Northern Tier High Adventure Program Okpik Participant Handbook



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The word Okpik (ook'-pic), which means Snowy Owl in the Inuit language, has identified the Winter Camping program at Northern Tier since it began in 1971. Representing innovation in the field of winter camping, the Okpik program has grown to nationwide proportions. Since October 1984, Okpik has been the approved name and symbol for the Scouting America's National Cold Weather Camping Programs.

The Charles L. Sommers Canoe Base of Northern Tier located 22 miles northeast of Ely, Minnesota, is the site of the Scouting America's National Cold Weather Camping Development Center. At this site, from December through March each year, Scouts, Scouters, and Venturers can participate in a variety of exciting cold weather adventures.

Read this handbook carefully, as it informs you of many details that will help you prepare for your trip. The Personal Equipment List is very important for you and your crew. Remember, you will be carrying everything you bring. Proper planning before your trip will assure you and your crew an enjoyable wilderness adventure!

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Ely: Ee' lee
OKPIK: Ook' pick
Bizhiw - *Bee* zhoo
Quinzhee - *Quin* zee

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO ATTEND?

All Northern Tier Okpik Participants:

- Every Northern Tier crew must have at least 2 youths under the age of 18. We strongly recommend that the majority of the crew is made up of youth.
- Must fall below the maximum (295 pounds) weight allowed for participation and it is strongly recommended that no participant weighs less than 100 pounds. (See Pg. 19.)
- Must have a current (within 12 months) and complete the Scouting Annual Health and Medical Record. The doctor completing the form must review the Northern Tier Risk Advisory included with the form. The Northern Tier form can be found at https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/ahmr/
- All health forms must be uploaded into CampDoc by 7 days prior to arrival at Northern Tier.
- Must be a registered member of Scouting America.
- Unregistered guests or family members are NOT permitted to camp at Northern Tier. There are no scheduled programs or available housing accommodations for family members of expedition participants.

Okpik Youth Participants:

- Okpik Program Age Requirements:
  - Okpik Weekends/Trek Programs/Dog Programs: Must be at least 14 years old OR currently enrolled in 8th grade and be at least 13 years old prior to participation.
  - Cabin Staff Program: Any registered Scout under the age of 14 is eligible. Participants in this program only stay in cabins for the duration and therefore is not eligible for the Triple Crown or Grand Slam Awards.
- Must be registered members of Scouting America.
- Each participant must meet the health requirements as outlined in Scouting's Annual Health and Medical Record.

Age	Scouting America Youth Protection Policies
Under 18	• Must be registered in a Youth position
18-21	• Must be current in Safeguarding Youth training • Must be registered in an Adult position
21+	• At least two registered leaders 21+ are required • A Registered female adult leader 21 years of age or over must be present for any activity involving female youth • All leaders must be current in Safeguarding Youth training

Scouting America and Northern Tier takes Youth Protection very seriously. Some of the Youth Protection policies that apply to participants at Northern Tier (and throughout Scouting) relate to registration and training. The complete set of Youth Protection policies may be found at https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/

Northern Tier will strictly enforce Youth Protection policies, which include the *Barriers to Abuse within Scouting*

All adults must be registered and have current Safeguarding Youth Training (certified within the past two years). This means all participants 18 years old and older registered in Venturing, Exploring, Sea Scouting, or as an adult volunteer must have current Safeguarding Youth Training. Because of the great concern Scouting America has for the issue of child abuse in our society, the Youth Protection program has been developed to help safeguard both our youth and adult members. Adult Registration in Scouting America requires verification of Safeguarding Youth Training. All adults participating in a Northern Tier expedition must be registered. For more information on Scouting's Youth Protection programs, visit: https://www.scouting.org/training/youth-protection/.

ADULT LEADERSHIP – Scouting America Policy

- Each crew MUST always have at least TWO registered adults (called "Advisors") age 21 or older.
- All adult participants are required to present proof of Scouting's Safeguarding Youth training prior to arrival at Northern Tier. (Uploaded into CampDoc.) At least one adult in each crew must have proof of current CPR, Wilderness First Aid and Weather Hazards training.

CO-ED/FEMALE CREWS – Scouting America Policy

- All crews are required to provide two adults aged 21 and over. Please refer to the Guide to Safe Scouting and ensure your crew is following the leadership standards required for your unit type.
- Crews may be all-male, all-female, or coeducational. All male or all female crews must follow the Scouting America Troop leadership guidelines as outlined in the Guide to Safe Scouting. Coeducational Troops and Venturing crews must meet the leadership standards for coeducational units as outlined in the same guide. Please contact the Northern Tier registrar with any questions about leadership requirements.

TENTING POLICIES

Tenting arrangements at Northern Tier follow Scouting America's tenting requirements (https://www.scouting.org/health-and-safety/gss/) and must meet the requirements shown below:

- Separate tenting arrangements must be provided for male and female adults and male and female youth
- Youth (14-17) cannot share tents with anyone 18 or older (including parents)
- Youth under 18 may share tents only if no more than 2 years age difference
- Spouses may share tents
- Tenting policy also applies to Quinzee snow structures.

BUDDY SYSTEM

Scouting America's Buddy System policy is as follows (from Scouting.org):

- The adult unit leadership oversees and approves buddies.
- Buddies are two and can also be three to prevent youth members from being alone.
- Buddy pairs cannot be mixed gender, where appropriate a 3rd youth must be added (for a buddy group of 3). EXAMPLE: Buddy pairs of 2 cannot be mixed gender. However, a third youth/participant may be added to allow for a mixed gender buddy group of 3.

