

# LEAVE NO TRACE



## A Guide to Minimum Impact Camping and Stock-Use Techniques

### The Seven Principles

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Be Considerate of Others
5. Respect Wildlife
6. Leave What You Find
7. Minimize Campfire Impacts



## 1) PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE

- Check with the appropriate agency for rules and regulations.
- Are there restrictions on group size? Are dogs allowed?
- Are parking or trail-use passes required?
- Are fires allowed in the area you are going to visit?
- What are the trail conditions?
- Is weed free feed required? If so, start feeding 72 hours before so the manure is free of weed seeds.
- Is grazing permitted? What are the current grazing conditions?
- Are animal-resistant containers required? Do you have to hang your food?
- Is all your gear clean and in good repair?
- Tell someone where you are going and for how long; if possible show him or her on a map.
- Have an emergency plan and share it with people at home.

### KNOW ABILITIES/LIMITATIONS OF STOCK AND HOW TO CARE FOR THEM IN THE BACKCOUNTRY

- Is stock in good physical condition and ready for the level of difficulty of the trip?
- Is the stock properly shod?
- Is stock familiar with carrying packed loads, being lead and/or tied behind other pack animals?
- Is stock familiar with restraints?
  - Portable electric fence
  - Pickets
  - Hobbles
  - Highline
- Can stock stand *quietly* all night on a highline?
  - Plan and prepare to minimize stock impacts:
  - Remove electric fences at night.
  - Change grazing area as needed.
  - Water stock in a gravel area or with a bucket.
  - Spread manure
  - Repair the highline area before leaving.

### REMEMBER TO TAKE...

- Parking Pass, Camping/Fire Permits
- Current health certificates, vaccinations, brand inspection slips
- Knife and matches (carry on person)
- First-aid kits (human and horse)
- Maps and compass and the know-how to use them
- Fire tools: Ax, saw, shovel, collapsible bucket, fire blanket/pan
- Lightweight gear: sleeping bag, tent, and kitchen supplies, etc.
- Weed free hay, grain and/or pellets, and salt for stock
- Tack repair kit
- Easy Boot/Horseshoeing tools (if you know how to use them)
- Water filter and purifying tablets
- Extra clothes and foul weather gear

- Stock containment equipment and tree saver straps
- Insect repellent for humans and horses
- Extra batteries for your flashlight

### AT THE TRAILHEAD

- Check-in with the trailhead host if there is one.
- Register at the trailhead box.
- Park vehicles/trailers and restrict stock to designated areas
- Tie stock to hitch rails, highline with tree saver straps or to your trailer.
- Use of electric fences at a trailhead is RARELY appropriate.
- Water stock at designated areas or use buckets.
- Be courteous. Keep noise levels down.
- No loose stock or pets. Leave dogs at home or keep on a leash.
- Keep a clean trailhead. Pick up after yourself and your stock.
- Put manure and unused hay back into your trailer.

## 2) TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES

- Do not cut switchbacks.
- Keep stock single file on the trail.
- Do not allow stock to run loose on trails.
- Repair and clear trail, if needed, to avoid detours.
- Keep stock to a walk on trails.
- When meeting other stock users, whoever can get off the trail easiest should do so.
- When meeting hikers, be courteous and take time to talk to them. Have hikers talk so horses recognize them as people. Ask all members of a group to stand on the same side of the trail the downhill side if possible.
- During breaks, tie all stock away from trail and water sources. Hobble if necessary to prevent damage to trees and surrounding soil and plants. Scatter manure.

### CHOOSING A CAMPSITE

- Select a camp at least 200 feet from trails, lakes and/or streams if possible.
- Camp choice should be based on:
  - Amount and type of use in the area
  - Fragility of the vegetation and soil
  - Likelihood of wildlife disturbance
  - An assessment to previous impacts and your potential to cause or avoid more impact.

**Minimum Impact Philosophy:**  
*Disguise the sight and sound of your passage, leaving no sign that you were ever there.*



- Allow enough time to select an appropriate site so that exhaustion, bad weather, and lateness of the day will not force you to cut corners and choose poor or fragile campsites.
- In popular areas, use excising legal campsites on a durable surface.
- Set up highlines away from your camp, the trail and water sources using tree saver straps around all trees used.
- Spray stock with insect repellent so they stand quieter and to keep pawing to a minimum.
- Place tents on already hardened areas.
- Put the kitchen in the most hardened resilient and impacted location available.
- Use protective ground covers (i.e. scrim cloth) in heavy use areas.
- Avoid making more foot trails in existing camps.
- If in bear country, practice safe bear camping techniques. Nuisance bears are made, not born.
  - Hang food, horse feed, toothpaste, chap stick, soap, garbage, clothing used to cook in and anything food scented 10 feet from the ground and 4 feet from the tree, downwind and 200 feet away from tents.
  - Use unscented biodegradable soap. Do not use scented deodorant and colognes.
  - Certified animal-resistant containers can be used instead of hanging food.
  - Hang game animals and meat 200 yards from camp and downwind from your tent. The lowest part of the animal must be 10 feet from the ground and 4 feet from a tree.

