- ⇒. Orange peel ---- 2 weeks to 5 months

**THE OUTDOOR CODE**

AS AN AMERICAN, I WILL DO MY BEST TO -----

**BE CLEAN** in my outdoor manners,

**BE CAREFUL** with fire,

**BE CONSIDERATE** in the outdoors,

And

**BE CONSERVATION - MINDED**