- Youth siblings of the same gender may serve as buddies regardless of age with permission from their parents or legal guardians.
- Except for siblings**,** it is recommended that the age gap between buddies be at most three years for all non-sleeping activities but **must** be no more than two years for all tenting.
- When exceptional circumstances warrant, a parent or legal guardian may serve as a buddy for their child's Scouting activities, but youth buddies meeting the above criteria, if available, are always preferred.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION AND PARENTAL PERMISSION

All participants, youth, and adult MUST provide a current Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record. A blank Health and Medical Record form is available at the Northern Tier website www.ntier.org. Be sure to provide your doctor with Parts A, B1, B2, C and the supplemental risk advisory of the form when you go for your physical exam. A physician must review the supplemental risk advisory prior to completing the form. Confirm that your physician has completed the form accurately prior to arrival at Northern Tier. A parent or legal guardian must complete the medical history and sign the medical form if you are under the age of 18. Every participant, youth, and adult must have a physical examination performed by a physician within 12 months of your expedition end date.

All Health and Medical Records are uploaded into the secure portal provided by CampDoc. A link will be sent to the email provided on your crew roster so the task of completing the profile and uploading the medical form can be completed ahead of time. Please complete this task no later than 7 days prior to your arrival at Northern Tier (preferably 30 days out.) Keep your paper copy for your records. If anyone arrives without a medical form signed by a physician and a parent or legal guardian if under 18, your trek will be delayed until the situation is resolved. **The only medical form Northern Tier will accept is the Scouting America Annual Health and Medical Record.** Good physical condition is essential. Each participant in a Northern Tier expedition should not exceed the maximum acceptable weight for height in the table shown on the Annual Health and Medical Record. Those who fall within the recommended weight limits are much more likely to have an enjoyable trek and avoid incurring injuries and health risks.

RISK ADVISORY

Your safety is of the utmost importance to us. Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs have an outstanding safety record. Scouting America and Northern Tier emphasize safety through education and strict adherence to established policies and procedures. The safety of your group is dependent upon your attention to these procedures as well as being physically fit, properly equipped and trained for the rigors of remote wilderness winter camping. Following these policies and procedures maximizes the potential for a safe and enjoyable experience for all involved. Parents, leaders, and participants should be advised that despite our best attempts at risk management, it is not possible to remove ALL risk from a wilderness expedition.

For more information about possible risks at Northern Tier, see the *Advisor Planning Guide* at www.ntier.org.

PREPARE FOR HIGH ADVENTURE

Your adventure begins at home. Months before arriving at Northern Tier, you should begin planning and training. A famous explorer once said, "The key to successful planning is living the experience in advance."

This guidebook has been developed to help you anticipate what to expect in order to better prepare yourself and your crew. The more thorough your planning is, the more successful your experience will be.

TRIP ORGANIZATION

Northern Tier uses the term "crew" to describe the group of Scouts/Venturers and adult advisors attending a Northern Tier High Adventure base. An organized crew quickly accomplishes its chores and has more time to enjoy winter camping. Ideally, you and your other crew members are organized before your arrival at Northern Tier. This will be easier if your crew is made up of members from your Troop or Venture Crew. If your crew is a part of a Council contingent and is made up of Scouts or Venturers from various Council units, Northern Tier recommends that the crew members have several organizational meetings and/or training outings to help crew members and leaders prepare for the trip.

Your crew size will vary based on the trek you decide:

- Cabin Stay and Cold Weather Camper 6-11 individuals
- All Dog Trips: 6-7 individuals

In addition to the participants you are coming to Northern Tier with, your crew will be assigned an Interpreter, who will accompany you on your trip.

ELECT A CREW LEADER

Each crew should elect a crew leader from the youth members before beginning a trek. The crew leader is responsible for organizing and planning the crew's activities. They will lead by example for the crew. This responsibility requires someone with leadership ability who is respected by all the crew members. The crew leader must be aware of the interests and capabilities of everyone in the crew.

ROLE OF YOUR ADULT ADVISOR

Your adult advisors will counsel and advise the crew leader and crew while letting the crew leader lead the crew. The advisor provides discipline should it be required and offers suggestions to help the crew leader. Your advisor is responsible for the safety and well-being of each crew member and if needed will be assisted by the Interpreter assigned to your crew. An advisor will also have an adequate CPR and WFA certification, to aid in crew safety.

ROLE OF THE NORTHERN TIER STAFF MEMBER –THE INTERPRETER

When you arrive at Northern Tier, your crew will be greeted by a wilderness counselor known as an Interpreter. The Interpreter will join your crew and stay with the group for the entire winter camping expedition and lead you through the first day orientation/outfitting procedures before you hit the trail. The Interpreter is an adult male or female who has been trained as a National High Adventure Base Staff member. The Interpreter provides training support, interprets outdoor skills and acts as a resource person to the crew leader, the crew, and the adult advisors. In an emergency or any situation involving safety, the Interpreter will act in conjunction with the adult advisors. The Interpreter is not a "fishing guide" but acts as a resource person for the skills pertaining to Scout camping and Winter camping. He or she is a specialist with the equipment and food carried as well as any skill needed on trips.

SELECT YOUR TREK PROGRAM OPTIONS

Before you arrive at Northern Tier, examine the program opportunities and descriptions listed in appendix C and D. Discuss with your other crew members and prioritize your top choices to discuss with your Interpreter upon arrival.

