



Leave No Trace

Why can't man travel through wild country in such a manner that he leaves behind him the least possible traces of his passing? The ethic is simple...man is measured by what does not remain.

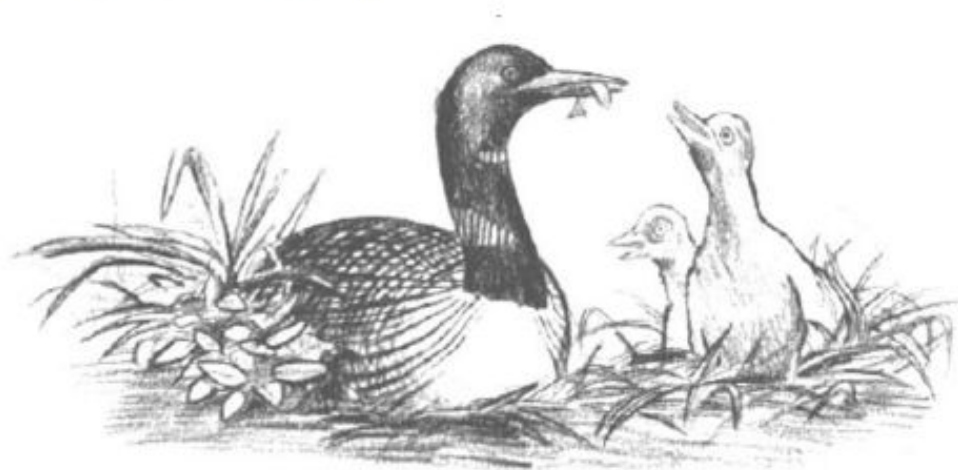
– John Milton

Tread lightly! America's woodlands are diverse and beautiful; they are also fragile. Outdoor recreation is often a catalyst for conservation, but there is a flip side. Polluted water, displaced wildlife, eroded soils, and trampled vegetation are just some of the impacts linked directly to recreational activities. Many of us have taken a pine cone or rock, veered off the trail to dodge mud puddles, gotten too close to wildlife, or tossed an apple core into the woods. While these actions may seem harmless at the time, until we learn to reduce our impact, the quality of our outdoor experiences and the recreational resources we enjoy are at critical risk.

If recreationists were better informed on low-impact techniques, much of the destruction would be prevented. We are drawn to the Northwoods for its beauty, purity, remoteness, ruggedness, and the unique challenges it presents, but it can sometimes be challenging to practice Leave No Trace principles. The Ma-Ka-Ja-Wan High Adventure Base takes the "Leave No Trace" ethic and approach seriously. We are unwilling to sacrifice the preservation of the natural setting for personal objectives.

We believe that most people will do all they can to help protect and maintain the environment, given the proper information. As guides, we spend time teaching the environmentally appropriate Leave No Trace principles and practices. There is nothing more beautiful than working hard to get far into the wilderness, come upon a pristine campsite, witness incredible views, and have the feeling that no one has been there before. And there is nothing more disheartening than working hard to reach a destination and encountering trash, food waste, or toilet paper. Please read and abide by the seven LNT principles on the following pages and contact us if you have any questions about what you can do to preplan and prepare. Thanks for taking the time to read this information.

"Take only pictures, leave only footprints."





Leave No Trace

Plan Ahead and Prepare

- A successful trip depends on careful preparation so, be prepared!
- Know the regulations and particular concerns for the area you'll visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.

Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, or dry grasses.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- In popular areas:
 - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
 - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
 - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- In pristine areas:
 - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
 - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.



Dispose of Waste Properly

- If you bring it in, take it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Double-check your campsite before leaving (i.e., police line). You will not only ensure that all trash is collected, but it will also prevent gear from being left behind.
- Deposit solid human waste in cat-holes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cat-hole when finished.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.



Leave What You Find

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants, and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.





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Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Bring firewood (make sure it is purchased locally to avoid introducing destructive species). Walking through the forest around your campsite in search of wood only increases the damage to the area.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cold ashes.

Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach animals.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, or raising young.

Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.



** Adapted from LNT.org **