

**THREE RIVERS DISTRICT
2026 KLONDIKE DERBY
Golden Empire Council, B.S.A.**



**FEBRUARY 20, 21 and 22, 2026
ALPINE MEADOWS CAMPGROUND
MARTIS CREEK
TRUCKEE, CA 95252**

**From Hwy 80 take Hwy 267 south toward Lake Tahoe.
Martis Creek Lake is 3 miles south of I-80 on the left.**

UNIT PARTICIPATION GUIDE

Updated: 11/09/2025

MARTIS CREEK CAMPGROUND RULES OF USE

ALPINE MEADOWS CAMPGROUND is owned and operated by the US Army Corp of Engineers. The campground is part of a larger Federal flood protection system developed in the 1970s and is operated by the Corp during the Spring, Summer and Fall. We have the privilege of using the campground facility during it's closed period. The Corp has four big rules we must follow:

1. Speed limit inside the locked main gate is **10MPH**. Period!
Walking citizens and their dogs have the right-of-way. A scout is courteous.
2. The rest of the flood protection system is off limits to us.
We are restricted to the campground and road access in & out only! A scout is obedient.
3. Remove (**take HOME**) all trash and garbage.
A scout is helpful.
4. The main gate is **always locked**.
Always lock the gate behind you!
A scout is loyal.

2026 KLONDIKE DERBY

What is a Klondike Derby?

For our purposes, a Klondike Derby is the annual Scouts BSA Winter Skills and Camping event. Since 1949 Scouts have been participating in the calibration of the heritage of the Klondike Gold Rush. So prepare yourselves for multiple thought bending, hands on competitions, where Scouts BSA Troops and Patrols as well as Scout Crews can compete against each other. Patrols of 5 or more will use a dog type "Sledge" that will be pulled with the everlasting Scout power. The sleds, which will be loaded with their personal and patrol equipment, will be pulled by the Scouts as they journey through the snow covered woods and fields stopping at different activity stations where they are tested on different Scout skills. When they arrive at these stations they will be timed and tested on their Scouting knowledge, team work and problem solving skills. Top performers will be awarded for their prowess, intelligence, fortitude, and sometimes deviousness. Scout Spirit and incorporation of the yearly theme will add points to each teams overall scores.

Some of the things they may be tested on include:

Sled and equipment inspection.

Are they prepared with the right equipment?

Build a fire in the snow using only 3 matches.

Winter Survival Skill Tests:

Where do you find dry wood for a fire?

How can you start a fire without matches, using flint and steel or fire by friction?

What can you find to eat?

How do you build a shelter to get out of the elements?

How do you build a bed to sleep in and keep warm?

Then demonstrate how to do these.

Pitching a tent in the snow, frozen ground or ice.

Map and compass navigation.

First aid, for hypothermia, broken bones, CPR, etc...

Pioneering - Lashing and Knots - building useful projects.

Emergency Search and Rescue competitions. Tests on how to search for a lost person, what to do if you get lost, how to pull someone out of the water if they fall through the ice into the icy water. Although these are only simulations they can still go through the motions of how to do it.

A sled race with a heavy load and they see who can pull the load a given distance the fastest.

Four men walking on one set of skis. A contest of team work where everyone has to move their feet in unison

Patrol Camp Inspections.

A contest to see how organized and well labeled your patrol areas are.

Troops will arrive on Friday night to get their camps organized. Competitions and the tests are performed on Saturday morning/afternoon. It is recommended that an advanced guard be sent up early on Friday to make sure that the check in is done in a timely manner and that they can select their campsite, as they will be chosen on a first come first serve basis.

Who can attend a Klondike Derby?

Scouts BSA Units, Varsity and Venturing Crews are the ones that this event is intended for. Competitions will be judged by Teams. A Team may be a Patrol or Crew and needs to be at least 5, but no more than 8, scouts. If a group has more than 8 they should form a second team.