Prior to arriving at Northern Tier your crew should answer the following questions:

- How many days is our trip?
- Does our crew prefer to hike and/or ski?
    - If you prefer to hike/ski, and if you are 8 people are less, would you like to go into the Boundary Waters?
- Which of Northern Tier's special awards do we want to earn?
    - Which one(s)? What is the priority?
- If we are interested in program activities, what would we like to do? (Descriptions of these programs are included in appendix C and D)
    - Visiting the dog yard?
    - Shelter & structure building?
    - Cross-country skiing?
    - Snowshoeing?
    - Ice fishing?
    - Broomball?
    - Sledding?
- Would you prefer a hands-off interpreter where the crew does most of the work or an involved interpreter who handles all the cooking and very involved in other work?
- Do we want to get away from others or are we comfortable around other groups of scouts?
- What exactly do you want out of this experience?

The answers to these questions will be used to plan your trek on the day you arrive at Northern Tier.

GIVE YOUR PARENTS THE EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBER AND YOUR NORTHERN TIER CREW NUMBER

For an emergency, it is best to call between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM and talk with a full-time staff member or seasonal manager. During off hours, leave a message and Northern Tier Staff will respond the following morning. *An emergency message MUST include the full name and the Northern Tier Expedition Number.* Northern Tier will not be able to contact the person if they are on their trek; however, the message will be attached to the crew file for delivery upon the person's return to base. No Collect Calls Will Be Accepted.

Telephones are available for use by participants.
These numbers are strictly for emergencies:

Ely Phone: 218.365.4811

MAILING ADDRESSES FOR PARTICIPANTS

Mail for participants attending Okpik should be addressed as shown below. Sending mail is not encouraged as it must be sent well before the person has left home to ensure receipt. All mail must have a return address so it can be returned to the sender if the letter arrives after the person has left for home.

Full Name and Crew Number
Northern Tier National High Adventure Base
14790 Moose Lake Road
Ely, MN 55731

REVIEW CAMPER INSURANCE COVERAGE

The Northern Tier fee includes supplemental accident and sickness insurance coverage. This applies for your travel to and from Northern Tier as well as while you are on your trek. This policy is secondary to a family policy. Insurance information of the family policy should be noted on the Health and Medical Record. A Scouting America *Camper's Accident and Sickness Insurance* pamphlet is available at www.ntier.org.

DON'T LOSE YOUR GEAR TO CARELESSNESS
Northern Tier recommends that each individual write their name and crew number with a permanent marker on their clothes, uniforms, and personal equipment. This will help in reclaiming lost and found items.

MONEY
Campers spend an average of $150.00 each in the Northern Tier National High Adventure Trading Post. If major items such as fleeces, vests, etc., are desired, more money will be needed.

LOOK SHARP EN ROUTE
Wear your Scout or Venture uniform proudly! You are members of Scouting America, the greatest youth organization in the world. A properly uniformed, sharp appearing, well-mannered crew makes a lasting impression on people who observe you. Use the buddy system to keep track of everyone.



ARRIVAL AT BASE

ARRIVAL

- We recommend that crews arrive between 1-3PM. Crews arriving after 3PM may not be able to complete these tasks and will be delayed in getting on the trail the next day. We cannot accommodate early arrivals at Northern Tier, if your crew arrives before 1PM, we ask that you wait in the parking lot and your staff will be there by 1PM to greet you.

CHECK IN

- Your interpreter will go through all medical forms, as well as ensuring that YPT, CPR, WFA, and Hazardous Weather training has been completed. This is to ensure that all safety requirements have been met.

ARRIVING AT YOUR CABIN

- Upon arrival at Northern Tier, you will be assigned a rustic Northwoods cabin to sleep in. Youth, advisors, men, and women will be split up according to Youth Protection guidelines. Each cabin is outfitted with beds and heaters for the crew. This cabin is yours for the entirety of your Okpik trek. In the event of hazardous conditions or the desire to go someplace warm arises, crews who planned to spend time on ice may return to sleep or rest in their cabins. As such, feel free to leave any personal belongings you have in this cabin.

SHAKEDOWN YOUR GEAR

- In a place designated by your Interpreter, you will unpack and review each item necessary for your trek to determine what items will be needed to be checked out from the Baypost. Store surplus gear and uniforms in your vehicle or cabin if you did not arrive in your own vehicles.

CHECK OUT BAYPOST GEAR

- Once the shakedown is complete, you will go to the Baypost and check out any additional gear you will need for your Okpik trek. This ranges from all crew gear to additional fleece jackets. All gear is free to use if it is returned in good condition. (See appendix F and G for more information on sleeping and keeping warm with gear)

FIRST NIGHT MEAL

- If you arrive before 7 pm your first meal will be dinner in the dining hall the evening you arrive.
- If you have special dietary needs, please fill out the dietary restriction form at www.ntier.org/food

OKPIK ORIENTATION

- Northern Tier will send your crew a pre-recorded orientation video for all members of the crew to watch prior to arrival to explain the regulations of the wilderness area you will be in, as well as an introduction to cold weather camping.

VISIT THE TRADING POST

- **IN PERSON:** Before departing on your trek you will want to visit the Trading Post to purchase last minute items. Many of the items not purchased back home may be found in our Trading Post. Now is the time to purchase items needed for the trail - there is no place to buy items once you start your trip. We encourage you to purchase your fishing licenses online before you arrive.
- **NORTHERN TIER ONLINE STORE:** Trail equipment and Northern Tier souvenir items are available for purchase through the Northern Tier on-line store, found at https://store.ntier.org/

A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

- Following the last steps in preparation for your trip, it is best to return to your overnight accommodations for a good night's sleep. After breakfast tomorrow you hit the trail!

