

Trek Manual 2024

NORTHERN LIGHT



HIGH ADVENTURE



Crew Requirements

All Participants belong to a Crew consisting of at least 2 adult leaders, a Senior Patrol Leader, and youth participants. Northern Lights High Adventure Guides accompany all Crews.

Crew Sizes can vary from group to group depending on the trek.

Youth Requirements

All youth must be 14 years of age or 13 years of age and approved by the Base Director.

Adult Requirements

A minimum of 2 adult leaders are asked to accompany each Crew.

Each Crew must present proof that at least 1 adult leader is currently certified in the following:

- CPR
- Wilderness First Aid
- BSA Weather Hazards
- Certification
- BSA Safety Afloat
- BSA Safe Swim Defense

ALL adults must have proof of current Youth Protection Training.

Requirements for Everyone

All participants must pass the BSA Swim Check given upon arrival at NLHA Base.

All participants must submit a complete and current (within 1 year) BSA Medical Form (Parts A, B, and C) and allergy form, and meet all age, weight, and health requirements. All participants must be at least 100 pounds and not exceed 295 pounds.

It's mandatory for Crews to train physically together in anticipation for their Alaskan adventure, including overnight hikes, canoe floats, and gear shakedowns 3 months before departure. Please refer to the trek manager's recommendations for more details on physical preparation for your specific trek.

Anyone with specific hypertension (150/90 or higher) should be treated before coming to NLHA to reduce their blood pressure and bring it as close as possible to normal (135/90). They should continue blood pressure medication as per their doctor's orders while participating in the trek. Hypertension can increase the risk of angina or stroke. Participants will be carrying heavy loads over steep and rocky trails and will experience strenuous activity in remote areas.

On a canoe trip, Crews may be paddling 10 miles a day or more in windy conditions and may carry as much as 85 pounds across a portage. On a backpacking trip, Crews may be hiking 8-14 miles a day in alpine environments with packs that may weigh as much as 60 pounds.

Consider the effect of altitude and exertion on personal physical fitness, and have a thorough discussion with your or your physician in preparation for your trip to Alaska.

NLHA reserves the right to decline participation or modify the trek as needed if participants do not meet health and safety regulations.

If there are any concerns regarding physical, emotional, or mental health please make NLHA leadership aware as soon as possible so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Required Gear for All Participants

Required Footwear

- ◆ 1 pair of waterproof hiking boots, ankle support required
- ◆ 1 pair of closed-toed water shoes with soles designed for rocky terrain
- ◆ Shower shoes recommended for NLHA Base
- ◆ 3-4 pairs of wool hiking socks; please NO cotton socks

Lower Body

- ◆ 1 pair of long underwear thermals, mid or expedition weight; synthetic or wool only
- ◆ 1-2 pairs of nylon hiking pants

Upper Body

- ◆ 1 long underwear or thermal long sleeve shirt, mid or expedition weight; synthetic or wool only
- ◆ 1 fleece jacket or pullover
- ◆ 1 warm jacket, synthetic filled preferred
- ◆ 1 waterproof rain jacket, Gore-Tex preferred

Required Accessories

- ◆ Sun hat, baseball cap, or bucket hat
- ◆ Knit/winter hat, wool or synthetic
- ◆ Sunglasses
- ◆ Gloves, waterproof preferred
- ◆ Swimsuit

Required Personal Gear

- ◆ 1 sleeping bag rated 20° F or colder
- ◆ 1 sleeping pad
- ◆ 1 waterproof bag for clothing, 20 liters+
- ◆ 1 waterproof bag for sleeping bag
- ◆ 2-3 small stuff sacks (waterproof recommended)
- ◆ 1 mess kit, including bowl, spoon, and fork
- ◆ 2 one-liter water bottles
- ◆ 1 two-liter Camelbak/platypus
- ◆ Toiletries: toothpaste/toothbrush, soap, shampoo, etc.
- ◆ Towel
- ◆ Personal First-Aid kit, including blister care and moleskin

Other Personal Gear

- ◆ Leatherman or pocket knife
- ◆ Sunscreen
- ◆ Wristwatch
- ◆ Insect repellent, mosquito head net
- ◆ 1-2 bandanas
- ◆ Water repellent notebook/pen
- ◆ Lip balm
- ◆ Binoculars
- ◆ Headlamp (August treks only)
- ◆ Compass

- ◆ Trekking poles
- ◆ Book
- ◆ Cash for souvenirs
- ◆ Fishing gear/license (adfg.alaska.gov/)

Required Crew Gear

- ◆ Backpacking tents and ground tarp for each participant, recommend sharing as appropriate (within 2 years)
- ◆ 1 water filter per 5-7 people, or 2 per Crew minimum; recommend MSR or Katadyn hand pump

