



KLONDIKE 2026: SNOWMAGEDDON

TWIN VALLEY COUNCIL—SCOUTING AMERICA

Cedar Point Scout Camp

February 7, 2026

ITINERARY

8:00 a.m. Troop Sign In at Polaris Lodge

8:45 a.m. SPL & SM Meeting in Polaris Lodge

9:00 a.m. Flags in Meadow—release to Program

9:00 a.m. to
11:30 a.m. Morning Program Time

11:30 a.m. to
12:45 p.m. Hot Lunch served in Polaris Lodge

1:00 p.m. to
3:00 p.m. Afternoon Program Time

3:15 p.m. Final Klondike Sled Race—Iowa Lake

 Awards to follow Sled Race

Minnesota's "Lake Vermilion Gold Rush"

When we think about North American gold rushes of the past, we think of states like California and Alaska (and the Canadian Klondike). But other states such as Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico had their own smaller gold rushes. And so did Minnesota. In 1865, quartz rock embedded with gold was found in the area around Lake Vermilion, Minnesota. Prospectors from throughout the county poured in, only to find little gold but abundant iron ore. While the prospectors had mostly departed by the end of 1866, their stories of large amounts of iron ore brought in a different kind of prospector—industrialists that began mining iron ore on what we now call the "Iron Range" in northern Minnesota.

Klondike 2026 is all about the outdoor adventures which the Lake Vermilion gold prospectors would have lived every day during the winter of 1865-1866. The only "be at a place at a time certain" part of the program is the Klondike Sled Race preliminary heats on Iowa Lake. The patrols are otherwise free to visit the other program & service project areas at their leisure and at their own pace.

Polaris Lodge is the main administrative facility for this camp. Hot drinks, medical care, and a fireplace will be available throughout the program area at Polaris. All scouts attending must appear in proper winter gear or they will not be allowed to participate. Improperly dressed scouts will not be allowed to participate for safety reasons. Each scout must also present with their completed BSA Health Form (parts A & B).

PROGRAM AREAS

ICE FISHING:

Ice fishing is an activity which most of the southern portion of our country believes is a fantasy. Just think of what the out-of-state prospectors had to learn their first winter on the Minnesota Iron Range. On Iowa Lake, the fishing can be stellar—if you know what you are doing. Best of all—bait, poles and holes will all be provided.

Your patrol will proceed to the program area on your map (one for each patrol will be given to the SPLs at the morning SPL/SM meeting). If you are a novice to ice fishing, skilled staff will teach you the basics and help you start your journey. If you are a veteran of the ice, you will have the opportunity to work your magic with jig and pole with pre-drilled holes or you may choose to make your own. Stay as long as you would like.

KLONDIKE SLED RACE:

This event will be run in a series of heats in the morning, with the winners of each heat qualifying to run in the final race at the end of the event. A list of times and location for the heats will be given for each patrol to your SPL at the morning SPL/SM meeting. Patrols may not swap heat times with other patrols. Patrols who do not make it timely to their heats will forfeit their heat. Each patrol must bring their Klondike Sled, one youth to ride in the sled and no more than four youth to push/pull their sled.

PRIMITIVE FIRE STARTING:

For those who practiced their primitive fire-starting skills at Fall Camporee 2025, this is the next level challenge. The addition of winter moisture and winds will challenge even the most skilled of fire starters. Bring your own primitive fire-starting kits or use the materials found in camp together with a limited amount of kit from staff. After you have fire, do you know how to create a cooking set-up? A heating set up for an open shelter? Learn the next steps once you have mastered the creation and sustainment of flame.

WINTER SHELTER BUILDING:

Can you create a shelter from wood and a tarp which protects you from the weather while allowing you to have heat from your fire? Or (snow amounts allowing) do you want to do the Quinzee Challenge: Pile your snow in the morning and carve-out your Quinzee shelter in the afternoon. For patrols who wish to work on these items, they should bring 3 full sized snow shovels (or more) for the morning and 1 or 2 smaller snow shovels to carve out their sleeping chamber in the afternoon.

STAKING YOUR CLAIM:

This event will require you to have a working knowledge of how to use a basic compass to find, from a series of coordinates, the path to your Klondike Claim. You will need to bring one or more compasses and there will be a 100-foot line marked out to confirm your pace count. From there, you will follow your patrol's given coordinates on Iowa Lake (HINT: no two sets of coordinates are the same so footprints in the snow are meaningless) and at the end, you will place your marker flag to stake your claim. The patrol closest to their claim's actual location will win an award.

WOOD CUTTING—OLD SCHOOL:

One of the ways prospectors and those who lived in the forests of Northern Minnesota survived the long Minnesota winter was to lay in supplies of fuel to provide heat to last until spring. The old saying goes that when it comes to cut firewood, it will heat you twice—once when cutting the wood and the second when burning the wood.

Try your hand at cutting firewood using the tools of the 1800s. Before there were machine-powered saws there were human-powered saws. Grab a fellow scout and man a two-person cross-cut saw and see how many rounds your patrol (switching out) can cut off a log in 5 minutes. Could you cut enough wood to survive our winter “Snowmageddon”?

RESCUE KNOTS ON THE LAKE:

While Iowa Lake will be well and frozen over during Snowmageddon, that is not always the case in early and late winter. Sometimes gold prospectors had to cross over thin ice to move about their claims or to get to town. Learn about ice safety and about what to do if someone falls through the ice. HINT: They don't call the bowline knot the “rescue knot” for no reason. Get a chance to practice basic ice rescues on the ice (NOT in the ice) so that you can be prepared!

HERE BUNNY, BUNNY:

Just as prospectors had to gather their fuel to keep them warm in the winter, they also had to gather food to keep their bodies going. Deer, rabbits and other critters made up much of the woodland “grocery store” in the winter, with the small game often being the plentiful option. Come try your hand at small game target hunting with a sling shot. Can you keep your stomach full all winter?

SERVICE PROJECT FOR CAMP CEDAR POINT:

Many hands make light work. It's true on a gold miner's claim and it is true for scout camps. Come help with the service project (going on throughout the day) overseen by the volunteers of the Friends of Cedar Point. They will be working on removing overgrowth in the camp's woods as winter is the best time to do so. This service may qualify for rank-required conservation service hours. Check with your scoutmaster for approval. Participating patrols should bring one or more loppers and scout-appropriate hand saws to help out (a limited number of each will be available on site).

ICE CAROUSEL CAFÉ:

Assuming the ice thickness allows, we will have an ice carousel on Iowa Lake. If you have relatives who live south of Minnesota, be sure to take some pictures they simply will not believe. We will have a Café set up with hot beverages for scouts to enjoy (the drinks are free but scouts will need to bring their own mug & spoon) while they “take a spin” on the ice carousel.

Patrol Gear

In order to participate in all of the program areas, patrols should bring the following gear:

1. Klondike sled for the Klondike Sled Race
2. 50' total of rope for Rescue Knots on the Lake
3. Compass for Staking Your Claim
4. Lopers and hand saws for Service Project
5. Mug and spoon for Ice Carousel Café
6. Primitive fire-starting tools/bundles, lopers, hand saws and a mallet for working at Primitive Fire Starting
7. Min. 3 large and 1 small snow shovels for Quinzee building and an 8' by 8' tarp (or slightly larger close to square tarp) for Winter Shelter Building

ALL SCOUTS MUST BE PROPERLY DRESSED FOR THE WEATHER!!

Lunch

Hot lunch will be provided by camp staff at Polaris between 11:00 a.m. and 12:45 pm. Plates, cups and cutlery will be provided.

