

National Pike Klondike Derby

Frequently Asked Questions – 16 November 2023

This event is subject to cancellation due to weather or other safety conditions, as determined by the NPD event staff or the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Event organizers will follow the BSA Guide to Safe Scouting and their own judgment when considering safety issues. NPD will make every reasonable effort to hold the event; however, if the event is cancelled, NPD will not be able to offer refunds but will distribute event materials in an equitable manner.

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[What's different for 2024?](#)

The 2024 National Pike Klondike Derby will be very similar to last year's event. The most significant differences will be in using the online registration system. **Please read the section below subtitled “[How do I register my unit?](#)” before starting your online registration.**

Those with sharp eyes will notice that the requirement for 6 foot staves as part of the Scout Trail equipment has been removed; where used, these will be provided by the station. These were becoming increasingly expensive and hard to find.

[When is the Derby?](#)

The 2024 Klondike Derby will be held on Saturday, January 27th:

- The Cub Trail will run from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
- The Scout Trail will run from 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
- Troops/Crews may camp on Friday night, Saturday night, or both (see details below)

[Where is the Derby?](#)

The McKeldin area of Patapsco State Park:

<https://dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/Pages/central/PatapscoValley/McKeldin/McKeldin-Area.aspx>

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Who's in charge?

Event Coordinator:

Dan Phillips (503-758-3471, scouterdanmail@gmail.com)

Cub Trail Coordinators:

Ed Wollack (301-854-0036, ejw3p1415@verizon.net);

Jerry Budai (443-838-4195, jerry.budai@gmail.com)

Scout Trail Coordinator:

John Barrett (443-878-7852, cdjrjandmsm@comcast.net)

Camping and Parking Coordinator:

Adam Shaughnessy (410-707-2118, ashag71@yahoo.com)

Registrar:

Steve Cooperstein (240-674-3133, npdkdregistrar@gmail.com)

How do I register my unit?

For online registration go to the [registration page](#):

This is the same as last year's link, but has changed since 2021. If you end up on a webpage for the Gunpowder Falls Klondike, please be sure to use the link above.

How is the registration process different this year than in past years?

- BSA/BAC has adopted a new underlying software system (Black Pug versus Doubleknot), so the entire look and feel will be different.
- You will register each of your trail groups separately. For Packs, all of your Cubs on the Cub Trail participate as one trail group, whether you have 5 Cubs or 35. For Packs and Troops, each sled on the Scout Trail is a separate trail group. Hence a Pack with Cubs on the Cub Trail and two sleds of Webelos/AOLs on the Scout Trail will have three trail groups.
- You will be required to provide contact information for the registration person and the carpool coordinator for each trail group. This does not have to be a different person for each trail group – you can have one person identified as the registration person for all of your trail groups.
- You will be asked for the desired start time, number of extra patches, and number of meals for each trail group. The start time field is free text – please provide a start time between 8:30 and 1:30 for the Cub Trail and between 8:00 and 12:30 on the Scout Trail. Each youth registration includes one patch, so you generally only need extra patches for adults who collect them. Your extra patches and meals are fungible – you can distribute them between your trail groups however you need to, so focus on getting those right for the whole unit vice each trail group.
- Before you register, determine whether or not your unit has a Maryland Park Service Youth Group Pass (YGP) ([Youth Camp \(maryland.gov\)](http://YouthCamp.maryland.gov)). We offer a small discount to units that do because the fees we pay for using the park are

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reduced for participants covered by YGPs. A valid YGP number is a five digit number (NNNNN) greater than 16907 and probably less than 18000 (they issue about 500 each year, and they're valid for two years). Please provide both the YGP number and its expiration date. All of your registrants (youth and adult) should be registered either with the YGP discount or without it – the YGP covers everyone in your unit (but remember that registered leaders register for free).

- You are not registering Scouts or adults by name – there is no way through the registration page to enter that information, and no requirement to do so. If one scout backs out, you can use his/her registration to cover a scout who is added later.
- There is a 4% convenience fee for using the online system; you will not see this applied until check-out.

Once you have registered, you may add to your registration (increase your numbers) by going into the online system and adding to your registration.

The online system is closed down about a week before the event to allow us to publish the final trail schedules. After that, if you have net increases to your numbers, you can settle any increases in fees at the Registration desk at any time on the day of the event. Registration never closes -- we do not turn away late deciders unless we saturate our trail capacity (500 participants on the Cub trail, 50 sleds on the Scout trail).

Once you have registered and paid for a specific number of participants, there is no mechanism available to provide refunds.

If your whole unit is late to register -- your unit does not register in time to use the online system -- then you should communicate directly with Steve Cooperstein (240-674-3133) or the registration team: npdkdregistrar@gmail.com in order to be added to the trail schedules.

All that said, please understand how this works:

On the Cub Trail, we have starting times available in five minute increments (8:30, 8:35, etc.). Based on the size of the Cub Trail group that you register, we reserve one or more sequential starting timeslots -- roughly one starting slot for every 5 scouts participating on the trail. This rate is what we have used successfully in the past and helps to smooth the scouts out over the full day. Your unit will be told one starting time on the Cub Trail (the earliest of the sequential timeslots). We maintain the Cub Trail schedule as units register so that we can give units their approximate starting times as soon as they register. However, if you increase your trail numbers by more than a handful after you initially register, you may grow into another timeslot, and cause a cascading change in the starting times of all the units that registered after you. While we understand that most units want an early starting time, **please do not register for the Cub Trail until you have a fair estimate of your eventual numbers.**

On the Scout/Webelos/sled trail, things are more binary -- we reserve a timeslot for each sled you register, and only one sled per timeslot. The number of scouts you put on each sled does not impact the sled schedule, but if you need to add or subtract a whole sled,

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that can also cause cascading changes to other units -- so we would ask that you be as accurate as possible in registering the number of Scout/Webelos sleds, and inform us immediately if your plans change. If you have multiple sleds, you may request sequential starting times for them, or unrelated starting times – whatever works for your schedule.