**REMEMBER THAT IT CAN GET VERY COLD. SAFETY IS ALWAYS FIRST.
PLEASE STAY WARM, DRY AND HYDRATED.**

What will each Unit have to provide?

Each troop will have to show at check-in that they have a copy of the scout medical forms for each scout attending assembled in a folder alphabetically by last name. A troop roster with the final number of scouts and adults attending should be in the front.

Each troop SHOULD, but is not required to, have at least one adult member who is OKPIK trained. If you don't please let us know when you arrive so any questions that you may have can be answered.

Each troop will need to provide a parent or two to run one of the stations during the competition. Troops can sign up for the competition event they would like to host on a first come first serve basis. Some equipment will be available for certain competitions. Others may need further equipment. This can be discussed as you sign up. Units can run more than one competition is really help.

Units can host Scout's Own on Sunday morning, their discretion. Remember, it's with your help that this event can be made possible!

Cost and Deadline to sign up for the Klondike Derby?

Deadline to sign up for the Klondike Derby is **Friday, February 13, 2026**. The cost will be **\$20** per person, scout and adult. This will cover the costs of the vehicles & camp registration and staff camp supplies. Each person attending will receive a camp patch for the event. Registration needs to be done by troop on the district web site. We'll need the names of the teams (patrols, crews) in advance for the judges tracking sheets. These sheets can be sent to recruitment.troop1@gmail.com.

What kind of equipment do you need at a Klondike Derby?

The Sledge -- Every competing team (patrol) of Scouts should have a Klondike Derby Sledge. The sledge will look similar to an Alaskan Dog Sled. They need to be made of natural materials. Some materials that are used include plywood, pine boards, wooden dowels, old broom sticks and handles, wood screws, nuts and bolts, rope, etc... It's not recommended to use nails in the construction of the sledge because they tend to come loose under the stress/strain and banging the sledges are subjected too. They must be labeled with the Troop number and Patrol/Team name. Art work is encouraged and extra competition points will be awarded for the yearly themed decorations. The sledges must be a **minimum of 5 feet long** and weigh at least 40 lbs empty. (They will be weighed) They need to be able to hold the patrol/team competition equipment and at least one (1) scout. One location for sledge ideas can be found at:

<http://www.inquiry.net/outdoor/winter/gear/sleds/index.htm>

Clothing -- The Scouts also need good outdoor winter clothing, such as long johns (thermal underwear), gloves, hats, warm coats, multiple pairs of socks, good waterproof boots, rain gear, etc... Basically to be prepared for a long cold weekend in cold, wet, & hopefully snow. The best idea is to dress in layers, so that layers can be taken off when you're hot from working or more layers can be put on if you're cold. Remember to stay away from cotton wear.

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Required Survival Gear for Each Competing Team (to be packed on the sledge) –

- ✿ Pouch to carry gold nuggets
- ✿ Notebook and Pencil/Pen
- ✿ Working Flashlight
- ✿ Boy Scout/Venturing Handbook
- ✿ Patrol First Aid Kit
- ✿ Patrol First Aid Kit
- ✿ Patrol Flag
- ✿ Poles or staves, at least 2, each at least 6 feet long
- ✿ Blankets, at least 2, for stretchers or warmth
- ✿ Pot or Metal Container to melt snow in
- ✿ 1 Gallon of Water
- ✿ Matches, strike anywhere type (no lighters!)
- ✿ Natural Tinder (no metal, wax, accelerants!)
- ✿ Emergency Firewood (enough to melt snow)
- ✿ Compass, because you should always have one with you in the wilderness
- ✿ Rope, 50' coiled
- ✿ Lengths of short ropes in a bag. (At least 10, 10-12 feet long)
- ✿ Anchors (6 sticks, about 1" diameter, 1-2 feet long)
- ✿ Small shovel for snow.
- ✿ 2 or more pairs of snowshoes. (homemade or store bought, scout choice)

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Activity Schedule

Friday, February 20, 2026

3:00 – 9:00 PM Check-In: Bring Troop Roster. Establish your camp, have dinner.
9:00 PM SPL/President/SM Cracker Barrel at the Main Tent
11:00 PM Lights Out.

