

September 9, 2025

Dear Parents and Scouts,

Troop 344/9344’s high adventure experience next summer will be an 11 day trip to the amazing and beautiful Desolation Wilderness in California (west of Lake Tahoe). The dates for the trip are tentatively set for July 14 – July 24, 2026. This trip will start by flying into Reno, Nevada and renting vans to drive to the Desolation Wilderness area where we will basecamp for 3 nights. Day 2 will involve traveling to Calaveras Big Trees State Park to hike among the Giant Sequoias. Day 3 we will do a 7 mile dayhike with an elevation gain of 1200 feet to Island Lake to help acclimate to the mountain environment. On Day 4, we will begin our 6 night, 7 day backcountry backpacking experience. After leaving the trail, the last part of this trip is a full day of white water rafting on the Middle Fork of the American River. This full day Class IV+ experience will be remembered by the participants due to its steep wilderness canyon walls and world famous whitewater rapids. It will involve a run through the Tunnel Chute Rapids featured in multiple Hollywood movies.

The maximum number of participants for this trip is 24. Maximum group size allowed for the Desolation Wilderness is 12 and if participant numbers are high enough, we will split into two groups and start at different trailheads and hike towards each other. While backpacking, we will average around 6-7 miles per day with several hundred feet of elevation gain and loss as well.

Any participants who are new to backpacking with us are required to take part in two shakedown hikes. The shakedown hikes are also highly recommended for the more experienced participants to gauge level of fitness and preparedness. The first shakedown hike will be at Oak Openings sometime in April of 2026. The second shakedown hike will be at Oil Creek State Park in Pennsylvania over Memorial Weekend in 2026.

Estimated costs for the adventure is ~\$1400 and includes all transportation, lodging, and food. Anyone that would like to fish will incur an additional fee of \$62.90 for a non-resident 10 day California fishing license. Actual final cost for the trip will be determined after final reservations are made and could be slightly more or less than the current estimate. Final costs will be known by February of 2026. Once we have the total participant numbers and the cost of the trip finalized, a final payment schedule will be provided with the second payment due in December and the final payment due in March.

Scouts must be 14 years old by December 31, 2026 (or have the approval of the trip leaders) and have the rank of Star to be eligible for the trip. **Space is limited to 24 individuals and priority will be given first to eligible scouts and registered leaders.** Parents may join us providing space is available. BSA regulations require all adults on a trip such as this fill out an application form which includes a background check, pay a registration fee, and take the online Youth Protection Training. Space can be reserved by placing a deposit on a first come first serve basis.

**To reserve a spot, complete the information below and return this entire form along with a \$100 deposit per person.** We are requesting that any interested individuals make their deposits by October 21, 2025 so that the reservation process can begin.

If your family is having financial difficulties that make the cost of the trip or placing a deposit difficult, please call or talk to the Scoutmasters privately to hear about the options we have available. We do not want anyone excluded for financial reasons.

In order to maintain costs for everyone, should anyone decide not to participate after reservations have been made, we will return any money deposited only if a replacement for the individual can be found.

Number from your family requesting to attend: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scout Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Participant