Gear & Amenities Provided by NLHA

- ◆ Crew First Aid Kit(s), backpacking and car camping stoves, fuel, pots/pans, dining fly, canoes, paddles, life jackets, duct tape, paracord, trowels, toilet paper, bear canisters
- ◆ All meals while on the trail and meals on Base (adhering to all food allergies noted ahead of arrival)
- ◆ Lodging at base the night your Crew arrives and the night before you leave, and transportation during the trek
- ◆ NLHA Trek Guide to accompany you for the duration of your trip
- ◆ Emergency communications device (satellite phone and spot device)
- ◆ Maps and orientation gear
- ◆ Bear spray
- ◆ Special Participant Patch
- ◆ Land use permits, camping fees
- ◆ Campers' Accident Insurance

Travel and Payment

Booking Your Adventure

Each NLHA trek is created exclusively for your Crew. Once an itinerary is approved, specific next steps will be given for all participants and families.

In the event of weather challenges (including forest fires), NLHA will communicate any and all changes to your Crew as quickly as they are available. Treks are not cancelled, but are rerouted to suitable locations that align closely with the original plan.

Traveling to NLHA Base

Most Crews elect to fly into Fairbanks, Alaska for their trek. NLHA recommends shopping around with different airlines to ensure the best rate. Also consider airline insurance or refund/adjustment policies.

NLHA provides transportation for the duration of your trek, and to and from the Fairbanks airport.

Considering a different airport or driving to NLHA? Contact us directly for more details and tips.

Payment Details

After reserving your trip, you have 3 weeks to turn in your 10% deposit to keep your reservation.

Each Crew pays for their trip in 4 installments, all of which are non-refundable and non-transferable.

- The 1st installment is a 10% DEPOSIT PER CREW due within 3 weeks of reservation.
- The 2nd installment is 30% due February 1st.
- The 3rd installment is 30% due April 1st.

The final installment consists of the BALANCE OF PAYMENT. Before making this payment, confirm the number of youth and adult participants on your Final Billing Statement. This payment is due June 1st or 30 days prior to trek start date, whichever comes first.

ALL FEES (Deposit, Payments, and Balance of Payment) ARE NON-REFUNDABLE AND NON-TRANSFERABLE IN EVENT OF CANCELLATION. EXERCISE CAUTION IN MAKING RESERVATIONS OR PAYING FEES FOR ANYONE WHO HAS NOT MADE A FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

NLHA must commit financial resources to employ staff, purchase food and supplies, and prepare for base operations.

Participants are, therefore, also required to make a financial commitment to attend. Be conservative in making reservations to avoid losing fees due to cancellations. Payment via check is preferred; major credit cards are accepted.

Please make checks out to:

Midnight Sun Council BSA

Please send checks to:

Midnight Sun Council

Northern Lights High Adventure Base

1400 Gillam Way

Fairbanks, AK 99701

Safety and Emergency Information

Scouts BSA and NLHA emphasize safety through education and strict adherence to established policies and procedures. The safety of your Crew is dependent upon attention to these procedures, following instruction given by the NLHA Trek Guide, being physically fit, using/wearing the right gear properly, and training for the level of intensity.

Safety Overview and Prevention

The policies and procedures of NLHA and Scouts BSA, if followed, will minimize these risks. Parents, leaders, and participants should be advised that despite our best attempts at risk management, it is not possible to remove ALL risk from a wilderness expedition.

Physical conditioning 3+ months prior to your arrival in Alaska is mandatory for all participants along with a completed physical and doctor's authorization on the BSA medical form. It is encouraged for all participants to speak openly with their physician and discuss all risks and best practices for maintaining wellness from training to completion of your Alaskan adventure.

Risks include (but are not limited to): motor vehicle accidents; severe weather conditions such as hail, lightning, snow, high or low temperatures, and high winds; forest fires; medical conditions such as heart attacks, appendicitis,

hypothermia, severe allergies, and asthma or diabetes related conditions; insect borne diseases such as the West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease; accidents such as cuts, embedded fish hooks, burns, or falls; risks associated with being on large, cold lakes and rivers; and encounters with wildlife. Medical evacuations and rescue services are coordinated by NLHA in close coordination with local authorities.

Youth Protection Policy

Scouts BSA's Youth Protection Policies must be adhered to at all times. No one-on-one activities between youth and adults are allowed. The BSA two-deep leadership policies must be followed. Separate tenting arrangements must be provided for male and female adults as well as for youth. Youth and adults must tent separately. Youth sharing tents must be no more than 2 years apart in age. Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse (including hazing) of a camper by their peers or by an adult leader is unacceptable. Reporting of abuse is the law. The local county, state, or provincial authorities as well the BSA Council representatives will be contacted if abuse is suspected. All adult participants must show proof of current YPT training upon arrival.

