

October 24, 2017

Dear Parents and Scouts,

Troop 344 is in the process of planning a high adventure trip for the summer of 2018. A decision on a destination needs to be made by the end of October so that the necessary reservations can be made. Any scout who will be 14 by December 31, 2018 is eligible for participation in the trek as long as he achieves the rank of Star prior to departure. Below are general descriptions of three different treks. Please discuss these potential trips with your son and come to a decision as to you and your Scout's preferences. Space is limited and will be awarded on a first come first serve basis. Regardless of the selected trip, the Troop will require a \$100 deposit per person by November 11, 2017 to hold a spot on the crew so that we may begin the reservation process. Many places require a deposit to secure a reservation. Should your scout decide not to participate after a deposit has been made, we will return any money deposited so long as reservation fees are refundable or a replacement for your Scout can be found. The estimated costs for each trek are not final costs. Airfare and van rental rates can vary from one month to the next. Once we have the total cost of the trip finalized, you will be informed of the payment schedule. Transportation for the different treks will vary. Trips A and B will require us to rent vans and drive to our destinations (about 2 days each way). Trip C will require us to fly into Seattle, Washington where we will rent vans to reach our destinations

Trip A: Canoe trip on the Allagash Waterway in Maine

Estimated Cost: \$750 for a 9 day trip

The Allagash Waterway is widely recognized as one of the best canoeing areas in the country, and deservedly so. Paddling north from Chamberlain Bridge there are over one hundred miles of lakes and river before reaching the first civilization at Allagash Village. Fish and wildlife are abundant. Black flies and mosquitoes can be challenging at times. No dangerous rapids are encountered and navigation is not difficult, but the camping and canoeing experience is highly recommended. The longest trip through the waterway starts at Chamberlain Lake and ends at Allagash Village, a distance of about 92 miles and takes about 5 days. Chamberlain Lake north to Churchill Dam is mostly lakes. Below the dam is a nine mile trip through Chase Rapids, dropping into Umsaskis Lake. Chase Rapids is famous for its white water canoeing. Chase rapids at Churchill Dam is classified as class II and gear can be shuttled around the waterway by rangers for a \$10.00 fee. Near the end of the trip you will find the Allagash Falls. For many, forty foot Allagash Falls is the scenic climax of the trip. A third of a mile portage around Allagash Falls and a run of 13 miles will bring you to the end of the trek at Allagash Village at the confluence of the St. John and Allagash rivers. Maximum group size for the Allagash is 12.

Trip B: Boundary Waters Canoe Trip

Estimated Cost: \$750 for a 9 day trip

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA), a wilderness encompassing over 1 million acres of woodlands and waterways in the heart of Superior National Forest. Located along the Canadian Border, the Boundary Waters is the largest wilderness preserve east of the Rockies. The Boundary Waters main launching point, Ely Minnesota offers many canoe trip options from over 20 different entry points and over 1,500 miles of canoe routes and 2,000 solitary campsites. The Boundary Waters has some amazing opportunities for topwater fly fishing. While there are a few lakes offering stream trout (mostly Brookies) the main fly fishing activity lies with Smallmouth Bass and Northern Pike. The Boundary Waters Canoe Area is filled with wildlife, from large animals such as moose, deer, black bears and wolves to smaller ones like mink, otters, squirrels and chipmunks; this wilderness is their home. It should be noted that good things don't come easy and the Boundary Waters is not for those fearful of big lakes or unwilling to portage your canoe and gear, sometimes up to a mile. Black flies and mosquitoes can be challenging at times. Maximum group size for the Boundary Waters is 9.

Trip C: Olympic National Park Adventure

Estimated Cost: \$750 for an 11-12 day trip

This backpacking trip will be divided into 2 parts. The first will be a 3 day hike along the Olympic Peninsula coastline and the second part will be a 4-5 day hike in the Seven Lakes Basin of Olympic National Park. Without a doubt, these backpacking trips should be on every hiker's bucket list.

Olympic Peninsula Coastline: Two sections of the Olympic Peninsula's coastline are completely undeveloped and uniquely spectacular. The first is a section of the Olympic North Coast Wilderness Trail that runs nearly 21 miles between Rialto Beach and Ozette. The second is this southern section that runs between La Push (Third Beach Trailhead) and the Hoh River (Oil City Trailhead) and totals 17.5 miles. Although this section has a nominal net elevation gain, the diverse terrain and trail requirements keep the hike in a moderately difficult category; between hiking on sandy beaches, climbing up rope ladders, ascending bluffs on your hands and knees, and waiting for an outgoing low tide to make headland crossings, this trip is far more challenging than it may appear on paper. Highlights along the route include:

- Sea Stacks: Dramatic sea stacks loom off the shore in several areas.
- Tide pools: At low tide, the ocean recedes to reveal an incredibly diverse mini-ecosystem in the rocks and shore where purple sea stars, giant green anemones, crustaceans, mollusks, mussels, crabs, and various other sea-creatures cohabit.
- Sea Birds: Beyond the countless western gulls you'll see, watch for bald eagles, black oystercatchers, pigeon guillemont, common murre, and cormorants that call the countless offshore sea stacks home. Binoculars are a great idea.
- Sea Mammals: Occasionally whales are spotted offshore.
- Old-growth Forest: For the entire length of the hike, the boundaries of Olympic National Park protect a roughly 1-mile wide swath of forest that runs adjacent to the coastline. Eight-foot thick western red cedars, massive Sitka spruce, and western hemlock dominate the forest.
- River Crossings: Be prepared to ford several large creeks.

Seven Lakes Basin, Olympic National Park: The 7 Lakes Basin/High Divide hike is one of the premier backpacking trips in the Olympics if not in Washington State. The scenery is superb and varied. It includes one of the best waterfalls in the state, old growth forest, multiple lakes in both sub-alpine and alpine settings (don't let the name 7 Lakes Basin confuse you, there are many more than 7 lakes), and views north to Vancouver Island, west to the Pacific, and a fantastic view south to the Hoh River and Mount Olympus. Wildlife is also abundant as sightings of deer, elk, mountain goats, and black bears are very common. Black flies and mosquitoes can be challenging at times.

Maximum group size for the Olympic Peninsula Coastline and Olympic National Park is 12. Time and money permitting, we will take one day to tour some of the sights in the Seattle area.

We are interested in the following trip (circle one):

Trip A: Allagash Trip B: Boundary Waters Trip C: Olympic National Park

Parents may join us providing space is available and they meet the shakedown requirements. Priority for space will be given to registered scouts and adult leaders of the Troop.

Number from your family requesting to attend: _____

Parent's Signature

Date

Scout Name

Additional Participant

Additional Participant

Additional Participant

Additional Participant