

Voyageur Skill School

Location: Northern Tier High Adventure Base – Ely

Dates:

- *August 13-16, 2026*
 - o *13-18, 2026 with WFA Extension*
- *September 10-13, 2026*
- *September 24-27, 2026*

Cost:

- *\$145.00 per Person*
- *\$125.00 for WFA add On*
- *\$300.00 for Shuttle Ride to and from MSP*

The wilderness is calling all advisors and adult leaders to the Far Northland for an unforgettable and meaningful weekend training. Northern Tier High Adventure Base is excited to announce the launch of our new Voyageur Skill School. Like Philmont's Advisor Skill School (PASS), participants receive hands-on, paddles-in-the-water instruction to prepare any adult leader registered for the coming summer and autumn seasons but is open to ALL registered Scouting America leaders who want to learn more about camping and canoeing at Northern Tier!

About the School:

Put down the pen and pick up a paddle! Northern Tier's Voyageur Skill School (VSS) is intended to immerse adult leaders in the skills, procedures, and spirit of Northern Tier and the Northwoods by learning hands on and in the field. Led by our seasoned wilderness canoe guides (Interpreters) and Wilderness Adventure staff, Voyageur Skill School prepares you for the Summer or Autumn trek ahead.

This experience equips you with knowledge and confidence you won't find anywhere else—plus a few behind the scenes looks into new programs, meals, and gear. Wrap it up with a banquet, a patch you'll wear with pride, and the feeling that you're truly ready to guide and advise your crew through the Wilderness at Northern Tier.

What Will You Do and Learn?

Participants will have an on-base, on water, and hands-on learning experience that will give a better understanding of the following Northern Tier skills, procedures, and resources:

- *Day 1 Arrival Processing*
- *Northern Tier Issued Gear*
- *Paddling Techniques*
- *Portaging Basics*
- *Campsite Recognition*
- *Dinning Fly and Tent Set Up*
- *Wilderness Canoe Cooking*
- *Dish Washing Procedures*
- *Bear Bags*
- *Youth Led Trips*
- *Intro to other Northern Tier Programs*
- *Physical Conditioning*
- *Forest Service Rules and Regulations*
- *Emergency Communication Devices*

Overview

Once checking in, the course begins that evening with a tour of the Ely Basecamp. Day 1 continues with a personal gear shakedown and outfitting for both equipment and trail food. The crew hits water the next morning and learns to paddle and portage to a campsite where hands-on training will continue throughout the evening. Day 3 includes the paddle back to basecamp with more trainings along the way. A closing banquet is held for the crew in recognition of completing the course along with closing remarks from the General Manager and Program Director of Northern Tier. Finally, the crew is presented with the Voyageur Skills School Patch.

Wilderness First Aid

The upcoming Summer Voyageur Skill School courses has an option to add on a Wilderness First Aid course the Sunday and Monday after the VSS course. This will be taught on-site by one of our certified staff members and will quality for your crew's Wilderness First Aid requirements for your Northern Tier Expedition. Space is limited due to class size restrictions and will be filled on a first come first serve basis. The course is ESCI Wilderness First Aid and is a 16 hour long course.

Participation Requirements

Voyageur Skill School is tailored especially for any adult leader registered for the coming summer seasons but is open to ALL registered Scouting America leaders who want to learn more about camping and canoeing at Northern Tier!

Crews are limited in size and will be mixed groups of leaders from across the country. (Crews are limited to 7 persons each.) Space is limited, so register early!

Health & Medical Record - Parts A, B, and C are required for each participant involved in a trek that spends the night in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The Health and Medical Record expires annually, so please ensure your record is still current. Copies will be submitted to the health officer during medical recheck and will be returned at the end of the VSS weekend.