HIT THE TRAIL

- **FOLLOW BUDDY SYSTEM**
  - As you are hiking and skiing, **always keep your crew together** and stay within hearing and visual distance. The Buddy System is a part of the Scouting America policy for good reason. Staying together is safer, avoids anyone becoming lost, promotes teamwork, and looks sharp.

- **STAY COMFORTABLY COOL**
  - Staying comfortably cool is important at Okpik, being warm will lead to sweat which then makes it more difficult to avoid getting cold. The three best ways to stay comfortably cool are eating, moving, and clothing. By eating, you are providing fuel for your body to burn. By moving, you are burning that fuel and generating body heat. By wearing appropriate clothing, you are regulating that heat, and keeping comfortably cool.

- **MEALS ON THE TRAIL AND OFFERING THANKS**
  - All meals, apart from your first breakfast and dinner, will be carried on the trail and cooked/prepared by your interpreter and your crew members. Crews are encouraged to give thanks before eating meals on the trail. The Wilderness Grace is simple and appropriate.

WILDERNESS GRACE
For food, for raiment, for life and opportunity,
For sun and snow, for ice and ski trails,
For friendship and fellowship,
We thank Thee, Oh, Lord.
Amen.

- **ICE FISHING**
  - Nearby lakes offer Northern Pike, Walleye, Rainbow Trout and Splake. The challenge is there for those who are up for it! If you have your own equipment, bring it. Limited equipment is available for crew issue. Equipment may be purchased in the Trading Post.
  - ***Remember the most efficient way to get your fishing license is to purchase it online prior to your arrival.*** **The types and prices of fishing licenses for Minnesota is found at this website:** Minnesota Fishing Licenses: http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/

- **LEAVE NO TRACE**
  - The wilderness areas used by Northern Tier crews are all on public lands managed by federal agencies. The campsites in these areas are all open to public use and are strictly on a first come first served basis. Wherever your crew camps, you are responsible for maintaining the wild character of the wilderness area you are camping in.
    - Keep your impact to a minimum and leave each site cleaner than you found it. Carry out all garbage and trash that you carried into the wild.

KEEPING YOURSELF HEALTHY AND SAFE ON THE TRAIL

Strict adherence to proper health and safety practices is crucial. You are responsible to yourself to keep safe and healthy, but this is also a crew responsibility. Read these trail practices to keep you and your crew strong, safe, and healthy. KNOW WILDERNESS FIRST AID SKILLS and CPR. Every Northern Tier crew MUST have an adult advisor certified in Wilderness First Aid and CPR. Ailments most commonly requiring treatment are sunburn, cuts (all types), frost nip/bite, sprains, blisters, headache, stomachache, constipation, diarrhea, and embedded fishhooks. Stock your first aid kit with supplies to handle these problems. Be aware of anyone in the crew who has a medical condition. Every injury or illness must be recorded in the base first aid log. While on the trail, your Interpreter will fill out a report to be posted in the base medical log upon your return.

- Practice good personal hygiene, including dental care.
- Know and be prepared to practice First Aid for the following ailments, but know that prevention is best:
  - Hypothermia
  - Frost nip/bite
  - Dehydration

    - Sunburn
- Prevent Accidents
    - Common causes of accidents include improper use of knife and axe, getting snagged by a fishhook, and carelessness around fires. Always maintain crew discipline and practice safety to avoid injuries.
- Purify All Drinking Water

WRAP UP YOUR ADVENTURE

Plan to return to base in the morning of your final day but know that we are flexible regarding crew departures.

- **CHECK IN CREW EQUIPMENT**
    - Upon arrival back at base you will check all your gear into the Bay Post. The staff will check each item for damages other than normal wear, and you will be charged for any damage and for lost items before your departure. You will also be able to pick up any valuables locked away. After equipment check-in, you might have time to shower and change clothes.

- **EVALUATE YOUR TRIP**
    - Youth and advisors are asked to complete a written evaluation form. Many constructive suggestions have been implemented because of these post trip evaluations. Your medical forms will be returned to you with the evaluation forms.

- **RECEIVE AWARDS**
    - Meeting the challenge of a Northern Tier National High Adventure experience is worthy of recognition. An emblem is awarded to every successful participant to wear on the right pocket of the Scout uniform. These awards are not for sale, they can only be earned. Be sure to visit the Trading Post for any other awards that you worked on while you were on the trail.

- **VISIT TRADING POST**
    - Visit the trading post to purchase any last-minute memorabilia, snacks for the ride home, or patches earned on your trek.

- **LUNCH (TIME-DEPENDANT)**
    - Crews with enough time are welcome to join us for lunch in the dining hall.

- **HEAD FOR HOME**
    - Say goodbye to Northern Tier and your interpreter to begin your journey home.

APPENDIX A- Required Check-In Documents

If you want your crew to be prepared for a smooth and efficient check-in, prepare all of the following documents prior to arrival and upload them into the proper locations in CampDoc.

NOTE: Advisors handle the upload of their training certificates, and each individual is responsible for completing their health profile and uploading their Health and Medical Record.

- ☐ **WILDERNESS FIRST AID AND CPR CERTIFICATION** – Each Crew must present proof that one adult leader is currently certified in CPR and one adult leader is currently certified in Wilderness First Aid.

- ☐ **WEATHER HAZARDS TRAINING** – This training can be found at www.my.scouting.org. Each Crew must present proof that at least one adult leader has training in Weather Hazards.