What is a BSA registered adult?

A BSA registered adult is someone who has completed the application, paid the fee, cleared the background check, and been accepted by BSA as an adult leader. There is no differentiation here as to role (adult leaders do not have to have a specified role within the unit such as Den Leader) or the level of participation (Pack, Troop, Crew, Ship, District, or Council).

How long does the event take?

Normally trail groups on the Cub Trail averaged three hours and thirteen minutes (3:13) from the time they signed in at the registration desk to the time they signed off the trail. 67% of the units fell within 26 minutes (+/-) of this 3:13 average. Note that most trail groups sign in at registration about 15 minutes before their official start time.

Sleds on the Scout (sled) trail took longer. Sleds took an average of five hours and 1 minute (5:01) from the time they signed in at the registration desk to the time they signed off the trail, with two thirds of these units finishing within 40 minutes (+/-) of five hours. Note that most sleds sign in at registration about 15 minutes before their official start time.

Please think about the implied impact on your Pack's logistics. Most Packs request identical start times on the Cub and Scout Trails, and we do our best to provide them, though that becomes harder as the trails fill unevenly. But if your Cub and Scout Trail groups start at the same time, they almost certainly will **not** finish at the same time – on average, they'll finish 1.5 to 2.0 hours apart. Having separate transportation plans for the groups on the two trails is advisable.

Are siblings welcome?

Siblings are welcome to participate in the event.

If the sibling is not an active participant we ask that you register the sibling as an adult and pay the adult fee (\$5); this helps cover the per-person park visitation fees that we pay to the park service. We will provide an event patch for these siblings.

If the sibling is an active participant – will receive a passport, a patch, and participate at each station – then please register them as if they were scouts (\$15).

We caution parents that non-participating siblings – usually younger children – may grow cold quickly and may not last the three hours typical of the Cub Trail. Having a back-up

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plan to get younger siblings off the trail (perhaps at Ulcer Gulch, with food and a fire) is advisable.

Are food and drinks available at the park?

Pre-paid Scout Meals can be picked-up from or eaten at the Ulcer Gulch outpost between 10:30 AM and 2:30 PM. Ulcer Gulch is also an enclosed warming station, with a roaring fire all day. *Because of a change in the enforcement of park policies, all food served by Ulcer Gulch must be pre-ordered and pre-paid via the online [registration system](#).*

What if we want to camp at the park?

Scout Troops and Venturing Crews are welcome to camp in the Group Camping area of the park. In 2023, we had 163 scouts and scouters from 14 units. Most units camp Friday night and usually 2-4 units camp on Saturday night.

Things to note:

- Water is available but units should come prepared to support their water needs for at least their initial meal. We'll provide an update later.
- Port-a-pots will be available (limited indoor facilities).
- **Due to the ash borer quarantine, no firewood may be transported into the campground.** We have contracted with DNR to provide a supply of cut firewood from within the park, and you may scavenge additional firewood from within the park.
- The camping fee is \$2 per person per night; the fee is waived if you have a valid Youth Group Pass.

Adam Shaughnessy is the Camping Coordinator.

If you have Webelos or AOLs who are interested in camping with a troop, please contact the troop Scoutmaster (if you have a point of contact), camping coordinator, or the registration team to make arrangements.

How large should a sled group be?

Stations on the Scout trail are generally designed to accommodate a den or patrol – ideally six to eight scouts. However, we do not restrict the sizes of groups on the trail. If you have a den of a dozen scouts that want to run a single sled, you are free to do so; just be aware that there will likely be stations where not all of the scouts can fully participate.

If your sled group is four scouts or fewer, they may have difficulty executing some of the stations. If you have a group of three or fewer, Klondike registration may be able to combine your group with another small group to make a more natural sled group – please contact registration.

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What are the sled requirements?

Webelos/AOL dens are expected to bring a sled with the equipment called out in the event flyer. A Webelos/AOL sled can be essentially anything, subject to the constraints expressed in the flyer (no metal runners). You may build a sled, borrow a sled (contact registration if you are interested in borrowing an existing Klondike sled), or use a commercially produced toboggan, sled, or wagon. Scout patrols are expected to use a sled built by scouts.

Does my troop/crew/ship need to register online?

Troops/ships/crews should register through the online registration system if they will end up owing fees:

- If your troop/crew/ship will be running one or more sleds on the trail (as participants), you must register and pay for those participants
- If your troop/crew/ship is camping overnight (either or both nights) and you do not have a Youth Group Pass (YGP) valid on the day of the event, then you must register and pay for your camping

If neither of these apply, then you don't need to register online.

However, you should:

- Verify your station topic(s) and location(s) with the trail boss(es) John (Scout trail) or Ed and/or Jerry (Cub Trail)
- Send an email to the registration team (npdkdregistrar@gmail.com) with the name, email address, and cell number for your primary POC (inclement weather cancellation POC) and, if you have one, the permit number and expiration date of your YGP (regardless of whether or not you are camping)
- If you are camping, send an email to the Camping Coordinator (Adam Shaughnessy)

Is my pet welcome?

ABSOLUTELY NOT. “Guide to safe scouting states that pets are not part of tours or activities in Scouting.” We expect to have over 900 people in McKeldin for our event.