

# Lessons Learned at Northern Tier 2010

October 14, 2010

The following are suggestions for future crews attending Northern Tier:

## Training Treks

Run 2 canoeing treks (with instructors) and 2 backpacking treks. Canoeing treks can be at the Newport Seabase with their instructor or at Lake Castaic with San Gabriel or Verdugo Hills canoes with older scouts teaching. One trek should be overnight with lightweight stove cooking.

## Training for Adults

The required class "Wilderness First Aid" is a very hard class to book, and the VHC only runs it twice a year. So book it early (the Fall or Winter before the trek)

## Airline & bags

Choose an airline where each passenger can have up to 2 checked bags for free (we used South West). The goal was for every traveler to fit all of their personal gear in one carry on bag. This will force everyone to bring only the recommend gear, with the smallest, light-weight and compact versions of sleeping bags, sleeping matts, etc... However if they can't fit it all in a carry on bag, using a larger checked bag is OK.

## Van Nys Flyaway

Was good for some, others want to drive directly to LAX.

## Maps

Buy 1 set of maps for each canoe (stored in a waterproof pouch). Pouches can be reused from last Northern Tier trek. Some maps can be reused too.

## Gear

- Provide a *Gear List* to everyone attending (on web site). Have gear check meetings before training treks and a final check a month before leaving.
- Each patrol should bring 2 water filters (they are better than tablets)
- Everyone's personal gear should fit in one carry on bag
- First Aid kits should be put in small waterproof bags (not a hard case).
- Bring padding for shoulders when carrying canoes

## Routes

- Younger patrols (14 – 15 years old) can comfortably do 50 – 65 mile routes.
- Older patrols (16 – 17 years old) can comfortably do 70 – 80 mile routes. Only if they are very older and very athletic should they consider 100 mile routes.
- 8 person crews are better than 6.

### **Minnesota Logistics**

- LCS Coaches is a good bus company
- The hotel “America’s Best Value Inn at Spirit Mt.” near alpine slides was good (included fresh waffle breakfast)
- Hotel Ely was cheap and not recommended

### **Touring Minnesota**

The day before Base Camp we toured Minnesota, and the following activities were a hit: Alpine Slide “Timber Twister” at Spirit Mountain, visit to Lake Superior at the bridge, Soudan Iron Ore Tour, the International Wolf Center, and the Mall of America.

We suggest instead of the Wolf Center try the Bear Center instead. Maybe do the High Tech Physics lab tour at the Soudan Mine instead of the Iron Ore tour.