- ☐ **SAFEGUARDING YOUTH TRAINING** – All Adult Leaders (18 years and above) must present proof of current Safeguarding Youth Training. This training can be found at www.my.scouting.org.

- ☐ **ANNUAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL FORMS** – All participants must submit complete and current (within 1 year) Medical Forms and meet Height/Weight Requirements. These are uploaded into the secure portal on the CampDoc website link sent to you. Please complete the upload no later than 1 week prior to arrival, preferably 30 days out.

- ☐ **MEDICATIONS** - Please bring ALL personal medications you normally take. If you require an inhaler or epi-pen for any reason, you must bring it with you, or you will not be allowed on trail - no exceptions.

- ☐ In addition, Crews will be asked:
    - If they have a complete and thorough first aid kit.
    - What their departure plans will be and if they will be eating lunch in the dining hall their final day.

APPENDIX B- Height and Weight Chart

Northern Tier requires that each participant not exceed the maximum weight on the table for their height. Northern Tier REQUIRES that you fall below the maximum (295 pounds or 250 pounds for dog programs) allowed weight for participation. Additionally, Northern Tier strongly recommends that no participant weigh less than 100 pounds. Smaller participants will have a very difficult time due to the strenuous nature of the trek.

Weight-to-Height Table Northern Tier National High Adventure Programs		
Height	Recommended Weight (pounds)	Maximum Weight (pounds)
******Participants weighing less than 100 pounds will have a very difficult time and are discouraged from attending.***		
5’ 0”	100 - 138	166
5’ 1”	101 - 143	172
5’ 2”	104 - 148	178
5’ 3”	107 - 152	183
5’ 4”	111 - 157	189
5’ 5”	114 - 162	195
5’ 6”	118 - 167	201
5’ 7”	121 - 172	207
5’ 8”	125 - 178	214
5’ 9”	129 - 185	220
5’ 10”	132 - 188	226
5’ 11”	136 - 194	233
6’ 0”	140 - 199	239
6’ 1”	144 - 205	246
6’ 2”	148 - 210	252
6’ 3”	152 - 216	260
6’ 4”	156 - 222	267
6’ 5”	160 - 228	274
6’ 6”	164 - 234	281
6’ 7” +	170 - 240	295
Maximum Allowed Weight ***No participants weighing more than 295(250 for dog programs) pounds will be allowed to participate.		***295 pounds***

APPENDIX C- Description of Programs

Cross Country Skiing: This traditional form of transportation takes place on our various groomed trail systems. No downhill or cross-country ski experience is required to learn with our interpreters guiding you. This transportation method is best enjoyed as an afternoon activity to get your crew to another activity like circle rides or an ice fishing demonstration.

Ice Fishing: Compared to the multitude of ways to fish during the summer, ice fishing has just two ways to fish: tip-ups, and jigs. Your interpreter can help you learn both kinds, or you can even visit our resident ice fishing expert and try fishing in a darkhouse!

Dog Yard Visits: If you would like to learn more about the life of a sled dog when they are not pulling a sled then this is for you. Here you can pet, love, and hug the friendly dogs that pull crews throughout the Northwoods. One of our mushers will be able to inform you about the dogs and what incredible athletes they are.

Snowshoeing: This is one of the best ways to get around on deep, ungroomed snow trails. We have various styles of snowshoes from traditional to more modern lightweight ones which will help you travel on deep snow better. You can take them for a hike on one of our trails or across a lake to help you move better over the Minnesotan landscape.

Broomball: This competitive game brings the crew together in a match of a mix between hockey, soccer, and lacrosse. It is best played on a lake near basecamp but can be set up anywhere. If you come during a busy weekend there may just be a tournament going on. Come play in the Broomball Madness!

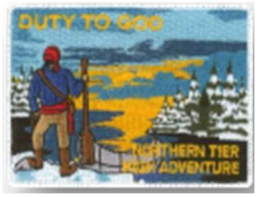
Snow Structure Building: Building in the snow is very similar to building in the sand, except your structures will freeze and withstand the elements. Your crew can build anything from a kitchen to a couch or even a quinzhee to sleep the night in.

Sledding: If you have ever imagined yourself sledding down a hill then our downhill sledding is for you. Check out a few tobogganing sleds and glide down the hill seeking top speeds and maximum fun.

Ice Skating: If conditions permit, Northern Tier provides skates so crews can try skating on the frozen Moose Lake.

APPENDIX D- NORTHERN TIER AWARDS

Northern Tier offers a wide variety of patches that can be earned over the course of your trek. A brief synopsis of each patch or program is offered here.

Zero Hero: The Zero Hero patch is available to any participant who camps outside on a night where the temperature drops below 0 degrees Fahrenheit (which means -1 or colder).	
Bizhiw: The Bizhiw Patch is available to any participant who spends two nights off base.	
Okpik Winter Trek: The Okpik Winter Trek award is available for any crews that spend at least 2 nights camping off base in the woods, change campsites at least once and travel at least 7 miles.	
Duty to God: The Duty to God award is available to scouts and adults who participate in at least one daily devotional while at Northern Tier and lead grace before one meal while on ice.	

Triple Crown and Grand Slam of High Adventure Award



Scouts and Scouters who have participated in at least one qualifying program at three of the four national high-adventure bases operated by Scouting America (Northern Tier, Philmont, Florida Sea Base and Summit Bechtel Reserve) can earn the Triple Crown patch and certificate. To qualify, you must earn a high-adventure program participant emblem (patch) from any three of the national high-adventure bases or all four bases to earn the Grand Slam.