Saturday, February 21, 2026

7:00 AM Reveille, Breakfast
7:00 – 8:30 AM Saturday arrivals make camp.
 Arriving SPL's and SM's report to Staff area. Turn in Troop Roster, Est. camp.
9:00 AM Opening ceremonies in the flag area.
9:30 AM Unit Adults—Pickup activity paperwork from the Main Tent, etc.
10:00 AM The Klondike Gold Rush begins. All patrols should mush to the various stations to compete.
12:00 PM Lunch
12:45 PM Unfinished patrols complete the Gold Rush.
2:00 PM Choice of Inter Unit Tug o' War, Snow Fort or Snowman Building Contest. Snow cones available for scouts at the Main Tent.
3:30 PM The Great Klondike Sledge Race
4:30 PM Assembly: Patrol Awards and Closing Ceremonies.
6:00 PM Dinner.
7:30 PM Campfire.
9:00 PM Staff Meeting
11:00PM Lights Out

Sunday, February 22, 2026

7:00 AM Reveille, Breakfast, Camp Breakfast/ Clean-up begins
9:00 AM Non-Denominational Scouts Own Service (Individual Unit Lead)
9:30 AM Campsite inspection and checkout begins.
9:30 AM Snowball Battle for those that want to participate.
1:00 PM All Klondike personnel clear of the Campground.

The Events

Gold Nuggets: Event Staff

Each event host will be provided gold nuggets. Up to **5** may be awarded to a patrol when they have finished competing in an event. An additional **3** Nuggets can be awarded by the judges for Scout Spirit, Patrol Cooperation, Patrol Unity, and Completing the task at hand. A patrol may not receive gold nuggets more than once per event even if they redo the event later. Some of the possible events you may encounter are as follows:

Captain Will's Harry Blizzard Army Stretcher Carry

Four blindfolded Scouts will carry a fifth Scout (not blindfolded) on a stretcher around a course following directions given by the Scout on the stretcher. This is a Timed / Skill Event

Big Boss Patrick's Compass Bearing Course

All members of the Team sight on several objects and report collectively on the various bearings associated with those objects. This is a Skill Event

Lucky Luke's Emergency Shelter Creation

Each Team will be timed on their ability to build a shelter that matches a design that will be handed out at the event. Timed Event

Royal Canadian Mounted Policeman Chris's Klondike History Test

Competition teams will be asked questions about the history of the Klondike as stated earlier in this guide. This is a Knowledge Event

Zany Zack's First Aid and Survival Kit Inspection

Each sled should have a Team first aid kit and the various competition items (Survival Kit). At this station, the Team kit and sledges are examined and scouts will be asked to comment on the use of various items. This is an Inventory and Knowledge event

Klondike Kevin's First Aid and Survival Quiz

Each Team will be asked some basic questions and asked to demonstrate first aid and survival skills. Scores will be based on their overall basic first aid knowledge.

Sargent Ghirardelli's Height and Distance Estimation

Teams estimate the height of a tree or rock face, and a horizontal distance. No climbing is allowed. This is a Skilled Event.

Jose's Knots, Whipping and Lashings

Scouts will be timed on their ability to tie knots and lashings to construct a winter signal pole. Time penalties can be incurred for wrong knots or lashings. This is a Skill and Timed Event.

Andrew the Actor's Panning for Gold

Teams use a blanket held at each corner by a scout to toss a provided "Nugget" over a horizontal rope 3 m above the ground. Overall score will be judged on the number of times the patrol can toss the nugget over the rope in a given period of time. This is a Skill and Timed Event

The Events Continued

Sourdough Stevens Snow Shoe Race:

All team members must run course on supplied snowshoes. Timed teamwork event.

Spencer's (a sterling individual) Snow Tower Building Contest:

Team builds the tallest pile of snow in the shortest time.

Deadeye Dylan's Sled Race:

Two team members pull the sled and the driver around a deadly course. Timed teamwork event.

