

LEAVE NO TRACE CENTER FOR OUTDOOR ETHICS DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY AND COURSE PARTICIPANT ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISKS

INTRODUCTION

For all Leave No Trace course participants: Please read this document carefully.

This document describes the role of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (the Center) as it pertains to Leave No Trace courses and includes the Center's disclaimer of liability and your acknowledgment and assumption of risks. Please take the time to read this information and contact your instructor with any questions or concerns.

THE CENTER - Role of Organization & Disclaimer of Liability

The Center is a non-profit education organization whose mission is to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships.

The Center focuses its education efforts on ways for human powered recreational visitors to reduce their impacts on the natural area and the experience of other visitors.

The Center's goal is to help visitors prevent avoidable impacts and minimize unavoidable impacts in our natural world.

As an education organization the Center develops and distributes educational curriculum and materials in cooperation with its partners. Leave No Trace Master Educator & Trainer courses are an integral element of the program. However, the Center does not teach, oversee or conduct specific courses, but rather, provides organizations and individuals trained as Master Educators with teaching materials to teach these Leave No Trace courses. The instructors for Master and Trainer courses are not representatives of the Center. **All organizations and individuals conducting Leave No Trace courses act as independent contractors and are solely responsible for the conduct of the courses. The Center (and its agents, owners, officers, employees, representatives and all other individuals or entities associated with it, collectively the Center') does not warrant or guarantee the quality or expertise of any individual or organization teaching a Leave No Trace course. Further, the Center does not supervise or control these independent contractors and is not legally liable or responsible for their conduct. The Center disclaims all liability to you or others, for any injury, damage, death or other loss you may suffer, in any way connected with your participation in a Leave No Trace course. Participants are advised to independently review and examine the qualifications of individuals or organizations providing Leave No Trace courses.**

Course Participants - Acknowledgment & Assumption of Risks

Leave No Trace courses provide participants with information and techniques so that they can engage in minimum impact wilderness ethics and principles. Those who successfully complete a Leave No Trace course can then teach others about these outdoor wilderness ethics. Leave No Trace courses focus on wilderness ethics but Leave No Trace courses **do not teach** traditional outdoor skills such as mountain climbing, river crossings, camping, etc. However, some Leave No Trace courses must be taught in an outdoor or wilderness setting. Activities vary, but can include hiking, camping, rafting and horseback riding and students should have basic outdoor skills before attending a course. **These activities necessarily include inherent risks, hazards and dangers that can cause or lead to injury, property damage, illness, mental or emotional trauma, disability or death. The following describes some, but not all of those risks, hazards and dangers:**

1. Risks present in an outdoor environment. These risks include travel in mountainous or wilderness terrain, both on and off trails. While traveling in these areas, hazards may not be marked, weather is unpredictable year around, and lightning, rapidly moving rivers/whitewater, falling rocks, snow and ice, avalanche dangers, fallen timber, stinging insects, wild animals and other hazards can exist.

2. Risks involved in horseback riding. Horses (including donkeys or mules) are unpredictable in all circumstances. Horses can react to the environment, and the conduct of riders and other persons. Horseback riding can involve equipment that may break, saddles that may slip and other riders who may not control their animals

3. Risks connected with cooking and camping chores. While camping, participants may cook over a gas stove or an open fire and are subject to the risk of gas explosion or burn. Participants may need to disinfect water before use.

4. Risks in staff judgment. Risks involved in decision making and conduct, including the risk that a course leader, co-leader or other assistant may misjudge a participant's capabilities, or misjudge weather, terrain, water level, or route location.

5. Risks associated with travel. Travel can be on foot, or by vehicle, boat or other means, and can be over difficult terrain or via lakes and rivers, in adverse weather conditions.

6. Risks connected with geographic location. Remote locations can create difficulties in communication and transportation and delays in evacuation and medical care.

7. The risk that equipment used in an activity may break, fail or malfunction

8. Risks regarding conduct. The potential that you, other participants or third parties (e.g. driver, rescue squad, hospital) may act carelessly or recklessly.

Other risks, hazards and dangers that are generally associated with educational and/or outdoor activities.

These and other risks, hazards and dangers may result in participants: 1) falling, 2) being struck, 3) colliding with objects or people, 4) experiencing vehicle capsizing or collision, 5) reacting to high altitudes and weather conditions or experiencing other problems. These and other circumstances may cause hypothermia, dehydration, frostbite, drowning, high altitude sickness, heart or lung problems, broken bones, burns, or other injury, damage, death, or loss.

By voluntarily agreeing to participate, you assume and accept full responsibility for yourself, for the inherent risks of these activities (both known and unknown), and for any injury, damage, death, or other loss you may suffer, resulting from those risks, and resulting from your own negligence or other misconduct.

CONCLUSION

As the Center continues to expand and develop as a program, the need to offer responsible, informative training grows. The Center welcomes your interest in and

devotion to the Leave No Trace program. The role of the Center is to provide educational curriculum to Master Educators and Trainers. Likewise, the Center is available as a resource for you as you go forth and spread the Leave No Trace word. If you have questions or concerns about the Center. vis-à-vis your course, please feel free to contact us at the number below. Thanks again for your interest in promoting Leave No Trace. 800.332.4100; www.LNT.org.