An application must then be submitted with fees for the patch and certificate. The application may be found on the Triple Crown website at https://www.nationalhighadventureawards.org/

Note: To earn the Triple Crown, you must complete each high adventure through the Scouting program. For example, canoeing the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness or Quetico through another outfitter other than Northern Tier will not qualify.

APPENDIX E – Gear

Here is the list of gear Provided by Northern Tier (subject to modification based on availability)

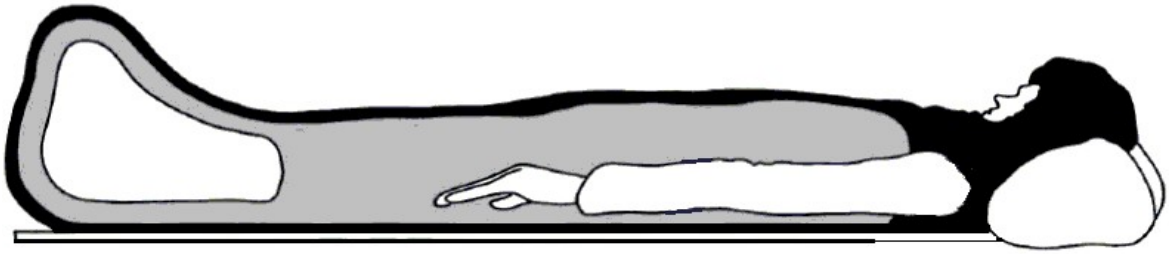
Crew Gear	Individual Gear (per person)
1 Kettle box	1 Sled & Harness
1 Large Pot w/lid	1 Tarp
1 Utensil Kit Bag	1 External Sleeping Bag
1 Ladle	2 Sleeping Pads
1 Regular Spoon	1 Shovel
1 spreader Knife	1 pair of Winter boots
1 Ice Scraper	1 Pair of Snowshoes
1 Hot Pot Pliers	1 Set of Skis, Poles, and Boots
1 Wooden Stove Pad	1 Kneeling Pad
1 Bottle of Matches	1 Water Bottle w/ Insulator
1 Bottle of	1 Fleece Jacket
Emergency Matches	1 Wind Jacket
1 Pair of Rubber Stove Gloves	1 Fleece Pants
2 MSR Dragonfly stoves	1 Wind Pants
1 Stove Service Kit	1 Set of Fleece and
1 Bottle Stove Oil	Shell Mittens
1 Bottle Hand Sanitizer	
1 Silky Saw	
1 Screw Driver	
1 Okpik Trail Map	
1 Fuel Funnel	
1 Ice Scoop	
1 Water Bucket	
1 Russian Tent w/ pole	
1 Auger or Spud	
1 Fire Pan	
1 Tip-up	
1 Tackle Box	
1-2 Snow Claw(s)	
2/day MSR Fuel Bottle w/ White Gas	
4-6 1.5L Silo Water Bottles	
Food Box	
Full Set of Trail Food	
1 Radio or Satellite Phone	

APPENDIX F- Sleep System

Your Sleeping System is Designed to Keep You Warm

Essentially, you are sleeping in several layers of insulation with an additional layer underneath you to insulate you from the frozen ground. It is important to first make sure your feet are warm. Using polar fleece or other types of socks will give you an inner layer of insulation around your feet. The inner bag is a regular sleeping bag with or without a hood and has a drawstring to be tightened down slightly in order to capture heat. The outside layer is a hooded sleeping bag which covers the entire system from feet to head and which has a drawstring allowing the opening to be pulled snug around the face to prevent loss of body heat.

Inner 3-Season Sleeping Bag
(Self-Provided)



Foam Pad- Stops Cold from Below
Tarp- keeps out moisture

SLEEPING PADS—These are essential for insulating the body from the cold ground: Closed cell foam pads are the best option for cold weather camping. (Okpik provided)

Hooded Outer Bag Covers Everything

(Okpik Provided)

TYPES OF BAGS—Inner bags and outer bags should be made of synthetic fiber which can be stuffed compactly for travel and dries easily.

Your Sleeping System Works Best When Kept Clean and Dry

APPENDIX G- Key to Keep Warm

WHAT KEEPS YOU WARM? - When you really study what keeps you warm, it becomes clear that it is you! Your body produces all the heat you need. Your clothing is designed to hold in whatever heat you need to feel comfortable under a variety of conditions and activities. You will notice all our clothing is loose. That is because tight clothing constricts the flow of blood so the body heat cannot move around. That is why tight boots mean cold feet and a tight belt means cold legs.

C-O-L-D

That is an easily remembered key to keeping warm.

C Keep yourself and your clothes CLEAN. Dirt and body oils which build up on clothing destroy its insulating properties

O Avoid OVERHEATING. Clothing is designed to be taken off or added to in layers to maintain an even body heat.

L Wear LOOSE clothes and dress in LAYERS.

D Keep DRY. Wet clothing removes body heat 240 times faster than it dissipates through dry clothing. Wet is trouble.

VENTILATION—To regulate the amount of heat, yet not get overheated and wet with perspiration, adjustments can be made to loosen up the waist, the cuffs, and the neck opening, allowing more heat to escape.

WET, WINDY, COLD—This is the combination that spells danger to the winter camper. We avoid it by keeping dry, getting out of the wind when possible and wearing the correct clothes.