Rowdy Russel's Fire Building event:

Will you live or die in the Klondike? Build a fire and survive. Skill event.

Quinn the Eskimo's Clear the Blockage

Teams will be required to use their logic and team work to move a heavy object in their way. Skill and Timed Event.

Alejandro's oops, I heard it crack, Ice Rescue

Teams will have to rescue one of their own off a frozen lake that could give away at any moment using only the items from their sledge. Skill and timed event

Geo's Nature Identification

Teams will have to identify 10 different types of flora/fauna and 5 different types of tracks. Knowledge Event.

Be Prepared

Scout Spirit shown through teamwork, Patrol flags, Patrol yells, and doing good turns will be considered when scoring each event.

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Scouts and Leaders that are able to survive a night in an Okpik approved shelter can earn the "Snow Cave Survivor" patch. All snow shelters must be inspected by an Okpik representative (available on staff) and the Scout Master of your troop or crew.

"The stars are out" or "The were am I" opportunity.

We are working to give Scouts and Leaders the opportunity to learn a little about the universe in a star gazing lesson. The time of this event will be announced at the Klondike and will be subject (obviously) to the cloud cover that evening.

Other Frequently Asked Questions

Will I need a Tour Plan?

As this is an event in our area and put on by the District you won't need a tour plan. But having said that it's still a good habit to put one together anyway.

Will I need a Parent Permission Slip?

All Scouts should have a Parent Permission Slip filed with the designated adult leader of their unit. **At check-in/registration, the adult leader responsible for the unit must be prepared to show permission slips, upon request, for all participants.**

Restrooms and Service Units

Restroom facilities will be available and Units will be taking turns making sure they are kept as clean as possible. Unit leaders should make sure their scouts understand that a little more respect for the facility is needed do to the water situation.

What is the Water situation?

This is a dry camp and water will not be available. The plumbing in the area will be shut down for the winter. Units should bring their own water to the event. Tip: Bury water containers in the snow to keep it fluid.

Will there be a place to put Garbage?

All trash is to be deposited in the designated trash bins as will fit. The only bin that will be open is down by the main gate. Once this is full units will have to haul any trash out. REMEMBER: Leave No Trace!

What will the Weather be like?

Good Question. Please make sure you're prepared for anything. The Klondike will be held regardless of weather condition, wind, snow or shine. Be Prepared, for any old thing!. ~ B.P.

Will there be any Off Limit Areas?

You bet! Off limit areas will be outlined at the cracker-barrel with each unit.

Can we have Family/Visitors?

Families and friends are welcomed throughout the Klondike but are not allowed to participate in activities or camp overnight. All guests must check-in with Klondike Headquarters at time of arrival and be able to provide proof of Youth Protection.

Pets: No pets allowed. Do not harm natural wildlife.

REMEMBER: NO OVERNIGHT CAMPING FOR VISTORS!

Is there Parking?

Parking is limited. Please carpool. The Klondike sites will have parking available but will be at the discretion of the snow. The best option will be to come as close to the sites as possible and drop off any equipment and then park out at the main road facing away from camp and on the right side only in case of snow storms.

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Camp Rules

- ✿ Do not enter any campsite other than your own without permission.
- ✿ No radios, TVs, electronic games, alcohol, firearms, CD players, MP3 players, or personal bow and arrows allowed.
- ✿ No generators.
- ✿ No profanity. (**Scouts caught using profanity will automatically result in 200 point deduction from the team's overall score.**)
- ✿ Buddy system should be used when out of your units area.

Alcohol And Drugs

"It is the policy of BSA that the use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances are not permitted at encampments or activities on property owned and/or operated by the BSA or at any activity involving participation of youth members."

This policy will be strictly enforced for all those that use this facility. Unit Leaders will be responsible for monitoring any prescription medications for it's members.

BSA Smoking Policy

Smoking is discouraged among adult leaders as a rule. Smoking is prohibited in all program areas, camp buildings. Smoking is discouraged in the presence of boys anywhere on the camp property.