Insurance

NLHA fees include accident and sickness insurance coverage. This applies for your travel to and from the NLHA Base and on your trek. This policy is secondary to a family policy. All participants with family insurance should include the insurance company name and policy number on their BSA Health and Medical Record form and should also submit a copy of the insurance card with the BSA medical form.

Emergency Contact

If there is an emergency at home or have any further questions, please contact the Midnight Sun Council office for assistance:

(907) 452-1976

Backcountry Policies

Trek Leaders

NLHA Trek Guides are highly trained to provide your Crew with a fun, educational, and safe adventure. Please look to them for guidance in all matters of safety and preparedness in the backcountry. **Failure to listen to your trek leaders could result in your trek being cancelled with no refund.**

The Outdoor Code and Leave No Trace

As Scouts, The Outdoor Code and the principles of Leave No Trace are foundations in everything that we do. Alaska's pristine wilderness is something to be enjoyed and shared with others for generations to come. Guides will advise you on proper management of food and waste, leaving minimal trail impact, and practicing backcountry etiquette and safety.

Food and Smellables

Bears, and other wildlife, are drawn to the smell of human food. NLHA provides bear canisters for your food and smellables at night. Use of the canisters is mandatory. Remember, scented items (toothpaste, soaps, lip balm, etc.) may also attract animals. Whether on the trail or on base, do not take into any tent or cabin.

Wildlife

Crews will encounter Alaskan wildlife in their journey. While actual sightings cannot be guaranteed, moose, bears, wolves, otter, beavers, marmots, wolverines, eagles, caribous, fish, and more will be in our surroundings.

As visitors in the wilderness, we strive to be responsible and courteous guests. While most wildlife is not towards humans, animals should be quietly observed at a safe distance. Wildlife should never be fed.

Trek Guides will train the Crew on safety regarding the unlikely event of a close animal encounter. Only Guides are permitted to carry bear spray.

Purify All Drinking Water

All water from natural sources, including springs, streams, and lakes must be purified by bringing it to a rolling boil, treated with chemical purifier, or filtered.

Climbing

Rock climbing, rappelling, and tree climbing are not permitted. BSA regulations require advanced training and equipment.

Swimming and Diving

All swimming and water activities must be done in accordance the BSA Safe Swim Defense Policy. In addition, water shoes, a life jacket, and a swimsuit or shorts must always be worn by all swimmers.

Diving is prohibited as per the BSA Safe Swim Defense Policy. All entry into the water must be feet first, and is allowed from rocks or ledges no greater than five feet above the surface of the water if the water is clear and the depth of the water is 10-12 feet deep.

Rock Throwing

Rock throwing is strictly prohibited.

Solo Canoeing

There must always be a minimum of two canoes in the water with two canoeists in each canoe.

Backcountry Policies

Footwear

Bare feet and under-protected feet are a major cause of injuries.

Closed-toed boots or shoes are required in all wilderness trail campsites and while canoeing, swimming, fishing, around the campsite, etc.

Waterproof hiking boots with ankle support are recommended for hikes and closed-toed water shoes are recommended for all river crossings and canoes floats.

Shower shoes are recommended for time in NLHA base

Tobacco

The use of tobacco is never permitted within the line of sight of youth. No smoking is permitted in any NLHA building or vehicle. Each base has a single established tobacco use area.

Alcohol and Drugs

Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or misuse of prescribed drugs is prohibited. Groups or individuals found in violation of this national policy of the Boy Scouts of America will be sent home immediately, as arranged with the council office or parent.

Firearms

Firearms, archery equipment, explosives, and the likes are prohibited on any NLHA trek. Firearms are available for use at Lost Lake Scout Reservation at the shooting range. Please do not bring or transport personal firearms to the base camp.

Fire

BSA Fire safety rules will be strictly enforced, as well as the local fire regulations by the campsite and park.

Forest fires are a natural and common occurrence in the wilderness and are taken into consideration when planning trek schedules. If a fire is spotted it must be reported to the Trek Guide, who will report it to the base director by radio and lead the Crew out of the area immediately.

Warning!!

NLHA provides trained and experienced Trek Leaders to guide your Crew through your adventure in the Alaskan backcountry. If at any time members of your crew fail to listen to your Trek Leader, particularly if clear instructions are disregarded, your trek may be cancelled with no refunds given.

Northern Lights High Adventure

About Us

Northern Lights High Adventure (NLHA) is a program dedicated to the development of young leaders, set within the great Alaskan backcountry. With the pillars of Scouting as the foundation, we offer unparalleled outdoor experiences that will challenge and build the leaders of tomorrow, while promoting teamwork and creating memories that will last a lifetime.

Midnight Sun Council

(907) 452-1976