APPENDIX H- NORTHERN TIER POLICIES

- Respect Wildlife: We are visitors in the wilderness – please be responsible and courteous guests. Do not bother or provoke wildlife. Animals should be enjoyed from a distance and should never be fed.
- Purify All Drinking Water: All water from all-natural sources - including springs, streams and lakes must be purified by bringing it to a rolling boil.
- Wash and Rinse Dishes Thoroughly: Protect the health of your crew by thoroughly washing, rinsing, and sanitizing dishes. Let dishes and utensils air dry. The dirty dishwater should be disposed of at least 200 feet behind the campsite and at least 200 feet from any water source.
- Tobacco: The use of tobacco is never permitted within the line of sight of youth. No smoking is permitted in any Northern Tier building or vehicle. Each base has a single established tobacco use area.
- Alcohol and Drugs: Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or misuse of prescribed drugs is prohibited. Groups or individuals found in violation of this national policy of Scouting America will be sent home immediately, as arranged with the council office or parent.
- Firearms and Fireworks: Shooting firearms are not allowed at Northern Tier. Do not bring firearms or archery equipment with you. Fireworks are a safety hazard and are prohibited by Northern Tier National High Adventure. Leave them at home.
- Youth Protection Policy and Abuse: Scouting America's Youth Protection Policies must be adhered to. No one-on-one activities between youth and adults are allowed. Scouting's two deep leader policies must be followed. No youth and adults are allowed in the same tents. Physical, sexual, or emotional abuse (including hazing) of a camper by his or her peers or by adult leaders is unacceptable anywhere. Reporting of abuse is the law. The local, county, state or provincial authorities as well as the Scouting America Council representatives will be contacted if abuse is suspected.
- Fires on Base: A fire on any of the Northern Tier program base facilities needs to be reported to the base director or staff person immediately. If the fire alarm is activated, all crews are to report to the parking area of the base facility. Each base has a fire guard plan posted.

APPENDIX I- Frequently asked questions

What gear do you recommend for winter camping?

Essentially, participants are required to bring any piece of clothing that touches their skin, a personal sleeping bag, and personal mess kit.

Here are some recommendations on some required pieces of gear:

Head - Bring two hats - one to wear during the day and one to sleep in. We recommend a beanie or bomber hat - the more ear coverage the better.

Neck/face - A neck gaiter, scarf, or balaclava is essential to prevent windburn and frostnip on the face.

Base layers - Base layers, or long underwear, should sit against the skin but not so tight as to hinder blood flow. Bringing two sets is essential so that you can change out of any wet and sweaty clothes.

Gloves - Participants *always* value bringing extra liner gloves. These are any thin, usually non-waterproof, glove. Fleece or wool liner gloves are great options.

Socks - On the packing list, we recommend two different kinds of socks - liner socks and insulating socks. Liner socks are a thin sock that fits snugly against the foot to wick moisture and prevent blisters. Insulating socks are a heavier, looser fitting sock that will keep your feet warm, usually made of wool or synthetic materials. We recommend bringing an extra, loose-fitting, thick pair of socks specifically for sleeping in.

Medications - Please bring ALL personal medications you normally take. If you have an inhaler or epi-pen for any reason, you must bring it with you, or you will not be allowed on trail - no exceptions.

Does the gear you provide cost extra?

All gear provided by Northern Tier is included to use without additional charge. We encourage use of all available gear at Northern Tier. Gear will be assessed at check-in for any loss or damage due to carelessness. Any lost or damaged gear will be charged to the crew.

What are the sleeping bag situations?

We issue a sleeping bag with a water-resistant shell that is rated to -20°F. A personal sleeping bag of any rating is required to be used inside the given sleeping bag. Additionally, we provide two closed-cell foam sleeping pads and a tarp for every sleep system.

What kind of boots do you provide?

We issue the Sorrel Glacier XT which are rated to -100°F and are waterproof. They consist of a rubber and fleece boot with a thick insulated liner. We strongly encourage participants to use our boots instead of bringing their own. Only waterproof boots with removable liners and thick soles are acceptable to be brought on trail.

What is food like on trail and base?

Dinner and breakfast will be served in the dining hall when you first get to base. After breakfast on your first day, every meal will be "on trail" from that point on. This includes cabin stays, so that you can gain experience cooking on trail in the winter!

A sample trail menu can be found at http://www.ntier.org/food/

All meals can be accommodated for dietary restrictions and allergies, as long as we are given prior notice via a dietary restriction form at http://www.ntier.org/food/

Are scouts allowed to cook on trail?

Generally, interpreters cook all meals while on trail. Whether or not scouts are allowed to cook on trail is up to the discretion of the interpreter at each meal. White gas can be extremely dangerous in the winter, as its low freezing point can cause instant frostbite to unprotected skin. Steam from cooking can also get hands wet, which is also dangerous in extreme temperatures. If you would like to learn how to cook on trail, express interest to your interpreter!

How to pee/poop in the woods?

Peeing: When in camp, crews will pick and pee on a designated spot on land, commonly called a "pee tree," to minimize the environmental impact. There will be a designated trail established by your interpreter to make it easier to find. When on trail, participants will walk 200 feet off a trail and pee in a discrete location, as not to blemish the pristine snow. When preparing to leave a campsite the crew will bury the pee tree snow so that it appears that no one had used the spot.

Pooping: Participants will go 200 feet from a trail or water source to do their business. There they will dig a hole in the snow with a provided shovel, do their business, and then bury their feces in the snow. Any toilet paper used will go into a Bio Bag for transportation to disposal.

Feminine hygiene: Interpreters will provide participants with blacked-out ziploc bags to dispose of used toilet paper and feminine hygiene products. As with the above regulations, everything needs to be packed out. Menstrual cups can be emptied in the same manner that fecal matter is taken care of - dig down to the bare ground and dispose of it there.