In Case Of Medical Needs

Troops/Crews are expected to handle most minor injuries but a Klondike Medical Officer is on staff to handle other injuries and illnesses. Accidents, injuries and illnesses **MUST** be reported to the Camp Medical area. The Klondike Medical Officer is available day and night at the Klondike Staff Headquarters. If you have an emergency, please notify any Klondike staff member right away.

Safety Tips

- ✿ Combine 2 sleeping bags to create 1 cold weather bag. And, use insulation pads for ground cold protection.
- ✿ Buy extra wool, polyester or nylon clothing layers at Goodwill. Keep as a back up if scouts forget or get wet.
- ✿ Encourage scouts to pack extra clothing. Wet clothing should be changed to dry, especially for bed.
- ✿ Kitchen garbage bags can be a liner inside wet socks in wet boots if extra clothing are not available.
- ✿ Consuming calories before bed gives the body fuel to keep warm. High calorie hot chocolate recipe: 2 cups of your favorite instant hot chocolate, 1 box instant pudding (chocolate is classic but banana is also good), 1/2 cup of powdered whole milk. Mix all ingredients and put in a zip lock bag. Add 2 or 3 tablespoons to a cup of boiled water.
- ✿ A warm and dry scout is a happy scout, after a day of fun in the snow!

Modifications to this guide may be made any time between now and the event. Please make sure you check the cover and have the latest edition of this guide.

Note: there is no security at the site and you will assume all risks for loss or damage. *No exceptions!*

KLONDIKE HISTORY

The Klondike Gold Rush, sometimes referred to as the Yukon gold rush, was a frenzy of gold rush immigration to and for gold prospecting, along the Klondike River near Dawson City, Yukon, Canada after gold was discovered there in the late 19th century. In total, about 12.5 million ounces of gold (about 390 tons) have been taken from the Klondike area in the century since its discovery.

Discovery

In August 1896, a party led by Keish (Skookum Jim) Mason, a member of the Tagish First Nations, headed north, down the Yukon River from the Carcross area, looking for his sister Kate and her husband George Carmack. The party consisted of Skookum Jim, his cousin, known as Dawson Charlie (or sometimes Tagish Charlie), and his nephew Patsy Henderson. After meeting up with George and Kate, who were fishing for salmon at the mouth of the Klondike River, they ran into Robert Henderson of Nova Scotia who had been mining gold on the Indian River, just south of the big dike. Henderson told George Carmack about where he was mining and that he did not want any "Siwashes" (Indians) near him.

August 16, 1896, the Skookum party discovered rich placer gold deposits in Bonanza (Rabbit) Creek, Yukon. It is not clear who made the actual discovery, with some accounts saying that it was Kate Carmack, while others credit Skookum Jim. George Carmack was officially credited for the gold discovery because the actual claim was staked in his name. The group agreed to this because they felt that other miners would be reluctant to recognize a claim made by an Indian, given the strong racist attitudes of the time.

The Rush begins

The news spread to other mining camps in the Yukon River valley. Gold was first discovered in Rabbit Creek, which was later named Bonanza Creek. The Bonanza, Eldorado, and Hunker Creeks were rapidly staked by miners who had been previously working creeks and sandbars on the Fortymile and Stewart Rivers.

Klondike stampede

News reached the United States in July 1897 at the height of a significant series of financial recessions and bank failures in the 1890s. The American economy had been hard hit by the Panic of 1893 and the Panic of 1896 which caused widespread unemployment. Many who were hurt by the financial crises were motivated to try their luck in the gold fields. The first successful prospectors arrived in San Francisco, California on July 15 and in Seattle, Washington on July 17, setting off the Klondike stampede. In 1898, the population in the Klondike may have reached 40,000, which threatened to cause a famine.