### 3) DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

- Use RV marine grade toilet paper when camping in the backcountry.
- Bury human feces in an appropriate location and effective manner for the type of area.
- Dig cat holes 6-8 inches deep and at least 200 feet from water sources, trails and camp sites.
- Latrines may be dug for large groups. Use ash from the fire in the latrine to speed up decomposition.
- Toilet paper should be buried in the cat hole or packed out in a plastic bag.
- Pack out ALL feminine hygiene products in plastic bags.
- Wastewater from cooking should be strained of food particles and scattered over a wide area away from camp. Bear country may require special procedures - BE INFORMED!

### 4) BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS

- Respect private property.
- Respect others' right to use the trails.
- Assume that other users are not familiar with stock and that stock might intimidate them.

### 5) RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Enjoy wildlife at a distance.
- Never feed wildlife.
- Store food properly and securely.
- Minimize noise.
- Dispose of waste properly so it doesn't make animals sick.
- Avoid sensitive habitat.
- If you have dogs, contain them so they don't harass, chase, wound or kill wildlife.

### 6) LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

- Allow others a sense of discovery by leaving rocks, plants, archeological artifacts and other objects of interest as you find them.
- Bones, plants, flowers, etc. are often a necessary part of the food chain. Removing such things may harm wildlife.
- Avoid damaging live trees and plants. DO NOT:
  - Pound nails into trees
  - Cut live trees
  - Leave wire, rope or twine tied around trees (over time it will grow into the tree and strangle it).

### 7) MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS

- Before you build a campfire, consider the following:
  - Do you really NEED a campfire?
  - Location
  - Appropriate type of fire (i.e. mound, fire ring, fire pan, fire blanket, etc.) to minimize damage
  - Wind, weather conditions and fire danger
  - Availability of the right amount and type of firewood
  - Administrative restrictions/fire bans
- Use only dead and down wood no bigger than your wrist.
- Firewood should be gathered away from camp.
- Never leave a fire unattended.
- Use mound fires where no fire has been built before.
- Use existing fire rings instead of building new ones and be sure to leave them cleaned out for the next campers.
- Scatter any unused firewood, ashes and charred wood (doused with water!) when breaking primitive camp.
- Consider enjoying the outdoors without a fire (use a stove to cook food).

**Today's education can help to maintain the back country for future generations.**

#### BACKCOUNTRY HORSEMEN OF OREGON

We are an organization with chapters throughout the state of Oregon. We are dedicated to:

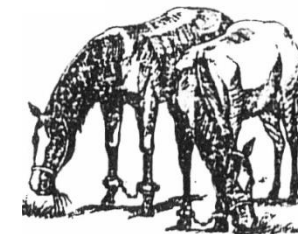
- ✓ Preserving the rights of American people to use horses and mules for recreation on public lands, through education,
- ✓ Expanding and improving trail riding and other backcountry recreational opportunities through advocacy and volunteer work.

Membership is open to all horsemen or horse enthusiasts who love our great outdoors and who are concerned that recreational horse use on public lands remain part of the American Heritage.

See our web page: [www.bcho.org](http://www.bcho.org)  
For more information on our Leave No Trace Program.

### TRAIL COURTESY

- Be saddled and ready to ride at the appointed time.
- Dogs are often NOT welcome on rides. Know the rules!
- Maintain a horse-length between you and the next horse. Do not tailgate!
- Inform others that your horse kicks with a red ribbon tied to the horse's tail.
- Stay with the group and the trail-plan. If you intend to leave the group, inform the ride leader.
- Do not trot or run past others. If you must pass, tell the person which side you are passing on and do so slowly and carefully.
- If someone is passing you, make sure your horse is aware of it too.
- When allowing horses to drink, wait until all are finished before proceeding.
- If someone has trouble, be considerate. If you have trouble, call ahead for others to wait.
- Impatient horses can be dangerous if left behind.
- Be friendly and courteous to other trail users.
- Safety helmets are recommended, for children.



### Leave No Trace

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