What is Okpik like at different sessions?

Late December, our "Holiday stay":

- Typical dates: From the first weekend after Christmas until the end of December.
- How long a typical crew stays: 5 total nights (1 night on base, 3 nights on trail, 1 final night on base)
- Temperature: 1 - 19°F, with about 15 inches of snow on the ground.
- Are dog treks offered: No, but crews who visit during this time can visit the dog yard and talk with our mushers to learn more about our dog sledding program.

January:

- Typical dates: MLK weekend is our busiest time this month, but we run treks all month long.
- How long a typical crew stays: 3 total nights (1 night on base, 2 nights on trail)
- Temperature: -16 - 18 °F, with about 15 inches of snow on the ground.

- Are dog treks offered: Yes! Non-dog treks who visit during this time can visit the dog yard and talk with our musher camp participants and mushers to learn more about our dog sledding program.

February:

- Typical dates: Presidents Day weekend is our busiest time this month, but we run treks all month long.
- How long a typical crew stays: 3 total nights (1 night on base, 2 nights on ice)
- Temperature: -5 - 22 °F, with about 15 inches of snow on the ground.
- Are dog rides offered: Yes! Non-dog treks who visit during this time can visit the dog yard and talk with our musher camp participants and mushers to learn more about our dog sledding program.

March:

- Typical dates: The first weekend of March is the busiest weekend, and we typically run treks until the second weekend in March.
- How long a typical crew stays: 3 total nights (1 night on base, 2 nights on ice)
- Temperature: -5 - 22 °F, with about 15 inches of snow on the ground.
- Are dog rides offered: Yes! Non-dog treks who visit during this time can visit the dog yard and talk with our musher camp participants and mushers to learn more about our dog sledding program.

Can crews still interact with the sled dogs even if not on a dog trek?

Dog yard visits are 20-minute appointments in the kennel where the dogs live while at Northern Tier. Participants may pet, play with, and learn about the dogs and dog sledding programs at Northern Tier. these experiences are run by our Musher Camp, in which the participants of the camp teach other participants about the dogs and dog program at Northern Tier.

What does the process look like when we arrive?

When you arrive on base you will be greeted by your interpreter and asked to bring your first aid kit, medical paperwork, and certifications (YPT, CPR, etc.) inside. Here you will start to get some logistics out of the way - medical checks, check-in, and crew photos. Throughout the remainder of the day, you will do a gear shakedown, check out gear from the bay post, attend a first-night orientation, and plan your itinerary for the weekend! This whole process is subject to change, based on when you get here and how many crews are on base. Be prepared for a busy night, with the potential for some of these activities to run over to the next morning!

What does the checkout process look like?

We hope you maximize your time on trail here at Okpik! On your final day, crews must return all their gear, fill out evaluations, and leave time to check out the trading post and get items branded. Doing all this in addition to showering and packing up your cabin can make for a busy morning! We recommend crews plan to leave after lunch on their final day here at Okpik so that they can spend their last night on trail (this excludes holiday stay treks, who spend their final night on base).

What time is best to leave/book flights?

To maximize time on trail and to allow your interpreter to facilitate your departure day as efficiently as possible, we recommend that crews plan to leave after lunch.

Duluth is about two and half hours away in good weather while Minneapolis is about five hours. Ensure to budget an extra hour or more for winter conditions and bathroom breaks. Following that guide, it is best to book departure flights in the late afternoon out of Duluth and take a night flight from MSP.

This is especially important on winter treks and dog program treks as there will be more gear to break down and return; it's also important to us that each crew feels satisfied with their time here. We aim to provide the best program possible and are better equipped to do that when crews are able to stay longer.

This does not, however, disregard the school and work schedules that you are taking into consideration. If a crew must leave early on their last day (long drive, mid-day flights, or weather) we are more than happy to accommodate and able to do so with enough notice. Be sure to have your travel information detailed out in advance; when you are contacted by one of our Northern Tier Program representatives, they will ask you for that information so your interpreter can facilitate your trip to be sure you get the most out of your time here.

What camera do you recommend?

No matter what camera equipment you bring, cold temperatures will drain batteries! Be it your phone, your GoPro, or your DSLR, we recommend keeping your battery on your person to stay warm and sleeping with it in your sleeping bag at night. We recommend a simple point-and-shoot camera that will be easy to use with mittens on, although any camera device will work - bring something you are comfortable with. If you are going on a dog trek, we recommend a point-and-shoot with a strap! Do not rely upon a cell phone for your pictures if you are going on a dog trek as they are easily dropped and lost forever in the snow. For additional camera equipment, you may like a tripod to try and capture the night sky.

How can we best prepare for trail, both mentally and physically?

While Okpik is a physically demanding program, most of the struggle we find participants facing is mental. Reviewing the literature on Okpik winter camping is one of the best ways to prepare mentally. Realize that once you get here, you probably will not be sitting down again until you are on the way back home!

Being physically fit is also important for Okpik. We judge this by a physical from your doctor saying that you are fit to participate. During med checks, we are looking to see that you brought all your medications with you. This means that if you have an epi-pen or inhaler and do not bring them with you, you will be unable to go out on trail - no exceptions.

*Dog programs do require a higher level of physical fitness. It is a common misconception that the dogs will be doing all the work - here, you are a member of the team too! This means you will have to be able to run dogs while harnessing, help push the sleds uphill, and run along the sleds in powdery snow while wearing heavy boots and thick clothes. Come prepared!

Most importantly come with an open mind and be ready to learn and have fun!