Men from all walks of life headed for the Yukon from as far away as New York, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Surprisingly, a large proportion were professionals, such as teachers and doctors, even a mayor or two, who gave up respectable careers to make the journey. For instance, the residents of Camp Skagway Number One included William Howard Taft, who went on to become a U.S. President; Frederick Russell Burnham, the celebrated American scout who arrived from Africa only to be called back to take part in the Second Boer War; and W. W. White, author and explorer.

Most were perfectly aware that their chance of finding significant amounts of gold was slim to none, and went for the adventure. As many as half of those who reached Dawson City kept right on going without doing any prospecting at all. Thus, by bringing large numbers of entrepreneurial adventurers to the region, the Gold Rush significantly contributed to the economic development of Western Canada, Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

Most prospectors landed at the Alaskan towns of Skagway and Dyea, both located at the head of the Lynn Canal. From these towns they traveled the Chilkoot Trail and crossed the Chilkoot Pass, or they hiked up to the White Pass into and proceeded thence to Lake Lindeman or Bennett Lake, the headwaters of the Yukon going without doing any prospecting at all.

Here, some 25 to 35 miles (40 to 56 km) from where they landed, prospectors built rafts and boats that would take them the final 500-plus miles (800-plus km) down the Yukon to Dawson City, near the gold fields. Stampeders had to carry a year's supply of goods — about a ton, more than half of it food — over the passes to be allowed to enter Canada. At the top of the passes, the stampeders encountered Canada's North West Mounted Police (NWMP and now the Royal Canadian Mounted Police) post that enforced that regulation, as well as customs and duties. It was put in place to avert shortages like those that had occurred in the previous two winters in Dawson City, and also to restrict the entry of guns, particularly handguns, into British territory. Another reason was to keep out of Canadian territory the criminal element under the leadership of Soapy Smith which had established itself in Skagway and the other Yukon Ports (then still claimed as British territory), as well as the fears by British and Canadian authorities about a possible armed takeover of the goldfields as an American territory.

Once the bulk of the prospectors arrived at Dawson City, most of the major mining claims of the region were already established. However, any major potential unrest with the idle population was averted with the firm authority of the NWMP under the command of Sam Steele.

Frederick Russell Burnham

Military Scout, Adventurer, Entrepreneur, Conservationist. As an American mercenary, Burnham served in the British Army as a military scout in Southern Africa (1893-1896, 1900-1904) during the Matabele War and the Second Boer War. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO), the second highest decoration in the British Army. It was in Africa where Burnham met and shared his scouting skills with Robert Baden-Powell, who would later go on to found the Boy Scout movement. Burnham was fond of the campaign hat which was then adopted by Baden-Powell thereafter.

Burnham and Baden-Powell remained lifelong friends. Following military service, Burnham traveled to Alaska during the Klondike gold rush as a prospector. He later led prospecting groups in East Africa and Arizona. In the 1920's, he formed an oil exploration company and successfully drilled wells and operated the Dominguez Hills oil field. He later purchased 5,000 acres near Three Rivers, CA, and pursued ranching. He helped establish wildlife parks and natural preserves in the United States and Africa, and promoted the idea of conservation long before it was fashionable to do so.

In 1936, Burnham was awarded the Silver Buffalo, the highest award given by the Boy Scouts of America. Mt. Burnham, a peak in California's Angeles Natl. Forest, is named in honor of him and adjoins Mt. Baden-Powell.

DIRECTIONS—Please lock the gate behind you.

I-80 E, Sacramento, CA 95834 A-B: 104.9 mi 1 hr 36 min

1. Depart I-80 E 99.8 mi 1 hr 23 min

 2. At exit 188B, take ramp right for CA-267 / CA-89 toward Sierraville / Lake Tahoe 0.3 mi

 3. Turn right onto CA-267 / Glenn Carlson Memorial Byp 2.8 mi

 4. Turn left onto Martis Dam Rd Gated road 1.4 mi

 5. Turn right onto Alpine Meadow Camp Private Road Unpaved Road 0.6 mi

B 6. Arrive at near Alpine Meadow Camp, Truckee, CA 96161 on the left 0 ft