Swim Classification & Weight Requirements

- *All Participants of Voyageur Skill School must be classified as a “Swimmer” in accordance with the Aquatics Supervision Guide and Safe Swim Defence.*
- *All Participants of Voyageur Skill School must fall below the maximum (295 pounds) weight allowed for participation.*

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Voyageur Skill School Participant Schedule

Northern Tier – 2026

<i>Time</i>	<i>Topic/Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>Thursday</i>		
<i>3:00pm-5:00pm</i>	<i>Check In/Med Check</i>	<i>SBPC</i>
<i>5:30pm</i>	<i>Dinner</i>	<i>SBPC Dinning Hall</i>
<i>6:15pm</i>	<i>Tour of Base</i>	
<i>7:30pm</i>	<i>Welcome to Northern Tier</i>	<i>SBPC</i>
<i>8:30pm</i>	<i>Route Planning Basics</i>	<i>SBPC Deck</i>
<i>9:15pm</i>	<i>Gear Shakedown</i>	<i>SBPC</i>
<i>10:00pm</i>	<i>End Day 1</i>	
<i>Friday</i>		
<i>6:30am</i>	<i>Wake Up/Gear Pack</i>	
<i>7:00am</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>SBPC Dinning Hall</i>
<i>7:45am</i>	<i>Crew Photo</i>	
<i>8:00am</i>	<i>On Water Preparations</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Food Prep</i> - <i>Gear Prep</i> - <i>Canoe Prep</i> - <i>Portage Prep</i> 	
<i>11:00am</i>	<i>On Water</i>	
<i>12:00pm</i>	<i>Lunch on Water</i>	
<i>2:00pm</i>	<i>Arrive at Camp Site</i>	
<i>2:00pm</i>	<i>Campsite Set Up</i> <i>(Requirements, Bear Bag, Dinning Fly,</i> <i>Tent Set Up, etc.</i>	
<i>4:30pm</i>	<i>Dinner Prep</i>	
<i>5:30pm</i>	<i>Dinner</i>	
<i>6:30pm</i>	<i>Dinner Clean Up</i>	
<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>Crew Roles</i>	
<i>7:45pm</i>	<i>Physical Training Prep</i>	
<i>8:30pm</i>	<i>Rose, Bud, Thorns</i>	
<i>9:00pm</i>	<i>End Day 2</i>	
<i>Saturday</i>		
<i>7:00am</i>	<i>Wake Up</i>	
<i>7:30am</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	
<i>8:30am</i>	<i>Campsite Tear Down</i>	
<i>9:00am</i>	<i>Paddle Back to Base</i>	

11:00am	Return to Base	
12:00pm	Lunch	SBPC
1:00pm	Gear Return	
2:00pm	Northern Tier Programs	SBPC Conference Rooms
	Budgeting/Planning	
	Northern Tier Travel	
	Preparing Your Crew	
4:00pm	Northern Tier Trading Post Visit	NT Trading Post
5:30pm	Banquet	The Lodge
	End of Day 3	
<i>Sunday (No Wilderness First Aid)</i>		
6:30am	Shuttle - Breakfast (To Go)	SBPC
7:00am	Breakfast	SBPC Dinning Hall
	Depart Northern Tier	
<i>Sunday (Wilderness First Aid)</i>		
7:00am	Breakfast	SBPC Dinning Hall
8:00am	WFA Instruction	SBPC Conference Rooms
12:00pm	Lunch	SBPC Dinning Hall
1:00pm	WFA Instruction	SBPC Conference Rooms
5:30pm	Dinner	SBPC Dinning Hall
<i>Monday (Wilderness First Aid)</i>		
7:00am	Breakfast	SBPC Dinning Hall
8:00am	WFA Instruction	SBPC Conference Rooms
12:00pm	Lunch	SBPC Dinning Hall
1:00pm	WFA Instruction	SBPC Conference Rooms
5:30pm	Dinner	SBPC Dinning Hall
<i>Tuesday (Wilderness First Aid)</i>		
6:30am	Shuttle - Breakfast (To Go)	SBPC
7:00am	Breakfast	SBPC Dinning Hall
	Depart Northern Tier	